

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 3617
TO BE ANSWERED ON 17th MARCH, 2021

PLANTATION CROPS

3617. ADV. DEAN KURIAKOSE :

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE & INDUSTRY** (वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री) be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that many plantation crops like rubber, tea, coffee, spices etc. are currently passing through an unusually difficult phase, with low prices combined with high cost of production;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has received any proposal with regard to re-classifying of plantation crops as agriculture commodities from the ensuing census and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government is aware that the farmers are heading towards a heavy debt trap and if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the details of loan waiver given to the farmers of the country during the last three years?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI)

(a) to (b) : Like other crops, the plantation crops namely, rubber, tea, coffee and spices are sensitive to fluctuation in the cost of various inputs like raw materials, wages and the demand-supply

scenario. For better price realization for plantation crops, the Government has taken various initiatives through the respective commodity boards, by way of providing financial and technical assistance to growers and the industry for new planting, re-plantation, rejuvenation, quality up-gradation, value addition and market promotion through the schemes implemented by the these Boards.

During the current year 2020-21, tea auction prices have shown an upward revision with an increase of Rs.59.92 per kg (43.17%) from April 2020 to February 2021. Similarly, during recent months, the monthly average International Coffee Organization composite indicator prices are showing an upward trend from 109.70 US cents/lb in November 2020 to 119.35 US cents/lb during February, 2021. The average price of RSS 4 grade rubber is also showing an upward trend from Rs.115.73 per kg in May 2020 to Rs.156.04 per kg during February 2021. Spices prices are ruling at comparatively higher levels for most of the major spices.

(c) : There is no proposal with regard to re-classifying plantation crops as agriculture commodities from the ensuing census.

(d) to (e) : Government of India has not announced any farm loan waiver during the last three years.

Government/Reserve Bank of India (RBI), have taken various policy measures to ease the financial stress caused by COVID 19 disruptions, by providing relief on debt servicing and improving access to working capital. RBI vide its circulars dated 17th April 2020, have permitted all commercial banks to grant a moratorium till 31st August 2020, on payment of all instalments in respect of term loans (including agricultural term loans, retail and crop loans). The repayment schedule for such loans, as also the residual tenor, have been allowed to be shifted across the board.
