

(b) In order to harness the potential economic value of the small grower sector, the measures adopted by Government are aimed at improving their farm productivity and quality of their produce, and then providing them with a market access to ensure a reasonable return from their investments. Focused attention is being paid to organize the growers into Self Help Groups (SHGs) and Financial assistance is being extended to them facilitating establishment of proper leaf collection system, transport arrangements and establishing proper partnership arrangements with the quality tea processing factories.

(c) The major constraints of small tea growers are small fragmented holdings scattered in remote areas not having land ownership, not conversant with good agricultural practices and not having their own processing facility.

(d) The self help groups are provided with 100% grant for setting up of leaf collection centers, storage godowns, purchasing Leaf weighing scales, Plastic crates/nylon leaf carry bags. Transport vehicles are provided at 50% of the cost. Each SHG is provided with a revolving fund @ Rs. 10,000/- ha for meeting the cost of field inputs such as fertilizers, pesticides, sprayers etc. A special training on modern aspects of tea growing is organized for selected two members from each self help groups who in turn on completion of the training are expected to impart training to other members of the SHG and also take care of the management of the tea area under the command of the SHG. Besides Meeting the training fee and boarding and lodging cost, each trainee is Provided with stipend @ Rs.500/- per month for next six months from the date of completion of the training.

Status of Care-Keralam project

943.SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Competent Authority of Kerala had submitted detailed project report related to Care-Keralam (Confederation for Ayurvedic Renaissance-Kerala) during January, 2005;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Competent Authority *vide* latter dated July, 2005 had informed the Competent Authority of Kerala that the proposal had been approved by the Inter-Ministerial Apex Committee;

(d) if so, whether the sanction order had been issued and the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and the steps taken for issuing above sanction order?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise

Impact of big retail companies on small stores

944. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been 16 per cent decline in sales and a similar decline in profit for the small stores located in areas where big branded retail stores opened;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that around 42 per cent of the total number of small stores in the country down their shutters every year and over 17 per cent of them go out of business on account of competition from big retail companies; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL POLICY AND PROMOTION, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR): (a) and (b) This Ministry has not maintained any data on sale turnover of small stores. However, in their report on the Study on Impact of Organised Retailing on the Unorganised sector, the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) have, based on a sample survey covering four cities, reported that the turnover and profit of unorganised retailers located in the vicinity of organised retail has declined by 16%.

(c) and (d) Government has not maintained any data on closure of small stores. However, in its report, the ICRIER has, based on a sample survey, reported that a total of 151 small shops had closed down in the country over an average period of 21 months which is about 4.2 per cent annualised closure of retailers. The report has stated that despite adverse impact, a large majority of unorganised retailers showed their determination to continue in business.

Export through Wagha-Atari border

†945. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has started its preparations to send Indian goods to Pakistan, Gulf countries and Europe through Wagha-Atari border;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the potentiality of increase in trade there in coming days;

(d) the mechanism in place for carrying out trade at present;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.