

Lack of roads and drinking water in tea gardens in Assam

1148. SHRI SANTIUSE KUJUR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many tea gardens in Assam do not have proper road connectivity and drinking water facilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether Government implements any such scheme or any order passed to the tea garden management to make well connected roads and drinking water facilities available to the labourers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) As most of the tea gardens in Assam are located in remote areas, the infrastructural facilities and connectivity to such areas is at times less than adequate. However, the Plantation Labour Act, (PLA) 1951 mandates the tea estates to provide basic welfare services and amenities *e.g.* housing, health facilities and primary education, water supply, sanitation etc. to the tea workers. Simultaneously, the construction and maintenance of the roads outside the tea gardens is undertaken by the State Governments. The facilities to be provided under the PLA are also monitored and governed by the concerned State Government.

(c) and (d) Tea Board implements programmes for Human Resource Development (HRD) under the Twelfth Plan Scheme namely, Tea Development and Promotion Scheme. The HRD component is aimed at filling in critical gaps in the welfare of tea garden workers, particularly in health and education sector. A sum of ₹ 50.00 crores has also been earmarked under the HRD component for the Twelfth Plan period for Gap Funding to the State Governments in the major tea growing States in order to align with their activities through National Level Welfare Schemes implemented in tea gardens.

Downfall in domestic and small investments in commercial organizations

1149. SHRIMATI SAROJINI HEMBRAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the domestic investment and small investments in various commercial organizations of the country have been lowered in the last one year affecting the economic growth; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) The overall investment in the economy indicated by Gross Fixed Capital Formation (GFCF) at constant (2011-12) prices is estimated at ₹ 31.92 lakh crore in 2014-15, which is 4.6% higher from GFCF of ₹ 30.50 lakh crore in 2013-14. The growth rate of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at constant (2011-12) prices, an indicator of economic growth, has improved to 7.3 % in 2014-15 compared to 6.9 % in 2013-14.

(b) Does not arise.

Plans to spread teachings of Tamil Saint Thiruvalluvar

1150. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a plan to strengthen and spread the teachings of great Tamil Saint Thiruvalluvar in India, especially in Northern and Eastern Provinces and in East Asian countries with a sizeable Tamil population like Malaysia and Singapore where Hon'ble Prime Minister visited recently; and

(b) if so, the details of Ministry's vision in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Enhancement of funds for classical music

1151. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is need to enhance funding for classical music;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this direction so far; and

(c) the demands still pending with Government from artistes and by when the action will be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE (DR. MAHESH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Ministry of Culture releases regular grants-in-aid to its autonomous organizations under plan and Non-plan head. Under various approved schemes of Ministry of Culture, funds are released to private organizations, NGOs,