

**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS****Rationalisation of Excise Duty on Tea**

- \*425. SHRIMATI LEELA DAMO-DARA MENON:  
 SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHAN-KAR ADIVAREKAR:  
 SHRIMATI AMARJIT KAUR:  
 SHRI SWAMI DINESH CHANDRA:  
 SHRI NRIPATI RANJAN CHOUDHURY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to rationalise excise duty on tea; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

**Feeder services by IA**

- \*426. SHRI JAGAN NATH BHARDWAJ:  
 SHRI GANESH LAL MALI: SHRI PIARE LALL KUREEL  
 Urf PIARE LALL TALIB; SHRI KHURSHED ALAM SHRI SHRIKANT VERMA;

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Indian Airlines has failed to meet the overall air transport requirements of the country;

(b) whether Government propose to add a few more feeder services to the existing route pattern and to connect more places of tourist attraction through air services; and

(c) if so, what are Government's plans in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PURUSHOTTAM KAUSHIK): (a) to (c) In order to augment the existing services provided by Indian Airlines, especially with a view to 'making a feeder service available, a proposal for setting up third-line operations is under examination.

**Spurt in Gold Prices**

- \*427. SHRI SAT PAUL MITTAL: DR. V. P. DUTT: SHRI SAWAISINGH SISO-  
 DIA: SHRIMATI LAKSHMI KU-  
 MARI CHUNDAWAT:  
 SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the prices of gold have reached an all time high;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what was the average price of gold in the Indian markets during each of the last three years;

(d) whether Government have been contemplating some measures to bring down the prices of gold in the market; and

(e) if so, what decision Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI H. M. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. The price of standard gold (per 10 grams) in the Bombay market touched an all time high of Rs. 706 on November 28, 1977.

(b) The rise in the international price of gold is attributed to \_\_\_\_\_

(i) short supply of gold in the internal market in relation to demand;

- (ii) increased demand due to marriage season;
- (iii) recent increase in the exports of gold ornaments;
- (iv) speculation regarding liberalisation of gold control regulations; and
- (v) firmness in the price of standard gold in the international market.
- (c) Spot average prices of standard gold in the Bombay market during the last three years were:

(Rs. per 10 grams)

April—March	Average (Annual)
1974-75	519.24
1975-76	545.17
1976-77	549.81

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

**Extension of Commercial bank facilities to community blocks in the Northern Region**

- 428. SHRI R. NARASIMHA REDDY: SHRI BHAIKAB CHANDRA MAHANTI: SHRI NARASINGHA PRASAD NANDA: SHRI NRIPATI RANJAN CHOUDHURY:

Will the Minister of FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to extend commercial bank facilities to all the Community Blocks in the Northern Region; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND REVENUE AND BANKING (SHRI H. M. PATIL): (a) and (b) In pursuance of the overall objective of provid-

ing banking facilities in the hither to unbanked areas, banks have been advised to ensure that latest by June 1978, each Community Development Block in the country is provided with at least one commercial bank branch. According to available information, there were 29 Community Development Blocks in the Northern Region as at the end of September 1977 which did not have a commercial bank branch. Of these 6 were in Himachal Pradesh, 12 in Jammu and Kashmir and 11 in Rajasthan.

**Agriexpo—77**

t\*429. SHRI SUJAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount of expenditure likely to be incurred on the exhibition 'AGRIEXPO-77' currently being held in Delhi;

(b) to what extent the small and marginal farmers will be benefited by the exhibition; and

(c) whether Government have made any arrangements for the night stay of farmers coming from far off places for visiting the exhibition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI ARIP BAIG): (a) The amount of likely expenditure and income of the Agri-Expo is expected to be of the order of Rs. 80 lakhs as per revised estimates.

(b) The small and marginal farmers will be benefited with the latest information available in the 'AGRIEXPO-77' on the modern techniques in the field of agriculture and allied fields, namely, the new high yielding varieties of seeds for various crops of wheat, maize, paddy, pulses etc., and use of different types of fertilizers,

tPreviously Starred Question 309 transferred from the 30th November, 1977.