

rate, and increase in cost of production. However, National Textile Corporation have recently offered discounts ranging from 2-1½ per cent to 7-1½ per cent to the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation for the benefit of the consumers.

**Claim, with Custodian of Enemy Property**

392. SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) what steps Government propose to take in case of those persons who did not file their claims with the Custodian of Enemy Property within the stipulated date *viz.* the 31st July, 1977; and

(b) What is the number of those claimants as on the 31st December, 1981 and the amount of money involved?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) A scheme for *ex-gratia* payment for giving relief to the Indian nationals) companies etc. whose assets in Pakistan were seized by the Government of Pakistan during and after the Indo-Pakistan Conflict 1965 was announced in 1971 under Government of India Resolution published in the Gazette of India dated the 10th April, 1971.

Notices to claimants to file the claims with the Custodian of Enemy Property were issued in May, 1971 and January, 1972. The last date for filing the claims was 15th April, 1972.

On receipt of representations from the claimants, the date for filing the claims was extended thrice and finally upto 31st July, 1977.

The claims filed by the claimants after the stipulated date 31-7-77 are time-barred. Since the Custodian is not registering any claim after the stipulated date, the question of computing the number of such claimants and the amount involved does not

arise. No proposal for extension of date for filing the claims is under the consideration of the Government.

**Purchase of cotton in Andhra Pradesh by Cotton Corporation of India**

393. SHRI HARKISHAN SINGH SURJEET: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that All Party Cotton Kisan Action Committee, Andhra Pradesh has demanded for the purchase of various varieties of cotton produced by the peasants by Cotton Corporation of India at remunerative prices; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir, Their demand was forwarded by Government to the Cotton Corporation of India for appropriate action.

(b) The Cotton Corporation of India has been giving full support to the cotton purchase in Andhra Pradesh and has so far purchased (upto June 1982) about 1.14 lakh bales of cotton at prices well above the support prices.

**Sick Tea Industry in Darjeeling**

394. SHRI SURESH SHAMRAO KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tea industry in Darjeeling is in sickness because of adverse factors like declining prices, rising cost of production and militant trade unionism; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to remedy the situation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Government is aware that the Tea Industry in Darjeeling has some special problems including rising cost of production and low yield. There is however no

information either with Tea Board or the Government about militant unionism.

(b) The Tea Board's financial assistance under its three major schemes is available to Darjeeling Tea Industry also. With effect from 1-9-80 the rate of subsidy for replanting in respect of hilly area in this tea growing region has been increased to Rs. 15000 per hec. Disbursement, by the Tea Board, under its various scheme for Tea Plantations in Darjeeling have been as under: —

Tea Plantation Finance Scheme	.Rs 30,78,075/- (As on 31-3-82)
Tea Machinery & Irrigation Hire Purchase Scheme	131 Applications amounting to Rs 225 79 lakhs (Till date)
Tea Replantation Subsidy Scheme	Rs 11,80,498 (Scince Inception)

With the special nature of the Darjeeling Tea Industries in mind, Tea Board has prepared a scheme of interest subsidies. In terms of this scheme, interest on development loans through ARDC re-finance will be subsidised to make it concessional. The scheme, proposed for a period of 10 years is to be approved by the Public Investment Board.

Tea Board has set up its own Research Station at Kurseong which aims at increasing productivity and improving quality of Darjeeling teas.

#### **Assam Tea Corporation Limited**

395. SHRI ROBIN KAKATI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the working group constituted by the Government of Assam to study the working of the Assam Tea Corporation Limited and to suggest measures for improving the condition of the said Corporation has since submitted its report;

(b) if so, what are the main features of the report and the suggestion made therein for improving the working conditions of the Corporation;

(c) what are the steps taken so far to implement the suggestions made in the report; and

(d) whether Government propose to take any legal action against those highups of the Corporation who are mainly responsible for mismanagement and negligence which resulted in such huge loss to the Assam Tea Corporation Limited?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The main recommendations of the working group are as follows: —

(1) Overhaul of the financial administration structure with a financial controller at its head.

(2.) Provision of funds to meet essential expenses e.g. labour wages, excise duty and other labour due, and for vital inputs.

(3) Inspection and overhaul of all machinery by Corporation engineers and overhaul of Prima Movers.

(4) Proper plucking.

Action to implement the above recommendations are to be taken by the Assam Tea Development Corporation which is an Assam State Institution.

(d) Government are not aware of the intention of the Government of Assam in this regard. However, reports of corruption in some tea estates of the Assam Tea Corporation were inquired into. They resulted in the service of one Garden manager being terminated. The resignation of another Garden manager was obtained, **a**