

Request for restoration of Gatiman Goods Train

SHRI P.K. MAHESHWARI (Madhya Pradesh): The decision of the Ministry of Railways to discontinue the highly successful experiment of "GATIMAN GOODS TRAIN" from Madhya Pradesh to other destinations is very unfortunate. The demand for goods to be moved by the Railways in the country is the only profitable measure, since the road infrastructure in the country is not up to the mark. Therefore, only Railways are in a position to carry goods from one corner of the country to the other. "Customer focus" is the key for survival of any organization, so, a right vision would benefit the Railways and prospective customers, at the same time. A new thinking must start at corporate level so that successful experiments like "Gatiman Goods Train" do not die untimely death. Madam, this had earned crores of rupees for the Railways which has been discontinued now.

Decline in price level of tea

SHRI CO. POULOSE (Kerala): My submission is regarding the price level of tea. The declining trend in the prices of agricultural and especially plantation crops has severely hit the living condition of the agricultural population and plantation labourers in the country in general, especially, in the State of Kerala. The Government decision to lift the QRS has opened the floodgates to import, putting various indigenous agricultural sectors in doldrums, thereby, increasing the rural unemployment manifold. In Kerala, many tea gardens and plantations stopped their production and other operations, rendering thousands of labourers jobless. The families of these helpless labourers are presently living under near famine conditions. Many of the small-scale tea garden owners have left their plantations, because of their incapability to manage their estates.

Tea is currently selling at prices much lower than its cost of production. The situation is such that the price level may further go down and the situation may become grave.

Therefore, the Government should come forward to take necessary steps to protect the plantation industry, in general, and, especially, tea gardens.

SHRI M.P. ABDUSSAMAD SAMADANI (Kerala)-I associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.

SHRI TARINI KANTA ROY (West Bengal): I associate myself with what the hon. Member has said.