

(d) whether any discussion about the winding up process has been done with the Government of West Bengal;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) to (f) There is no proposal under consideration of the Government of India for winding up/shifting of Tea Board. This has been intimated to the Chief Minister of West Bengal in response to her letter dated 8th November, 2017.

Routing of tea output through auction system

967. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Tea Board of India wants 100 per cent of the country's tea output to be routed through the auction system;

(b) whether the auction route is the most secure way of marketing;

(c) whether the auction measure introduced last year to improve price realisation, may not have achieved its objective;

(d) whether the trade and industry sources were not very happy with the proposal saying that the low tea prices were not directly linked with the amount being offered in auctions; and

(e) if so, the corrective steps proposed in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) Consultation was done by the Tea Board with the stakeholders regarding the feasibility of 100 per cent sale of Tea through auction. However, such proposal is presently not under consideration of the Government of India.

(b) to (e) Auction in Tea has historically and traditionally seen to be the most appropriate method of ensuring actual price discovery in a competitive manner. The Pan India e-Auction was implemented by Tea Board after several rounds of discussions with the concerned stakeholders to overcome the limitations of the existing auction process such as prevalence of different rules in various auction centers, restrictive participation of buyers, cancellation of deal after knocking down of lots, prevalence of proxy bidding system, manual intervention in post auction

processes, etc. The average price realization of teas after introduction of Pan India e-auction has increased from ₹ 289.47 in 2015 to ₹ 325.70 in 2016 in respect of Darjeeling Tea and from ₹ 134.06 in 2015 to ₹ 139.68 in 2016 in respect of other categories of Tea. However, the price rise and fall notwithstanding, the purpose of the e-auction is to provide a platform for genuine price discovery and not a means of facilitating a rise/decline in prices.

New policy for development of salt manufacturers

968. SHRI SHANKARBHAI N.VEGAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has come out with the new policy to develop salt-manufacturers and for the industry; and

(b) the details of the welfare fund for the salt manufacturers and their families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Details of welfare fund/financial assistance for welfare of salt workers engaged in the salt manufacturing are given in the Statement.

Statement

Details of welfare fund/financial assistance for welfare of salt workers engaged in the salt manufacturing.

Government through the Office of Salt Commissioner (SCO), Jaipur has *inter-alia* taken following steps for welfare of salt workers engaged in the salt manufacturing by providing welfare fund/financial assistance:

- Water supply schemes including provisions of water coolers, storage tanks, water tankers mounted on trailers.
- Construction of labour rest shed, crèches, toilets etc.
- Provision of augmentation of medical facilities including conducting general health cum eye camps.
- Provision of community centers and recreation facilities including organization of sports meets, installation of TV sets etc.
- Provision of augmentation of educational facilities for the children of salt workers employed in the salt industry including grant of rewards to meritorious children of salt workers for purchase of books etc.