

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.

- Labour housing, subject to the provision of the schemes formulated in this regard.
- Provision of supplying bi-cycles for salt workers.
- Provision for supplying safety kits containing gloves, cap, goggles, gumboots etc. to the salt workers

During the financial year 2017-18, ₹ 30 lakh has been earmarked under the head “Scheme for Salt Workers”

Promotion of exports by MSMEs

969. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether promotion of exports by MSMEs is part of Government's foreign trade policy;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) what are the highlights of mid term review of foreign trade policy; and
- (d) what are the policy changes contemplated based on this review?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government's Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) recognizes the contribution of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in exports. MSMEs contribute about 45 percent of the manufacturing output, over 40 per cent of the total exports of the country, and around 8 percent of the country's GDP.

- (i) The Foreign Trade Policy supports the MSMEs by offering specific incentives such as Interest Equalization scheme, under which all exporters who are MSMEs across all ITC (HS) codes are granted 3% rate subvention for pre and post shipment Rupee Export Credit with effect from 1st April, 2015 for five years.
- (ii) Further, the Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS) under the FTP incentivizes exports of all notified products manufactured/ produced in India including those manufactured/produced by MSMEs by granting duty credit scrips at the rate of 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7% of the FOB value of exported goods.
- (iii) Under the FTP the exporters achieving exports beyond a threshold limit are granted Status Recognition which entitles them for certain privileges like faster clearance of goods by customs and provision for free of cost