

**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;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, whether Government is considering to take any step to stop it; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIBHAI PARTHIBHAI CHAUDHARY): (a) to (c) Presently, there is no intelligence input/evidence to indicate that terrorists are making efforts to set up terrorist training camps in the hinterland of the country. However, during investigation of certain earlier bomb blast cases, it was noticed that physical/IEDs related training was imparted by leaders of some of the organizations to their cadres at various places in the country.

In order to counter terror activities, there exists close and effective coordination between intelligence and security agencies at the Centre and the State levels. The Multi Agency Centre (MAC) has been strengthened and re-organized to enable it to function on 24x7 basis for real time collation, analysing and sharing of intelligence with other intelligence agencies and States, which ensures seamless flow of information between the State and the Central agencies. This has resulted in busting of many terror modules in the country.

#### **Settlement of solar power trade dispute with US**

1136. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the US and India held talks to settle a long running solar power trade dispute, delaying the announcement of a ruling by the WTO;
- (b) whether the US initiated this dispute for the purpose of advancing the rapid development of clean, affordable energy in India and around the world;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the WTO has twice delayed the public announcement of a ruling in the case and WTO's Dispute Settlement Panel had confidentially notified the US that it would rule against India in the case; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRIMATI NIRMALA SITHARAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Talks were held between India and US to arrive at an amicable solution to the WTO dispute ruling against the Domestic Content Requirement (DCR) of India's Solar Energy Program.