

(c) whether the Tea Board of India has declared five blocks Pathan, Thakurgunj, Kishanganj, Bahadurgaur and Dighal Bank as non-traditional areas for growing tea;

(d) if so, whether Government will urge State Government to release Land Ceiling Act on a 90 years term to boost the production; and

(e) if so, by when it is expected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Although planting of tea was started in Kisanganj way back in 1982, there was no quantum jump in production. The average annual production is around 2.5 million kg of made tea.

(b) As per information available with the Government, the total area under tea in Bihar is around 6500 ha (16475 acres) owned by 5000 small growers (with average holding size around 1.2 ha) and 8 big tea growers (with average holding size of 65 ha.). Tea Industry is now a major industry in the Kisanganj District of Bihar giving employment to a considerable number of workers.

(c) Yes, Sir. Those five blocks have been declared as non traditional tea growing areas in 1999.

(d) and (e) No, Sir.

#### **Marketing mechanism for cashew growers**

1731. DR. PRABHAKAR KORE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that cashew growers are facing difficulties in the absence of adequate marketing mechanisms for their produce;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what steps are taken by Government to provide marketing facilities for cashew growers in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) India produces less than 50 percent of the overall requirement of the processing units in India. Processing

units procure raw nuts from farmers directly allowing remunerative prices. Therefore, the question of cashew farmers facing any difficulty in marketing of their produce does not arise.

(c) and (d) Assistance is provided under National Horticulture Mission and Horticulture Mission for North East and Himalayan States for development of infrastructure for post harvest management such as cold storages, terminal markets, wholesale markets, rural primary market, apni mandies etc. to ensure adequate supply of horticulture produce including cashew to the consumers at reasonable prices and also to provide remunerative returns to the farmers.

#### **Foreign investors facing problems in retail sector**

1732. SHRI D.P. TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that foreign investors are facing problems in retail sector;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government has banned them from selling several products; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Economic relief to small shopkeepers**

†1733. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after permitting the entry of big corporate houses and multi-national companies into the retail sector of the country, the small shopkeepers working in this sector needed economic relief in order to compete with them;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.