

[19 July, 2004]

RAJYA SABHA

standards. There are no complaints regarding pesticide residue in teas exported from India to the European Union. The tea industry in India is well aware of the European Union regulations on pesticides and the producers of tea are cautious and are conforming to the maximum residue limits. It may also be mentioned that teas are produced in India in accordance with the quality standards prescribed under Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, which includes specifications for residue contents.

### **Representation by Coffee growers**

615. SHRI K.B. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been any representation from the Coffee growers from Karnataka to waive loans and to provide minimum support price for Coffee; and

(b) if so, the action, if any, taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGO VAN): (a) Government of India has received representations from coffee growers from Karnataka for providing certain relief including waiver of loans etc. to the coffee growers.

(b) The Government of India is aware of the difficulties being faced by the coffee growers due to the low prices of coffee and has taken a series of steps for the benefit of coffee growers. The steps include re-phasing/restructuring of loans taken by the coffee growers from commercial banks by way of Special Coffee Term Loan (SCTL), interest subsidy to large and small coffee growers on repayment of working capital loans taken from financial institutions, reduction of import duty on specified machinery for coffee sector to 5% to enable the industry to improve the quality and productivity of coffee for making it globally competitive. Commercial banks have also agreed to extend crop loans upto a maximum of Rs. 50 lakhs at 9% interest so as to benefit the coffee growers having land holdings upto 60 ha. In addition, the Government of India has also set up a Price Stabilisation Fund with a corpus of Rs. 500 crore for the benefit of tea, coffee, rubber and tobacco growers.