

assistance, which can be availed through State Horticulture Missions on submission of feasible proposals. Export promotion programmes on turmeric are being implemented by Spices Board under Ministry of Commerce, Government of India.

**Financial assistance to rubber producers by rubber board**

2484. SHRI B.S. GNANDESIKAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Rubber Board proposes to provide financial assistance to the rubber producers and self-help groups to develop primary infrastructure facilities for strengthening the small holder sector;

(b) if so, whether the Rubber Board will assist for productivity enhancement and quality upgradation of produce in the small holding sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the fiscal allocation made by Government for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) Yes, Sir. Rubber Board provides financial assistance to develop primary infrastructure facilities for strengthening smallholder sector. The assistance is provided through village level forums of smallholders such as Rubber Producers Societies (RPS) and Self Help Groups (SHG). Assistance is provided for setting up of group processing centres, latex collection centres, training centres and other infrastructure facilities. Support is also given for mechanization, formation of labour banks and ancillary activities such as apiculture.

(b) Rubber Board assists smallholding sector for productivity enhancement and quality upgradation of produce.

(c) Major measures for productivity enhancement and quality upgradation of produce include generation and distribution of quality planting materials, supply of critical inputs with price concession, establishment of Rubber Agro Management Units for demonstration of scientific agro-management practices, assistance for soil protection and water conservation, training, marketing through Rubber Producers Societies sector companies etc. Fiscal outlay of activities specially formulated and implemented for productivity enhancement and quality upgradation of smallholders' sector during 2012-13 amounted to Rs. 15.75 Crore.