

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4917
ANSWERED ON:23.05.2006
TEA PACKAGE
Subba Shri Moni Kumar

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has worked out a tea package for development of the wanning tea industry in the context of dumping of cheap tea from China, Sri Lanka and other tea producing countries in the Indian market;
- (b) if so, the details of the package alongwith the package likely to be shared between Assam and other tea producing States, indicating the basis of sharing of the package; and
- (c) the benefits contemplated under the package to the tea labourers and the number of laid off labour in each State at present?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) & (b): Government is examining ways and means of introducing a programme for massive replantation and rejuvenation of old tea bushes. The detailed costing and modalities of funding the programme, including setting up of a Special Purpose Tea Fund, is under consideration. The allocation from this Fund would depend upon actual individual borrowings and no specific allocation is proposed to be made for each State. Tea imports into the country are not significant as compared to indigenous production. In order to maintain quality and retain the brand equity of Indian teas, the Government has issued a new Tea (Distribution and Export) Control Order, 2005 which prescribes strict norms for tea and stipulates that all teas, whether imported or exported, would be required to conform to the specifications cited in the new Order.

(c): Uprooting and preparation of land for planting would call for additional manpower. As per available information, the approximate number of workers affected by the closure of tea gardens in the country is 29,710 (3820 in Assam, 10,050 in Kerala, 15,840 in West Bengal).