

Replacement of old tea bushes with young plants

1134. DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has chalked out any plan to replace the large percentage of very old Indian tea bushes with young and productive plants;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the fresh steps taken by Government to maintain high quality standards of Indian tea by implementing stricter quality control norms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) and (b) Under the Tea Development and Promotion Scheme of the Tea Board, financial assistance is regularly extended to the tea estates and also to the small tea growers for replanting, rejuvenation and consolidation of the old aged tea bushes. During the years 2012-13 to 2015-16 of the XII Plan Period, an area of 17,304 hectares and 3,205 hectares has been covered under replanting and rejuvenation respectively.

(c) Tea Board of India has enforced a comprehensive guideline called “Plant Protection Code” for safe usage of Plant Protection Formulations (PPFs) in the tea plantations in India with effect from 01.01.2015. The Code aims to achieve sustainability through Good Agriculture Practice (GAP) and promote alternative or biological control strategies to gradually reduce dependence on chemicals. As on date, 37 PPFs are approved for use in Tea Plantations and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) have already prescribed the Minimum Residue Limits (MRLs) for 10 of such PPFs. Tea Research Institutes in India are entrusted to monitor the safe use of PPFs and educate planters in this regard. Tea Council of North India and Tea Council of South India constituted by the Tea Board regularly monitor the quality standards of tea exported from India as stipulated in the FSSAI standards.

In addition, the Tea Board extends financial assistance to tea industry for modernization of tea manufacturing units, warehouses, improve value addition of tea through blending, packing, tea bagging, flavor tea, setting up of units of specialty tea, quality certifications and for Organic/Orthodox/Green tea production.

Terrorists making efforts to set up terrorist training camps

†1135. SHRI LAL SINH VODODIA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that terrorists are making efforts to set up terrorist training camps in various parts of the country;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.