

#### UNDER-CUTTING OF AIR FARES

444. SHRIMATI SAVITA BEHEN : Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is fact that the practice of under-cutting of air fares by international airlines is rampant, to the detriment of Air India ;

(b) if so, the number of such cases that have come to the notice of Government during the last two years ; and

(c) the steps taken by Government with the help of IATA or otherwise to effectively prevent this unhealthy practice?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CIVIL AVIATION (DR. KARAN SINGH):

(a) and (b) It is believed that certain international airlines indulge in malpractices such as undercutting the IATA approved fares which result in the diversion of traffic from the national carrier.

(c) The following measures have been taken to deal with the situation :

(i) Reduced return excursion fares have been introduced between the USA and India.

(ii) Reduced return youth fares have been introduced between India and France.

(iii) A charter company has been established by Air India for operation of charters at cheap fares.

(iv) A new rule has been incorporated in the Aircraft Rules, whereby it is compulsory for airlines to file their tariffs with the Director Genral of Civil Aviation for approval.

Apart from the above measures, a close watch is being maintained by the International Air Transport Association enforcement organisation as well as by our own governmental authorities concerned with the infringement of the foreign exchange regulations.

#### TAKE OVER OF SICK TEA ESTATES BY WORKERS' COOPERATIVES

445. SHRI KALI MUKHERJEE:

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY:

SHRI SURAJ PRASAD: SHRI

KALYAN ROY : SHRI

SHYAMLAL GUPTA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any initiative has been taken by Government to encourage the workers' co-operative societies to take over sick tea estate ;

(b) if so, the details in this regard ;

(c) the number of sick and closed tea plantation in West Bengal or any other State; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by Government to take them over?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI A. C. GEORGE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(d) The Task Force recently set up for evolving a viable and long-term strategy for the growth of tea industry and promotion of exports will *inter-alia* study the problem of closed and sick gardens and make recommendation for effective remedial action.

#### PURCHASE OF PLANES FOR INDIAN AIRLINES

446. SHRI SANDA NARAYANAPPA:

SHRI DEBANANDA AMAT:

SHRI M. S. ABDUL KHADER;

SHRI G. R. PATIL: