

CONTEMPORARY

TEA TIME

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TEA JOURNAL WITH THE LARGEST READERSHIP 33rd YEAR OF PUBLICATION

*The
Family
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Advisers : Nayana Goradia and Lal Raisinghani
Executive Editor : A Nandkeolyar
Correspondent (Bangladesh) : Monjur Hossain
Mailing Address : Editorial & Marketing Office, 1 Old Court House
 Corner, 2nd Floor, Kolkata- 700001 Phone: +91 33 2230 7241 / 7242
 Mobile : 9830454544.
E-mail: pkg@contemporary.co.in
Branches : • Guwahati - A Sarmah, 2A Central Point
 (opp. Bora Service Station), G S Road, Ulubari, Guwahati- 781007,

Phone: 0361 252 4253/252 2052.
E-mail : ase@contemporary.co.in
 • Siliguri - Angshuman De, STAC Building Mallaguri, Pradhan
 Nagar. Siliguri- 734403.
 Phone: 0353 251 3095/3521
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E-mail: paruccofoundry@gmail.com, rudra_parucco@rediffmail.com, Website: www.paruccofoundry.com

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UAE has fast become a large trading hub for tea in the Middle East region, with Indian exports to the Emirates rising to 42.37 million kilograms worth Rs 1,276 crore, overtaking exports to the Russian Fed at 41.11 million kilograms worth Rs 677 crore. Last year, the UAE imported 17.26 million kilograms, worth Rs 430 crore.

Teas are exported to various Middle Eastern countries from here.

In our next issue we will carry a feature on the Dubai market and explore the potential for Indian Teas, both orthodox and CTC varieties.

Many countries in this region consume teas without milk and there has been marked preference for teas from south India. At similar price points are the Dooars- and Terai-bought leaf produce, the normal variety. Perhaps there exists a greater opportunity for them in the export market as well?

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The executive editor, Contemporary Tea Time
Editorial & Marketing Office : Contemporary Brokers Pvt. Ltd.
 1, Old Court House Corner, 2nd Floor, Kolkata - 700 001
 West Bengal, India
 Phone: +91 033 2230 7241/7242
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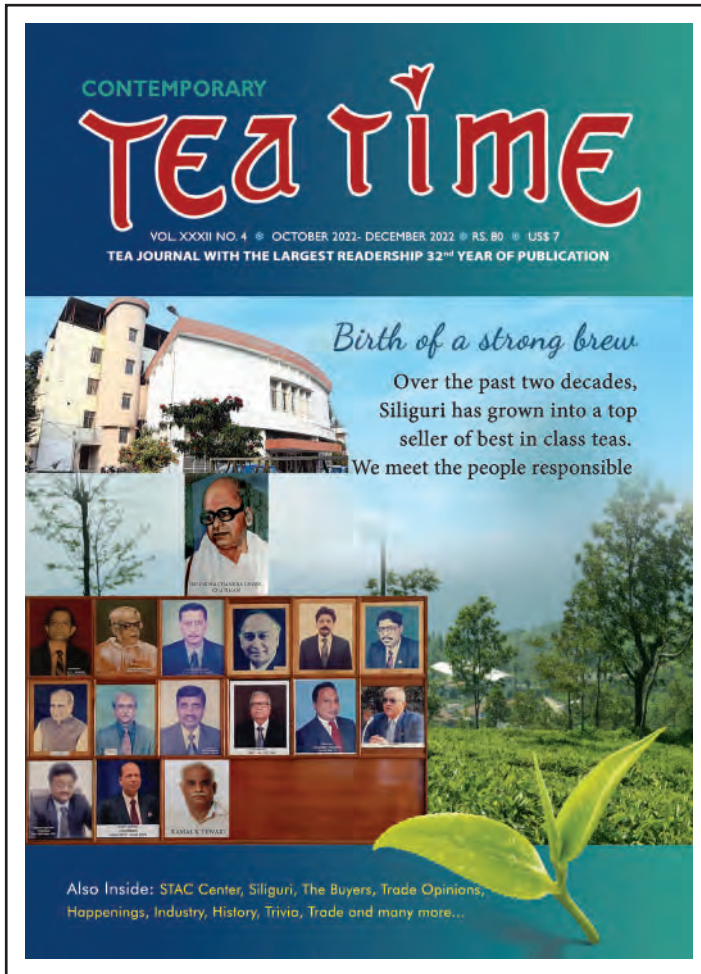
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QUIZ



Errol O'Brien



QUESTIONS

1. Why are the entrances to the traditional Japanese Tea Ceremony set low?
2. What are the functions of a Tea Sommelier besides discussing and describing the flavour of tea?
3. Which tea term is taken from the name of Josef Kamel, a Czech-born Jesuit missionary who worked in the Philippines and a Latin word meaning 'from China'?
4. Who coined the term: 'Direct from the tea garden to the tea Pot'?
5. What is the legend behind the name of the highly prized Da Hong Pao tea from China?
6. Because of its hardness this plant was once used as an alternative to grass on the lawns of Buckingham Palace. It is also famous for being a cure for insomnia. Name this plant.
7. Strong tea, burnt toast and Magnesium Oxide mixed in a 1:2:1 was considered a useful mixture in what context?
8. Name the group of agitators in the tea circles, which not only boycotted unions but also refused to let men join the strike as they are easily influenced by liquor and sell out to the management.
9. Why is High Tea designated by that name?
10. What is the moniker given to the 'most valuable teapot in the world' as designed Nirmal Sethia of Newby, London?

1. Bowing one's head and crawling to enter symbolises the casting off of pride and acceptance of humility.
2. To suggest appropriate tea and food pairing.
3. CamelliaSinesis
4. Sir Thomas Lipton
5. Da Hong Pao literally translated 'Big Red Robe', alludes to the legend of the tea curing the illness of a Ming Dynasty dowager empress and the emperor sent four big red robes to cover the tea bushes.
6. Chamomile.
7. As a universal antidote to ingested poison.
8. Pombal!Orunai in 2015 at the Kanan Devan Hills Plantation pressing for better financial conditions.
9. High Tea was a meal usually taken at the end of a work day by the English working class. This substantial meal was taken sitting at the high dining table, sitting on high chairs, as opposed to afternoon teas sitting at low coffee tables.
10. The Egoist – so named because it can only hold one cup of tea.

ANSWERS



Vikram Tea: Living up to a Legacy

A young man goes out to see the world, works hard, makes his fortune and builds a flourishing legacy. A good story, come to life in the success of Vikram Tea.



Bhaishree Rameshbhai Patel, Founder, Vikram Tea (L);
Bhavesh Patel (R), Managing Director, Vikram Tea

In the outskirts of a small town in Mararashtra, lies an expansive industrial complex. It occupies thousands of square meters and dominates the surrounding scrub land like a lying colossus. This is the home of the Vikram Tea Processing Plant. Supporting hundreds of employees, this place has been a fixture in the landscape of Jalna district in Maharashtra since the early 1990s. It's interesting to think that it might not exist if not for a stop on the way to a pilgrimage and the

astute observational ability of one Rameshbhai Chhotabhai Patel.

Bhaishree, as Mr. Rameshbhai Patel is known affectionately to his friends and family, is rather a well-known figure in the tea circle of the central and south parts of the country. He is known as a soft-spoken gentleman, a charismatic industry leader who rose from a grass-roots beginning in a small farming village in Gujarat to shine brightly in a very competitive field. Customers,



Mass marriage sponsored by the Patel family

suppliers and employees alike have been impressed with him for his gentlemanly demeanour. His birthplace is a small farming village in Gujarat called Bochasan, where poverty, endemic to the region, limited his academic career to a secondary level. But it didn't stamp out Rameshbhai Patel's desire to succeed.

The entrepreneurial journey began in 1967 when he left his village to work in the Kolkata office of a fellow-villager who was a tea vendor. His first job in the tea industry was as an attendant who brewed and served tea to the customers. The work was long and tiring, to say the least. His salary for the duration of his service was nothing more than two meals a day and a shelter for the night. Still, it seemed not to have been an entirely useless grind. Those years taught him about the very basics of tea and customer service. We find reflection of this in his own words: "Give ₹ 1.50 worth of tea experience to the customer if he gives you ₹ 1." In 1974, Mr Patel left this job to work for Mr. Jayantibhai Patel in Bilaspur, where he stayed for seven years, and gathered invaluable experience about blending tea.

They say opportunities always knock for those who are ready to receive them. During a trip to Tirupati in 1974, Rameshbhai Patel happened to stop at Jalna to visit Ajantha-Verul. While walking around town, he quickly noticed the lack of the loose, unbranded tea that he was familiar with in Kolkata and Bilaspur. Everyone was using the similar He had an 'eureka' moment where he could quite clearly see a large market for blended tea. With the help of his friends Kiranbhai Patel and Jayantibhai Patel, he started his tea business in 1975. In the beginning, he sold his tea in and around Jalna on foot. His blended teas were targeted at specific customers – he spoke to people and learned the tastes of the region, whether they like strong or mild, and their spending habits.

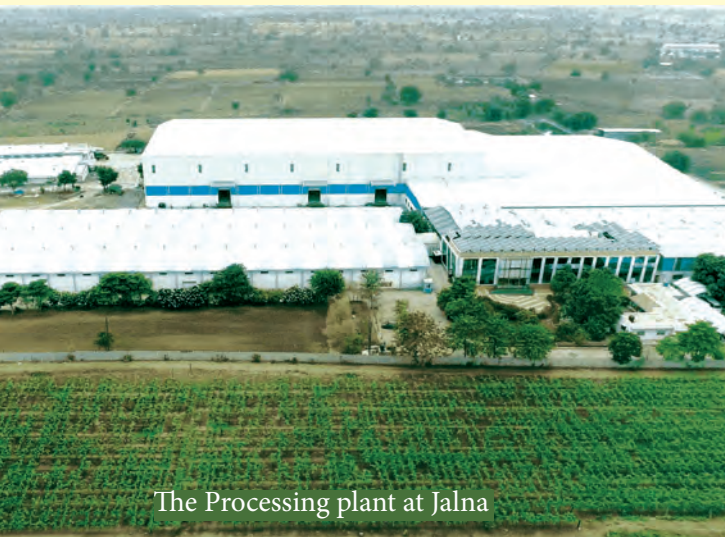




Eventually he started using a bicycle to travel all over from Jalgaon to Marathwada buying and selling tea. He was slowly able to create a sales network with a distinctive identity 'Rameshbhai Ki Chai' in Jalna and the surrounding districts. In 1990, the first production unit of the company was established and the brand was named Vikram Tea after the erstwhile popular TV show 'Vikram-Vetal'. The goal was to become a household name like its eponym.

It's not too much to say that the initial success of the business depended wholly on the hard labour of Mr. Patel. Bhavesh Patel, his son and the current managing director of the Bhaishree

showcased well in the growth of his company from one man and a bicycle to an 850 crore company. Both he and his son and successor, Mr. Bhavesh Patel, attribute their achievements to their consciousness of the human factor. In the beginning, Mr. Patel worked tirelessly to build up a reliable distribution network. The low-income demographic was not ignored; Mr. Patel introduced 1 rupee and 50 paise packs for their convenience. Several of the products under the Vikram umbrella – 'Vikram', 'Titli', 'Lion', 'Rupa', 'Vikram Gold', 'Vikram Classic', etc. have become recognisable brands in many parts of the country.



The Processing plant at Jalna

Group, said in a conversation with Tata Nexarc, that his father "started the business with Rs 700 and sold tea on cycle. My father used to sell tea blends at railway stations, used to go door-to-door, slept at railway stations for two years. With his earnings, he set up a small retail shop on rent in Jalna. Whatever he earned during that time went in expanding the retail shop and the footprints of the tea business." Bhavesh adding "he used to source tea from Jalgaon every day, blend it and sell." The network he built and the good-will and recognition he gained from his customers became the basis of later success.

Rameshbhai Patel's business acumen is



De-silting Project at Ghanewadi Lake

Currently, Vikram Tea has also re-invigorated their line of products. They've introduced instant pre-mix teas to compliment the current urban lifestyle, as well as exotic flavours and gourmet teas in their Tea Tantra line. They also have several plants with the production capacity of 60 tons per day and a large network of stockists and distributors all over central and southern India. Since the early 2000s they have diversified into other fields successfully as the Bhaishree Group.

Bhavesh Patel joined the family business in 1996 at a comparatively young age – it can be said that he has matured into a successful entrepreneur along with the modernization of the company. From a traditional business to a modern corporation is not a transition that is easy to make. We spoke to him about his experience and his aspirations.

TEA TIME

- Q.** The childhood of the son of an entrepreneur is very different from those of children from families with 9 to 5 jobs. Can you tell us a bit about your experience in this respect?
- A.** Business is 24 x 7 Job, this is something I understood from childhood. I always saw him working hard for the success in his profession to give us a better education and life. So we (the family) couldn't get much time with him.
- Q.** You started working at a young age. Did youth hinder you at all when you started taking leadership roles? What were the changes you hoped to see in the company that you have realised and which are still to be realised?
- A.** At the age of 19, I joined my father's company to support him. Yes at that time there was always a fear in my mind – if I do this or that, what if it goes wrong. So one day father taught me that in making decisions there can be 2 results – it may be RIGHT OR WRONG, but the decision must be made. When I entered into business that time, I was determined that all work should be systematic, planned, well-organised, which as a company we achieved 100% while keeping the trust in quality and service towards our consumers. I think whatever I achieved is only 5% only, still 95% has to be achieved yet.
- Q.** The pandemic in the recent past has affected every business to a greater or lesser degree. How did Vikram Tea cope with it? In a business where WFH is largely not possible, how did it affect the way you and your company worked?
- A.** Yes, at the start of Covid there was no clear list of rules and regulations to follow about what to do and how to do it. After 4 days we got some clarity about the situation and started the work of productions. Along with managers and workers we camped at the



factory itself for 10 days and we managed to supply Vikram tea smoothly all our valuable customers.

- Q.** The steady rise of your company has a lesson to be learned. What advice would you give to young entrepreneurs at this time?
- A.** I am not that big on giving advice to anyone. I can only say that success will come if one is motivated to work hard.

The Patels, as a family, are very conscious of their social responsibility. They give back to their community in the many charitable activities they host – about health, education, women's empowerment, water conservation and even mass marriages. They have continued and expanded these activities under the leadership of Mr. Bhavesh Patel. The Bhaishree Foundation, the charitable arm of the Bhaishree Group, is especially concerned with the desilting and rehabilitation of Ghanewadi Lake, which is the water source for Jalna town.

The success story of Vikram Tea reflects its adaptability to the changing times and tastes of the people, while remaining true to the essence of service which was the cornerstone of Rameshbhai C. Patel's career. The current trajectory of the company shows that they plan to continue on their path of reconciling the old-fashioned hard work with modern innovation.

The Journey of

COVER STORY



Bikram Tea

The business acumen of Mr. Purojit Bakshi is an example for many aspiring entrepreneurs. Born in Jalpaiguri, West Bengal, he graduated from Calcutta University as a Civil Engineer and worked with an MNC, Head Wrightson, in Kolkata. He was posted to Kolkata and Haldia for his job.

He then decided to take a leap of faith and start his own business, in the year 1978. He started with a land of 125 acres in the same year and gradually expanded it to 138 acres. He once again showed his adventurous and pioneering spirit, as he set up his Green Tea factory in 1995, when green tea was a barely-known commodity in the India market.

He outsourced Rs 100 per kg green leaves for production. In 2005, he setup his CTC factory, and won the award for the highest sold quantity from the Auction Committee that year.

Mr. Bakshi is the former Vice Chairperson of Jalpaiguri Tea Auction Committee, and currently holds the posts of the General Secretary of the North Bengal Chamber of Commerce and

Industry (NBNCCI) and Executive Committee member of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BNCCI) and also an active committee member of the Tea Board.

His late father, Mr. Bikram Bakshi, was also inclined towards business and hence, the name 'Bikram Tea' is kept to honor him.

Currently, Mr. Bakshi is producing approximately Rs. 6.5 to 7 lakhs of green tea and Rs. 11 to 12 lakhs of CTC tea per year. He has outsourced green leaves for both CTC and green tea production. His own leaf quantity (STG) is 3 lakhs per kg (average).

He is also into the packaging business and has three brands – Duranto, Bambi and Bikram Tea.



Mr. Purojit Bakshi





From left to right , Mr. Sourattam Bakshi Gupta, Mr. Purojit Bakshi and Purottam Bakshi

He has set up two factories – Bikram Tea, located in Jalpaiguri and Duranto under Tapaban Agro Industries, located a few minutes from Lataguri, which he began in 2020.

Besides his successful business life, Mr. Bakshi loves playing cricket in his leisure time. He also likes listening to classical music and Rabindra Sangeet. He has, predictably, a love of nature and loves gardening and growing flowers. His long-standing passion for cricket has led him to be much involved in the sport. He was the Jalpaiguri Town Club Captain in his engineering days. An active player in college, he was a part of many winning teams. He continues to enjoy and promote the game of cricket through various initiatives. Currently, he is the Vice President of the District Sports Association.

He is currently running his business with his sons and daughter-in-law. His sons, Purottam Bakshi and Sourattam Bakshi, are looking after the packaging and manufacturing business



Mr. Sourattam Bakshi Gupta and Mrs. Nabami Bakshi

respectively. His daughter-in-law, Mrs. Nabami Bakshi, has also completed her agricultural studies from Delhi and is now actively participating in the business.



By Ena Bandyopadhyay
Contributor :
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TEA TIME

Ek Pyali Aur:

ITF Convenes in Siliguri



The biennial conference for the tea industry takes place under the aegis of CII, with attendees from all phases of the industry.



The 8th India Tea Forum (ITF), organized by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) saw a gala opening in Siliguri on the 10th of January, 2023. The participation from inside the industry, as well as the presence of several international diplomats lent dignity and momentum to the occasion. More than 300 planters attended this conference along with representatives of various brokers, exporters, auction houses, industrial manufacturers and associated services.

The chairman of India Tea Forum and the CII NB Tea Panel Mr. Ravi Agarwal spoke about the need to encourage efforts which can let the demand and supply in the tea industry come to an equilibrium. He also highlighted the theme of the program “One

More Cup – Ek Pyali Aur...Ho Jaye”. “Tea is the best healthy drink for Indian youth and it can help increase domestic consumption”, he asserted as he spoke about emphasizing the health benefits of tea among the younger consumers. Mr. Agarwal, very pertinently, observed that strengthening the global distribution networks will certainly positively affect both production and sales of Indian tea.

Several diplomats from Bangladesh, Nepal and Britain were also present for the occasion and addressed the attendees. Mr. Nick Low, the British Deputy High Commissioner, Kolkata, referred to the English love for tea lightheartedly and mentioned the deep historical connection between the two



countries which became the basis for a prosperous bi-lateral exchange. Sustainability was also an issue of emphasis at this forum. Mr. Andalib Elias, the Deputy High Commissioner from Bangladesh, said, “When we talk about sustainability, we talk about responsibility”. Mr. Elias’ concerns about the sustainable development in the tea growing regions of both countries were shared by many others in the industry as it became a much-deliberated topic in the panel discussions of the forum. The topic of mutually beneficent sustainable development was also a significant part of the comments from Mr. Eshor Raj Poudel, Consul General, Nepal.

Among the invitees, were such industry leaders as Mr Sanjay Shah, Chairman of the All India Tea Traders Association, who echoed Mr. Agarwal’s praise of tea as a drink with medicinal benefits, and called for more vigorous dissemination of this information to the masses. He also expressed his appreciation for brands who are branching out into innovative ways of packaging and consuming tea. It is hoped that this experimentation will bring more engagement between the industry and the public. Mr. Pradeep Purohit, the Chairman of CII North Bengal Zonal Council suggested that new technology might lead to bigger and better things for Indian tea as it would be more visible in the modern global market.

Different facets of the industry were amply represented in this conference. Owners of niche brands and large auction houses alike met and discussed the common concerns facing the tea industry today, such as the rising cost of production, enhancing exports of tea to virgin areas, stability for small tea growers, increasing domestic consumption and promoting tea as a health drink. Rajeev Baid, attendee and founder and managing director of Chai Chun tea boutique & Okayti Tea Estate said, “As someone who has been in the industry for more than a decade, I second the forum’s call of ‘one more cup, ek aur pyaali ho jaaye’. We were hit by a pandemic recently and there are high chances that another wave might be on its way. In moments like this, tea presents a miraculous way into human health and boosts one’s immunity. The new-age teas like herbal and floral teas present an opportunity for better health in the most flavorful way.”

The veteran’s words reflect the optimistic bent of mind among the tea fraternity of North Bengal amidst fears of impending economic downturn in the international market. Their outlook shows their confidence in the tea they produce which is recognized all over the world.



“The Future of Tea”:

GLOBAL DUBAI TEA FORUM Re-convenes in 2023

After a five year-long COVID-induced hiatus, the DMCC (Dubai Multi Commodities Centre, billed as the world’s foremost free zone) is organising the Global Dubai Tea Forum (GDTF) once again. This conference for the tea industry will be held in The Address Dubai Marina Hotel from April 25th to 27th. Considered to be an

important networking event, it is expected to be well-attended by experts and leaders in the tea industry. In its past iterations GDTF has always seen ample representation from every aspect of the industry, from growers to packers to marketers to consumers.

The theme of the 2023 GDTF is “Unpacking the Future of Tea: From consumer trends to new market opportunities”, which aims to explore the new direction of the industry. With an increasingly interconnected global market place, the industry can hope to open up new customer bases, which in turn can fuel innovation in flavour and introduce new ways of consuming a much beloved beverage. But restricted transport because of the pandemic, economic pressures of a possible recession in developed countries and changing weather patterns all over the world, present new challenges to contend with. This forum will encourage the exchange of views and insights so the industry may face these interesting times with aplomb.





MONGEET 2023 FEATURE 'AHAROR AKHOLI'

The Mongeet Festival, held on January 14th to 17th, saw a welcome addition to its repertoire music, poetry, dance and fine arts, in the form of Chef Atul Lahkar's masterclass to talk about food conservation, identification of ingredients, modern cooking methods in relation to indigenous techniques, and ways to promote regional cuisine.

The idea behind Atul's three-day workshop, starting January 12, is simple: It aims at "making our traditional food popular. That will help younger generations learn about it; the moment they learn, they will begin to protect it. When there is demand, it will restore the livelihood of indigenous people who survive on traditional methods such as *dhuwa saang* (smoking meats and fish), and by collecting edible herbs and helping us differentiate useful plants from weeds." Atul's idea is to pass on the knowledge of the past to the future generations so as to preserve not only the cooking techniques unique to the region, but also the ingredients which are being lost due to deforestation or simply ignored for having no place in the current mass market consumer mentality.

Khulasaporir Pitha with Lal Saah (Red Tea)



Tea tasting in at the 1st Arunachal Tea Festival

LOVE OF TEA IN ARUNACHAL

The First Arunachal Tea Festival, organised by the Arunachal Pradesh Agriculture Marketing Board, was held on Valentine's Day this year at the Lhoba Resort on the outskirts of Pasighat, along the Siang River. Arunachal Pradesh agriculture and horticulture minister Tage Taki, who inaugurated the event, spoke about the need to move towards a fully organic cultivation techniques in the local tea estates. Tea-lovers and tea-growers gathered to discuss new ideas for growth and blending process. Sessions on tea blending and tasting of various teas grown in the Arunachal region, led by veteran tea taster Dr. Romen Gogoi, were well attended.

The event highlighted the legacy of tea within the indigenous communities in Arunachal Pradesh. The Singpho and Tangsa people traditionally brew tea inside bamboo tubes – this is known as phalap and is still regularly consumed today.



The 4th STAC held on





Sports Carnival 09.02.2023.



TEA TIME

The Calcutta Tea Traders' Association had an eventful new year with their 125th Annual General Meeting in December and the Annual Picnic in January.

CTTA 125th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 22nd December 2022, at Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



**CTTA Annual Picnic held on 28th January, 2023
at Merlin Greenes, Amtala.**





TRA Tocklai releases Sycanus for pest control

The Tea Research Association made new strides in the field of bio-pest control as they released *Sycanus Collaris* at the Ecological Heaven at TRA Tocklai on 17th February. *Sycanus* is a species of assassin bug with a good record as a bio-agent in teak, marigold and tea cultivation. It is a natural predator of many major tea pests such as termites, helopeltis and looper. Leaders present

at the occasion such as TRA Chair Nayantara Palchoudhuri, Atul Asthana, Vice Chairman (TRA), P. K. Bezboruah, the former Chair (TRA), were optimistic about the direction of research in the future. They whole-heartedly support the promotion and use of organic and nature-based pest control in tea cultivation.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP AND OTHER PARTICULARS ABOUT THE NEWSPAPER ENTITLED CONTEMPORARY TEA TIME, AS REQUIRED TO BE PUBLISHED IN THE FIRST ISSUE OF EVERY YEAR AFTER LAST DAY OF FEBRUARY.

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I, A Nandkeolyar hereby declare that the particulars given below are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: 01-03-2019

A Nandkeolyar

Publisher



Letter to the Editor

All four manufactured altogether

Dear Editor

Let us say, there would be a bud and three leaves in an average plucked leaf. The bud should be covered with silvery pubescent hair. There could be some similar hair also on the first leaf, especially if it were from a young bush of a tender jat. Then the second leaf followed by a more mature third leaf.

The four are of different maturity and size and usually they are carried or transported in the same basket, weighed together, withered together for the same length time in the same degree of temperature or heat. By the time all the four (the bud and three leaves) are taken for rolling or are adequately withered, the bud and probably the first leaf, or a part of it, are over-withered, if not also dried.

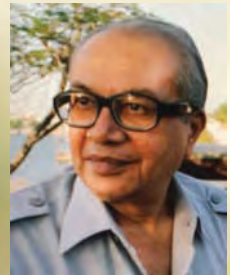
In any case, given the same warmth or heat for the same time, all the four would be differently withered. The bud is likely to lose all or most of its silvery hair and therefore most or all of its potential for producing tip (golden or silvery) would be lost. This is by the time the third leaf is adequately withered. What hair has survived would get damaged while the bulk is rolled or rotovaned. While supervising manufacture, it is unlikely that the person would realize that while the good black leaf would realize Rs. 300/- per kg, the golden tip could command up to Rs. 5000/- per kg. To earn such a premium, is it not worth moving heaven and earth?

Years ago, when I was active visiting gardens and factories in Assam, we carried out an experiment. We chose a small portion of a young section and deployed on it say 40 pluckers, divided into two batches. The first 20 were asked to pluck the buds and the first leaves which were still somewhat curled with silvery hair still on them. The second batch of 20 pluckers followed to pick the second and the third leaf.

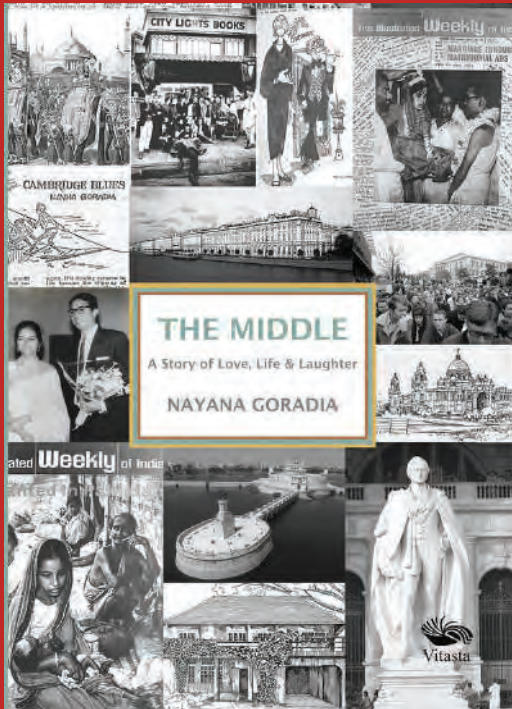
The two batches of harvest were manufactured separately as appropriate to their respective tenderness. The batch of buds turned out to be a blaze of chunky golden tip to the extent of at least 85 per cent, possibly 90, of the bulk. Imagine the quantity as well as the quality of chunky golden tip we had preserved and produced. Had the two batches been plucked, withered, fermented and fired together could we have salvaged more than say ten or twelve per cent, from young section? And of what quality?

In those days of active visits, there were no mechanical pluckers. Today there are a variety. Cannot one of them be developed to pluck the bud and the first leaf?

Yours,
Prafull Goradia



pic courtesy S.K. Mitra



■ Nayana Goradia in conversation with Mitakshara Kumari about her book **“The Middle: A Story of Love, Life & Laughter”** at the Bengal Club, Kolkata on 4th February. The meeting was presided over by Ms. Nandini Khaitan. Ms. Goradia kindly allowed us to publish an excerpt from her book which follows.



WITH PANDIT RAVI SHANKAR IN BEATNIKLAND

by *Nayana Goradia*

NORTH BEACH WAS BURSTING with young Americana dissenting, bizarre, occasionally coloured and frighteningly alive. Instead of wheezy old men coughing into the night, hirsute dilettantes ruminated in street corners, their eyes feverish with excitement. An art exhibition progressed on the pavement, the artist haggling over the price of his masterpiece with fierce energy.

The streets were ragged, as in many other poorer parts of the city, with windblown paper and dead autumn leaves, and the marching phalanx of dull brick houses along the road with smelly babies, unpaid bills and arthritic mothers-in-law. Nevertheless in pubs, barefooted contessas danced in uninhibited abandon to a sensuous Latin beat.

Through the mist-drenched streets we walked, charmed by the gay bohemianism of it all, past an exotic little Hungarian restaurant exploding masses of paprika and to poet Ferlinghetti's City Lights Bookstore where it all first began and which still sells everything from Kamasutra and banned pornography to a treatise by the venerable Archbishop of Canterbury.

North Beach claims to be a world that does not believe in Convention, where eccentric behaviour is an accepted norm of life; a world that has

amputated itself from the affluent American society. It seemed to be true. Certainly the grey-faced commuters we had earlier encountered caught up in the rush hour of office every morning and back home every evening, were at strange variance with this lotus eating fraternity who lounged in bed all day and awakened to freedom when the world slept.

To our unenlightened eye this freedom meant congregating in cafes, non-conforming over glasses of apple cider and the ardent pursuit of kindred souls of the opposite sex. To work in North Beach is tantamount to being enslaved and to work for money, a highly vulgar Idea.

We drifted into a poetry-reading. Guru-like, the bard was sprawled on a mat, smoking ganja. His half-closed eye seemed to brood over the futility of labour. Around him sat a group of intense young disciples as in an Upanishadic ashram with rough woolen mufflers around their unshaven cheeks.

With heavy solemnity he sang about mankind trapped by a success-obsessed society. He enjoined on his listeners to break away before it was too late and to plunge headlong into the Pure Ecstatic Experience. Little of this made much sense to us. But we need not have worried for it was not supposed to. A painted sign on the wall read: "There is method only in madness".

Beats are cheaper by the dozen in North Beach but our poet gave us full value of the experience of meeting one. To look at he was like a tourist guide illustration of the species. He adhered to the convention of non-conformity with great enthusiasm. He was heavily bearded and clad in appropriately smelly, scruffy clothes. His eyes

TEA TIME

were fanatic and his smile utterly patronising. From time to time he would pause and fix us with his jaundiced Brahmanic eye. We were clearly untouchables, bound as we were by a life of clean, healthy habits, annual visits to the dentist and holidays by the sea.

Considerably subdued we crept out and into a restaurant next door for coffee, sympathy and rehabilitation of our scattered self-confidence. Here there was little of that sepulchral gloom. A bunch of onions and copper kettles hung from the ceiling over checked tablecloths, with candles in empty Chianti bottles dripping wax.

There were no chairs, only scratchy, splintery benches sawed by a raw hand. With a happy little bump we had descended from the sublime to the earthly plane. Nevertheless, in keeping with the strict protocol of beatnikland revolt against established convention the place was warmed by six charcoal burners as a protest against the crass mechanisation of central heating.

Huddled besides these improvised fires sat poets, writers, critics, sycophants, drop-outs, Marxists, drug addicts, professors, Zen Buddhists, jazz makers, schizophrenics and frauds, who are successful door-to-door salesmen of detergents by day. They talked, ate and drank late into the night. This activity was invested with a kind of feverish urgency as though that time was running out and that the grappling hooks of reality—money to pay the rent and the next meal—would catch up with them. Till then they abandoned themselves to a gay subterranean orgy.

Oblivious to the sound and fury sat a demure old

man jotting down strange, cabalistic signs on a scrap of paper. Plump with rounded pink cheeks and dressed in full academic regalia, he was lost in a world of his own. An obliging beatnik from the next table explained that he was formerly a senior professor of mathematics at a well-known American university and about to be nominated for the Nobel Prize when, all of a sudden, Buddha-like, he was appalled by the futility of it all. Promptly he renounced his home and position to live in the wilderness of beatnikland. We lingered over our coffee, a little reluctant to return to the chill pragmatism outside, when a young man from a nearby table detached himself from his friends and folding his hands together a quaint little namaskar said, "I am delight to meet you, Pandit Ravi Shankar."

Somewhat surprised by this adulation an unexpected quarter—for the maestro was so well known in the U.S.A then—Ravi Shankar replied: "Thank you, young friend. Are you a student of music?"

"No," came the short reply.

Perhaps you are studying at the university in Berkeley, then?"

No. Again the uncompromising answer.

"What then?" exclaimed Ravi Shankar, considerably perplexed. Initially the inquiry had only been a form of conventional Indian courtesy. The cagey reply had aroused curiosity. "What are you, young man? I mean, what do you do?"

"Do?" cried the beat in great horror. Drawing himself up to his full height he said with scornful patronage, "I am, Sir a Human Being!"

The Statesman, July 4, 1971



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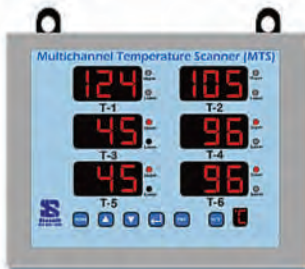
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Team Center



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Famous Watering Holes – The Shillong Club

Dublin-born Richard Harte Keating, the first Chief Commissioner of Assam was the inspiration behind setting up of The Shillong Club on 7th of September 1878, one of the oldest clubs of the country. The erstwhile Government allotted Lot no.12, a 6.5 acres of land in the heart of Shillong town which became the address of the well-known landmark today.

Major T. J. Williams, the first executive engineer of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills prepared the plans for the iconic building and grounds. He personally supervised the whole construction works. The building was ready for occupation in six months.

The Club, in those days was mainly a recreational centre for the civil service officers, army officers and tea planters. The Club was patronised by the Tea Planters of Assam province and they donated liberally to the Club. Incidentally, Keating

Road in Shillong is named after the same Chief Commissioner who later rose to the rank of Lt. General. He died in Horsham, Sussex in 1904.

The Club building was reconstructed after the great earthquake of 1897. This building was again destroyed by a fire on the 10th January, 1927. A new building was constructed which was again gutted in a fire on the 13th February, 1962. The present building was built in 1962.

The buildings have fallen due to disasters – natural or man-made – but the Club goes on as a ship of Theseus – a carrier of the history and legacy of the town.



By Rajdeep Basumatari
Contributor :
Contemporary Brokers





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Darjeeling: Is the brand in hot water?

As one of the most recognisable names in tea, Darjeeling faces a slew of problems in the changing economic landscape. Read Ritwik Mukherjee's incisive and candid analysis of the situation and explore some solutions to be found therein.

They sound like clichés: Darjeeling teas are the best in the world; they are the “Champagne of Teas”; they are the world’s most expensive teas; At one level, all these statements remain true. But on closer examination, these exaggerated descriptions almost mock the harsh reality that exists at these gardens. Many of them are losing money, they have little control over the geographical indication “Darjeeling Tea”, and the future, for many, seems bleak.

Now with several organised players in the industry entering the fray, the flavoured tea market is growing at a fast clip in India. These teas are particularly popular in the 18- 35 years age group. The demand for such functional teas has increased in the country particularly after the onset of Covid-19, as tea augmented with spices and natural herbs is known to boost immunity.

The size of the flavoured tea market in terms of volume and price is approximately 60 million kilograms and

Rs 3600 crore respectively. So, as of now, the flavoured tea market amounts to about 10 per cent of the entire packet tea consumption in India. It bears reminding, that flavoured tea is a tea with tea leaves as a base, and then flavour is added to it, to make the gustatory experience more interesting. Flavour in tea can be included in the form of inclusions such as spices, nuts, flowers, or as added flavour extracts such as essential oils of ginger, lemon and spices.

Consider this. For puritans, Luxmi Tea may have made a deviation from its legacy, strait-laced pure line of Darjeeling or Assam teas, rolling out a whole new line of fusion teas to match the tea-drinking whims of the health-conscious, globetrotting tea drinker. But for Rudra Chatterjee, managing director and the 3rd generation scion of Luxmi Tea owners, this was one of the key lessons he learnt from the pandemic. He realised that when it came to flavours, they had everything to add value to their teas; their own tea plantations have fruits and herbs which are available for adding flavour – so they created fusion teas with turmeric, basil, jasmine, lemon grass, gandharaj (scented lime) and so on.

But the question: ‘Why would one take good tea and ruin it with flavours?’





kept haunting him. And subsequently, he realised that the flavour of tea itself was changing. For example, their new turmeric tea blend, jasmine, basil, gandharaj named Citrus Sky – these were all very healthy teas and he realised why people were adapting to these fresh blends.

Tea itself is herbal and what Luxmi Tea or Makaibari are doing now- they are selling herbal tea highlighting more on the wellness, immunity booster aspects and the flavours. This is what is known as functional teas.

Madhav Sarada, Managing Director Golden Tips Tea, also says that the demand for premium teas has increased. These premium teas include immunity boosting - speciality and flavoured teas, and the younger generation is lapping them up. There is an increasing trend globally in the 20 - 45 yrs age group to shift towards immunity-boosting wellness branded teas. Such a shift is contributing to the growth of tea as a wellness beverage in India.

Since the last few years (post Pandemic), many new normals have emerged – like mindful eating and mindful drinking. These trends are being increasingly followed by people to improve their health and well-being. Mindfulness teaches us how to rely on our body's inherent ability to tell us when we are hungry or full, thirsty or not.

With immunity-boosting teas enriched with Ayurvedic ingredients like Ashwagandha, Tulsi, Turmeric, Moringa etc readily available online and in brick-and-mortar stores, customers are spoilt for choices. So, it would not be a misnomer

to say that augmented nutrition will be the mantra in the years to come, says Sarada.

As Darjeeling Tea sets out on this new journey, one must remember that the story of Darjeeling tea is almost 170 years old. It began when Dr A. Campbell, a British civil surgeon, planted tea seeds in his garden at Beechwood Estate, 7,000 ft above sea level, just for kicks. That simple (and largely unplanned) act laid the foundation for the world's most famous tea industry.

Decoding what is often known and described as 'champagne of tea' is as interesting and exciting as the product itself.

A Few facts first.

- According to Indian Tea Association (ITA), annual production in Darjeeling tea has drastically fallen from 12 million kg to 6sixmillion kg, with the primary reason being difficulty in re-plantation due to the hilly terrain and lack of expansion of the cultivation area in the region.
- The fall in output notwithstanding, the good news is that the first flush Darjeeling tea (green tea and white tea) fetched very good prices.
- Darjeeling tea is only 7 million kg market (all varieties taken together). So good quality Darjeeling tea market is even smaller. Ironically many people are finding it easy, convenient and making more business sense in focusing on tea tourism, tea resort, than concentrating on producing good quality Darjeeling tea.



TEA TIME

- On the supply chain side, there are several challenges faced by the Darjeeling tea industry. It is embroiled with issues like low wages, high cost of production and consistency in quality. The weather conditions are continuing to remain unpredictable because of global warming (tea production- both quality and quantity- needs nice and warm sunshine and at the same time good rainfall. If there is a shortfall of either of the two, both quality and quantity drops.). Tea prices remain a major concern for the industry, not having kept pace with increasing costs.
- A notification banning blends of imported tea in GI-tagged teas had almost pushed Tata Consumer Products, the biggest buyer, out of the market. A notification from Tea Board India issued last year to put brakes on imports has had an unexpected outcome: It had brushed off the biggest buyer of Darjeeling tea, Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL), and exacerbated the weakening financial condition of the fabled gardens that produce some of the best tea in the world.
- Fortunately, on October 18, 2022, the Tea Board of India amended its earlier notification that had completely banned the blending of Indian teas enjoying the geographical indications (GI) tags with imported ones. The previous ban had come as a dampener for top Indian tea buyers. In fact, buyers of the Darjeeling tea had stopped buying it following the ban. The reasons was simple. These buyers used to buy the Darjeeling tea and mix it with other varieties to sell it at a cheaper rate in the Indian market, as the pure Darjeeling tea is expensive. The ban had taken away this opportunity. So much as that more than 12 per cent of Darjeeling tea, which used to be bought by a single corporate buyer prior to the imposition of the ban on the blending, was forced to be sold at distressed price.



The ban on the blending of Indian teas enjoying GI tags with imported ones had also resulted in the major buyers dealing with blend teas to start procuring tea from Sri Lanka and Nepal.

- Apparently, Darjeeling tea is the first product from India to obtain a globally recognised Geographical Indication (GI) tag and logo. This brand of tea cannot be sold without the GI tag and the logo as well as using the 'Darjeeling tea' name for any other tea blend apart from the one produced in Darjeeling, is illegal. Darjeeling tea, as we all know, is a brand known worldwide. But just being a producer of world class tea would not do justice, if the mechanism to reach them out is inadequate. Once a brand is created in the minds of consumers, it needs to keep its promotional activities just not lose its brand power and thus its market share. 'Out of sight, out of mind,' hope this phrase rings a tune in decision makers' minds.
- The Bengal government intends to create around 30 brands of Darjeeling Tea which will become the flag bearers of this industry. The state government might identify selected estates which produce quality tea with a good global order book and help in branding initiatives of the produce from such gardens. The Centre has also narrowed down on a



similar plan where it proposes to identify one or two companies which can become the flag bearer of Indian tea.

- Many garden owners are finding it easy, convenient and making more business sense for them in focussing on tea tourism, tea resort, than concentrating on producing good quality Darjeeling tea. The irony of the brand name selling well, while the product languishes is painful, to say the least.

There is a perception that the Sri Lankan crisis can be a blessing in disguise for the Indian tea sector, Sri Lanka being one of the largest exporters of tea in the global market. But some industry veterans say that tea plantations, plucking- everything have been done in Sri Lanka and they will have to be sent to the market. Especially in the current situation they are in dire need of dollar or other hard currencies. And tea is one of their top forex earners. So they will do everything possible to make sure that their tea reaches the global market and fetches foreign exchange. Therefore, even if there are some minor benefits, I don't think there will be some significant or long term gains or benefits for us. Exports will continue from that country.

The other questions is: How would the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war impact Indian tea industry?

Experts say that when it comes to CIS countries, including Russia and Ukraine, in particular, they imported 41.18 million kg, the highest among the overseas destinations of Indian tea, drop from 46.19 million in the year-earlier period. Among the CIS bloc, Russia was the main importer with a shipment of 31.88 million kg in April- February period of 2021-22, down from 33.65 million kg in the same period previous year.

But these may be all temporary setbacks and it has possibly happened because both the transport route and payment routes came under shadow. Although India continues to enjoy the best of relationships with Russia, it has taken a non-committed and impartial stand in this armed conflict. India is also taking a role in mutually settling the conflicts. India is going ahead with its plans on the economic and business front. Unless there is further escalation in conflicts, India should not have reasons to be too worried about this.

Tea Board officials admit that Indian tea had not been able to establish itself globally, and that one of its key brands, Darjeeling Tea, was under acute stress for more reasons than one.

One of the reasons is high absenteeism, thanks to next generation's inclination and desperation for getting jobs outside the garden and supporting the family financially. As a result of such absenteeism plucking timely is not possible and as a result, quality suffers. Trade unions need to work closely with the industry and find solutions to these new issues which are hurting Darjeeling tea. Darjeeling shutdown also impacted the industry severely financially from which the industry is yet to recover. Recently, during the annual general meeting of the Indian Tea Association (ITA) in Kolkata, the Tea Board of India said it had sought a special financial package of Rs 1000 crore from the Centre for the tea Industry over five years. The silver-lining may come from this one time grant, to start with.

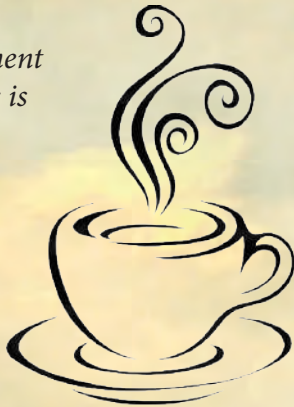


Authored by:

RITWIK MUKHERJEE, an independent journalist and author with more than 3 decades of experience in business and economic journalism, has worked with almost all leading business dailies & magazines. He has worked with The Economic Times, Financial Express, Financial Chronicle, Hindustan Times, Business Today, Hans Bizz Buzz, among others.

TEA TIME **FROM THE ARCHIVES**

A couple of years ago Teatime had a chance to talk two eminent Buyers of Darjeeling Tea. This is what they had to say.



Marcus Wulf

A German tea importer and Managing Director of Hamburg Tea

Respond to the question of Tea Time



If your girlfriend is away, you will still love her but if you do not see her for long, your love may fade away over time and you have to look elsewhere

MARCUS WULF

on the possible impact of any prolonged absence of Darjeeling Tea from international markets

Listed below are some of the questions which come to mind.

TT How has been the Darjeeling quality over the past several say 2 decades? Has it generally improved or declined?

In general most of the tea traders would perhaps comment that quality has declined over that period. Retrospectively, as we all know, the “good old times” appear to be better anyhow.

However, my personal opinion is clear. The variation of quality is much less. About 20 years ago, we had a tremendously volatile, less controlled production process. That led to a significantly higher quality for some estates, some sections, some invoices (invoices are the individually produced homogeneous smaller lots) and it was very strongly connected with field and factory babus.

Further there was less middle class tea and more really badly produced tea these days.

With new players cum larger buying force beginning end 70’ and early 80’ the producers were forced to streamline the production process quite a bit and offer a more average e.g. First Flush quality to be able to cater these buyers, gearing for larger blends only.

That certainly had a bad impact on the “Crème de la Crème” of the truly outstanding lots, which got extremely high prices (and perhaps more important “fame”) – in fact many of those vanished during the last two decades and sadly we reported an average decline in revenue (inflation-adjusted) for the Darjeeling producers along with. The buying power of few larger blend buyers did not help to increase the average selling price at the end and put many into a bit of an addiction pit. It did not help the tea industry nor the individual pluckers/workers in spite of hopefully good intentions.

TT Different Marks from Darjeeling liquor differently in various regions. Is this perception generally true? Absolutely! However, we have basically eight/nine major points which make a great cup of quality Darjeeling tea.

a) Tea plant used	b) Soil
c) Place of the estate (north facing south facing etc.)	d) Weather situation
e) Plucking quality	f) Feeding of the plant (nutrition's)
g) Skillful making of tea (in the factory)	h) Water quality and way of brewing

TT. Apart from mineral and the pH factors, what are the other factors which make a difference to flavours. See above. It could be more detailed of course, if required.



FROM THE ARCHIVES

TT. How do the Europeans consume the not so flavour rains teas, which probably constitute the majority of the crop?

Those find their way into blends of larger packers, which are selling in a market with price sensitivity. Europe still buys more tea from 1st and 2nd flush. The majority is whole leaf, though. A tough seller is the produce of Broken, Fanning and Dust, they account for nearly 50 % of the total production. So it is extremely difficult to find a market for those grades during the rain period.

TT. How credible is our shipment and quality assurances-on a scale of 10? Where 1 is low and 10 high?

It really depends on each producer. We have a ranking from 10 down to 4. In general Darjeeling producers are reliable business partners.

TT. No doubt the packer has been affected adversely by the GI, but has this been a boon for some?

As everybody from my Darjeeling producer friends know, I have never been in favour of the GI in the way it was implemented.

There was this wonderful story that four times more Darjeeling tea was being sold worldwide than actually produced.

This statement was given “out of the blue” from my senior friend Mr. Bharat Bajoria jee, who just blazed it in front of a press meeting, as it was a good example for a bad doing.

It was never ever supported with any evidence. It sounded good and it was an eye opener for many. We till date have to fight against the general believing that all traders/blenders (in India or outside India) cheated to such a high degree. Also don't forget that the law even in e.g. Germany was clear before the GI implementation.

Nobody was allowed to sell a Darjeeling blend in Germany (blend says clearly that it does not need to be 100 % from Darjeeling) if it did not consist of minimum 51 % Darjeeling.

With the GI we have strict rules to comply. These are a corset sometimes as well, unfortunately.

Some blends were declared as e.g. Assam & Darjeeling or Ceylon & Darjeeling. Since the name Darjeeling can only be used if the teas consist of 100 % Darjeeling, these names had to be changed. So many of the packers had removed the name Darjeeling from the packages and thus also there is much more freedom to not pack any Darjeeling into their packages at all.

Further the implementation was made out only for “Black” tea at the beginning and all green, white,

Oolong etc. Darjeeling teas imported after the GI, have been legally illegal from the European point of view. This submission of the law was not executed professionally. With joint effort of all parties concerned right from the beginning a better result would have been achievable, which would not have harmed the Darjeeling brand so much.

TT. How do the best Himalayans compare with Darjeeling's?

If you are referring to Nepal teas, they are different. Also only perhaps 4 estates are clean enough pesticide wise to import to the EU. The total amount of Nepal tea imports is still neglectable compared with Darjeeling.

But one had to give Kudos, as few producers are making great teas with a lot of skillful efforts. This detail oriented entrepreneurship has gone lost in Darjeeling unfortunately.

Only quality will help Darjeeling to survive. If Darjeeling loses further reputation due to produced medium or mass quality it is designed to surrender – no doubt.

TT. Is the taste for Darjeeling growing or has medium quality –but organic teas flooded the markets?

Due to the lower quality and certainly marketing mistakes in the past we lost the young generation. It is unfortunately not growing in the global view, neither with the few remaining great lines nor the medium quality.

TT. Any other relevant message you would like to convey to our Producers?

-Make less but good/great tea

-Darjeeling must have fame otherwise it will die

-Work together with your competitors - in joint effort

-Focus to make tea only during the top quality periods (First Flush, Second Flush and Autumnal)

-Stop production of tea when not even getting the cost of production back

-Diversify with other crops and tourism and find solutions to adjust the existing old laws, which are long outdated and hindering every possible success.

-It is high time to work with all involved parties to find economical solutions which gives air for the tea producers, fair wages for all involved parties. The tea industry needs room for diversification so that at the end everything gets viable again.



Questions for TEEKAMPAGNE



Prof. Günter Faltin

In 1985 Prof. Günter Faltin founded Projektwerkstatt as an independent company. Back when he was a student of economics he discovered that entrepreneurship is the key to making economics exciting and consequential. So when he became a professor of economics he thought about creating his own enterprise to have a model for his students.



Thomas Raeuchle, *Chief Executive* and Dr. Khathrin Gassert evaluating teas

Tea Time asked Thomas Raeuchle, Chief Executive of Projektwerkstatt some questions, to which he answered as follows :

1. **How has been the Darjeeling quality over the past several say 2 decades? Has it generally improved or declined?**

As for us we have been able to improve our quality from 1985 to the present. However, we see labour shortage as a big challenge to keep up high quality overall – handplucked vs. mechanical would impact quality and therefore the image of Darjeeling.

2. **Different Marks from Darjeeling liquor differently in various regions. Is this perception generally true?**

True, it can be compared with hillsides in vineyards.

3. **Apart from mineral and the pH factors, what are the other factors which make a difference to flavours.**

The microclimate gives the tea its distinctive flavour – the steepness of the slope, the geographic direction, the distance to water body and trees. And of course it also depends on the kind of tea bush, is it a seed-grown or clone, and its age.

4. **How do the Europeans consume the not so flavour rains teas, which probably constitute the majority of the crop?**

We mainly deal with First and Second Flush Teas which are consumed as pure 'liquor tea'. As flavoured teas are quite popular we assume that rainy teas are being used as a base for flavouring quite often.

5. **How credible is our shipment and quality assurances-on a scale of 10? Where 1 is low and 10 high. (Not sure who is meant by 'us'?)**

Difficult to put as a number as we are in close contact with all our suppliers. We ensure that tea gets shipped in time, and as we ship it FOB, we can track the status of shipment quite well. When it comes to quality we rely on our own system which consists of inhouse-tasting, as well as external panels in India, England and Germany who will do blind

tasting. It's this special set-up that ensures quality and credibility of Teekampagne and its suppliers.

6. **No doubt the packer has been affected adversely by the GI, but has this been a boon for some?**

For us it's a boon as we promote pure Darjeeling since 1985. We were the first company to use the logo for genuine Darjeeling Tea and the first German company to sign a license agreement with the Tea Board of India. We hope by eliminating tea which is falsely declared as Darjeeling the suppliers who provide genuine Darjeeling will receive better market prices.

7. **How do the best Himalayans compare with Darjeelings?**

Of course the rich history, the expertise and art of tea making is an USP for Darjeeling. However, as sometimes one side of the valley belongs to Nepal and the other side belongs to Darjeeling even experienced tea tasters will not find a difference in taste. There are good Himalayans as well as mediocre Darjeeling's around – it's after all each batch of tea that needs to get evaluated.

8. **Is the taste for Darjeeling growing or has medium quality –but organic teas flooded the markets.**

Germany is still a coffee drinking nation and in the last years there haven't been significant changes in tea consumption. People have become more conscious about the environment and their health, so organic products see an increase in demand all over the world. There shouldn't be a trade-off between good taste and organic cultivation. It should be both at the same time - and we know that it's possible because we practice it.

9. **Any other relevant message you would like to convey to our Producers?**

Make quality your priority. If it's necessary introduce shear plucking but be transparent about it. Don't sell shear plucked as hand plucked as it will ruin your credibility as well as that of Darjeeling.



The TEA Industry. YEAR 2040

The industry is at a crossroads once again: will the next few years see it brew into a strong and vivacious sector or weaken and look bleak? We asked industry stalwarts for their predictions and this what some said.

But first, the road we are on: Today the sector echoes the uncertainty of 20 years ago, when the small growers were birthing. The 4 percent that they contributed to supplies was considered insignificant, and no one realized that one day it would rise to become 56 percent and compete with the 'organized sector'.

Demand was growing fast and production was steady; all were anticipating the boom ahead. Consumption then was out pacing supply and a boom was inevitable by 2008-09, said the pundits. Small growers were left to their own devices. However, the small growers' resolve, grit, perseverance and entrepreneurial skills resulted in a success story. In the case of the organized sector, that apathy brought the industry to today's cross-roads.

In many ways the challenges today are far greater than 20 years ago, with raging input costs and spiraling wages. Supplies have outpaced consumption and to add to the woes of the 'organized' sector, two business models are competing for the same tastes in the domestic space. The growth in the lower segment is much greater and this has led to a downward swing in consumer pricing, as the price wars escalate. The wafer-thin margins that exist for the large players coupled with low MRPs acts as an effective barrier of entry for other smaller regional and sub-regional players, who have more or less gone out of business. Two large brands Marvel and Mohani literally missing from all the shelves. Only those packers, who have realized at a very subtle level that taste is a significant factor in decision making by any discerning consumer and have differentiated, survive. This realisation is also responsible for the burgeoning growth of quality packers growth in the Bihar and Jharkhand markets.

A recent Business Standard Report, NIQ (formerly known as NielsenIQ), quotes data that shows packaged tea category grew around 4 per cent in value and volume terms in 2022 compared to 2021.

"Although price growth is similar (around 4 per cent) for both urban and rural for 2022, inflation hit rural consumers more as urban consumption growth is on the higher side —around 5 per cent —as compared to rural's 3 per cent growth," it states.

The report also says that the packaged tea market in January also saw its volume grow by only 1.5 per cent.

"Most consumers in India prefer their tea with added milk except for about 2 percent of the tea-drinking population. But milk prices have increased significantly, as have fuel and cooking gas prices. This has impacted the spending of Indians on their normal tea brands, forcing them to downtrade," said Paras Desai, executive director, Wagh Bakri Tea Group. Desai added that tea prices have also increased on the back of cost push.

"All of this has taken a toll on sales volume. Our volumes at the premium-end have been stagnant in the last one year."

Unilever's chief executive officer (CEO) Alan Jope also told investors —after announcing the October-December earnings—that consumption of tea has been impacted in India.

Jope said that consumers have shifted to very low-price, low-margin powder tea, where it chooses not to compete. He said, "In the premium tea segment, we're gaining share but there's a shift within the market to very low-cost teas where we see no margin to be made and don't want to participate."

TEA TIME

Tata Consumer Products saw its India beverage volume decline by 5 percent during the same quarter. In a recent interview with Business Standard, Sunil D'Souza, managing director (MD) and CEO of Tata Consumer Products, said, its tea business in India was softer in the quarter ended December. This was primarily because of rural weakness and due to delayed winters in the north. We saw winter actually hitting, probably in the middle of December. From then on, we've started seeing some decent numbers. I would say continued stress in semi-urban and rural areas and delayed winter were the primary factors that

drove softness in the beverage space," D'Souza said.

Jivraj Tea, which sells tea under three brands, catering to the premium, popular and economy segments, is witnessing growth of more than 2-2.5 per cent in the premium segment. Consumers want value for money, and therefore, it is important to price it right. "At Jivraj, we have three brands —premium, popular and economy. The premium segment is growing at more than 2-2.5 per cent. However, the other two brands are growing at a much higher rate," Viren Shah, director, Jivraj Tea, said.

And now, what shall the industry look like in the next two decades? Here's what the industry greats think might happen in the year 2040:

Tea has regained as its original stature of being truly precious. History has it that this product was exported out of India by airfreight at one point in time. Small quantities are available at select stores. We are told that five years ago, changing climate conditions and unusual and persistent pest attacks made it impossible for marginal lands to be cultivated. The production has stagnated and the industry production of 1,500 million kgs is just not enough to meet the 1,650 million kgs in demand.

OR

Loose tea is just not available. It's only a "million" varieties of ready-to-drink teas that are on display. Instant, flavored teas, cold brews, hot masala teas are delivered to your doorstep if you choose. You could select from the online menus of any of the tea shops.

OR

Tea producers have set up single estate outlets in specific areas where the water and milk complement their produce. These estate teas dominate sales in that geography. At times the teas are extraordinary tasty while at other times they are not as good. We are told that this is due to seasonal variation.

OR

Nearly all the tea estates are owned by the major tea packing and blending companies. Tata Consumer Products Limited and Hindustan Unilevers, Wagh-Bakri Society and Girnar, to name a few. The entire production is now being sold in consumer packets. Bulk packing of several decades ago is unheard of now. It was necessary for them to divide up the industry between themselves as with rising costs, tea estates were finding it non-lucrative to grow tea and were switching to luxury home stay, super-luxury getaways, ranches and amusement parks, while their tea packets sales were soaring. Demand for good teas was rising, but only the big marketers were profiting.

OR

Thanks to several commercial decisions aided by the Indian Government about 20 years ago, the industry is thriving. The government decided to offer Egypt and Pakistan, both cash-strapped tea drinking countries tea in the form of aid. But with a rider that after 5 years of the aid, they would source 75 percent of their requirements from India for the next 30 years. Coupled with that Turkey as a gesture of gratitude to the Indian government for their aid to them after the devastating earthquake of 2023, started importing 50m kgs of orthodox teas from India annually. Demand has outstripped the supply to the benefit of the industry.



Marshall-Fowler
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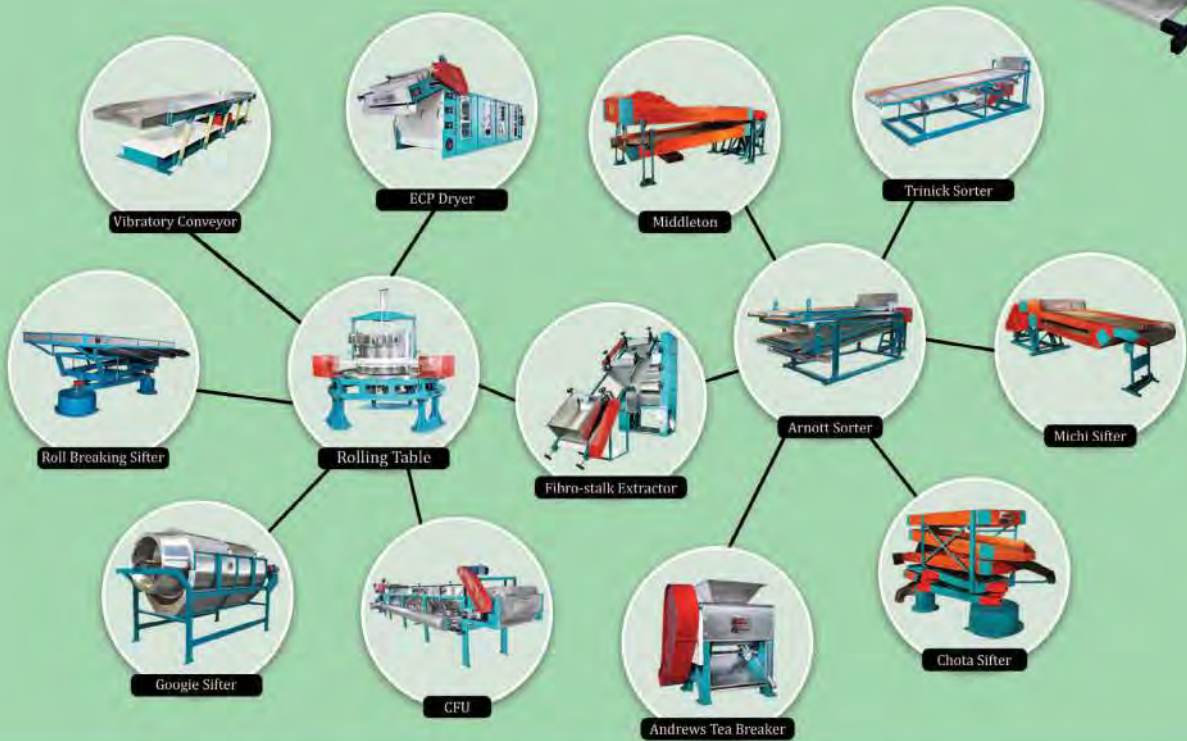
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50
Years
Experience
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We are a company with strong roots dating from the 1890's in the United Kingdom, started by the Marshall family. Back then the company established an enviable reputation, supplying agricultural machinery and steam engines. The product offerings from the company have undergone a sea change with time and today it offers state of the art equipments for CTC, Orthodox and Green Tea manufacture which save on energy, reduce labour dependency and deliver optimal performance, consistently.

Orthodox Tea

A few from amongst the wide range of Orthodox process line equipments offered by us are as follows:



Orthodox Tea manufacturing is a craft for all intents and purpose, catering to the make, taste and Flavors of the discerning persona. The science behind the craft is the key differential that gets unraveled in the Marshall Fowler Products in the Orthodox processing equipments range. The essence of engineering applications in shaping the craft of making tea to perfection are brought to the fore in the Marshall Fowler range of equipment. Fundamentally, the artisan's imagination is brought to life through the detailed engineering of Marshall Fowler, as is evinced through the numerous product validations across tea factories around the world.

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TEA TIME

Amrut Chaha: Where Chai is served a with dash of love

Meet the man who compares tea to the elixir of immortality and advocates service with devotion.

Mr. Vivek Patwardhan, the founder and CEO of Amrut Chaha, is a man of ambition – he wishes to leave his mark on the world, but his satisfaction lies not in luxury, or fortune, but in the human connections made with the people he meets.

Mr. Vivek Patwardhan, founder and C.E.O. of Amrut Chaha didn't want to just live and get some where lost in society without creating something significant. He knew fancy lifestyle or high salary job won't give him satisfaction but remaining connected to people would. As he mentions in his website in the story of Amrut Tea, he has always loved meeting new people and, making new relationships friends and he





found that making them happy and eventually it made himself me happy as well.

Patwardhan noticed the power a small cup of tea can wield – it can reconcile arguments, it can make meeting old friends that much sweeter; some of the best moments of joy or memory or peace may be connected to a cup of tea. He wanted to share this feeling on connection with as many as possible, which became the seed which germinated into ‘Amrut Chaha’.

He refers to tea as ‘nectar’, which he decided to serve it to as many people as possible. He simply didn’t have the only desire want to simply sell tea but to to sell tea but bind people over tea, providing them with a sample taste of ecstasy with each sip of teahile each taste they had.

And thus, he began his quest of roaming in different cities, through narrow alley and well-lit streets, walking through hundreds of streets in like a bohemian quest, tasting thousands cup of tea to find the best one. And while he embarked on this journey of finding the best ‘nectar’, he meets the one behind this all.

The story goes like this:, that Mr. Patwardhan was in Ratnagiri when he came across a tea stall and was inspired by Krishna Kaka, who the owner of the stall whowas engrossed with devotion while making tea in gleaming brass vessel like pots

with a devotion and skill worthy of devotion. The tea stall had a huge crowd watching the fragrant liquid . The first heavenly sip elicited a spontaneous exclamation “Amrut!” from him.

Like the fabled nectar of the gods. On taking the first sip, he decided it tasted like ‘Amrut’, meaning Nectar.

That is when he asked Krishna Kaka to be made him his Guru and learned from him the art of making tea.

Krishka Kaka would say that it’s not only about making tea, it’s about serving with gracititude as well.

Hence, as a Guru Dakshina, he wanted to make Krishna Kaka and his tea immortal, the main reason why he selected his looks and name for mascot of Amrut Tea and this is what you see on public display- Krishna Kaka pouring tea in the serving cup with a charming smile.

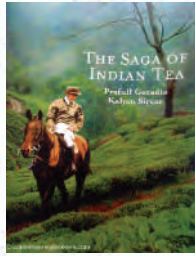
The headquarters of Amurt Chaha is located in Nagpur and they have opened 14 franchise outlets in Nagpur, Madhya Pradesh , Kolkata, Maharashtra and Hyderabad.

Learn more about them [Amrut chaha.com](http://Amrutchaha.com)

I personally have been there in their stall at Kolkata multiple times, and loved it. Till date Even now, when I go back to my city, I make sure to visit Amrut Tea stall.



by **Ena Bandyopadhyay**
Contributor :
Contemporary Brokers



Introducing Tea: Extract from "The Saga of Indian Tea"

- by Prafull Goradia & Kalyan Sircar

Every so often in the history of human civilization, an object of luxury becomes a necessity and spawns an industry so vast that it becomes a culture.

Tea comes to our country in a roundabout fashion through the British. 'The Saga of Indian Tea' explores the journey of tea in India from its earliest years to its latest incarnation. The authors of this profess that it "has no right to be called a history" as it was written based on what readers might want to know about tea, rather than according to a meticulously followed timeline. This book is a treasure trove of experiences from historical records which form and inform the economic and cultural fabric for many parts of the country.

When Britain first imported tea from China, it quickly became a favourite of the upper classes and by the time it had become a staple in the lives of the English everyman, it had inspired many friendships and enmities among the literati. Join us, as we find out how the English society debated about its engagement with tea.

In 1664, the East India Company bought 2 lb and 2 oz. of tea for a gift to the King. The upper classes, especially the female members, took to tea-drinking avidly and it soon became an index of prosperity and social decorum. By the 18th century, social meetings called 'tea parties' became common among the middle classes. In Alexander Pope's epic poem *The Rape of the Lock* and Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* published in 1766, tea was mentioned. Many writers, poets and men in the medical profession, as well as itinerant travellers and journalists, waxed eloquent about the myriad virtues of the Chinese infusion. It was sold in apothecaries' shops in many towns, because of its supposed medicinal qualities. Perhaps the first mention of tea by an English poet – Edward Waller –

was in 1688. Waller wrote of "fleets, laden with my much-loved tea". From then onwards a vast literature on praising its numerous qualities, came to be written. For Duncan Campbell "how insipid would this world be without some female love and tea?"

A contemporary suggested that tea was the most suitable female drink being the "liquor of the fair and of the wife". Men would find that whereas wine intoxicated, tea gave "no offence". From the confines of the apothecaries' counters tea quickly spread to grocers' shops and became an important item in the stock of pedlars. Tea was now regarded as a part of the household's daily diet. Its qualities, some imagined, were much written about, discussed and debated in the salons of London. Women, it was suggested, should avoid drinking gin which made them "stink, and cause domestic war". Tea was also believed to be the answer for many ailments, both physical and psychological. Thus it was claimed that tea "refines the brains, prevents and cures diseases of the mind" and that "it drives each morning gloom".

The agricultural and industrial revolution in the 18th and the early 19th century helped to improve the living standards of many in Britain. One index of rising domestic comfort was the habit of tea drinking among these people. William Cowper, the famous English poet wrote:

"Now stir thee fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
Throws up a steaming column, and the cups
That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in"



Gin-drinking was condemned and many switched from the boisterous wine to the gentle tea. One poet compared coffee beans to English beans and recommended these as the “right food for Hogs and Horses”. He declared: “I hate coffee, give me a dish of tea”. Many came to believe that tea had contributed more to producing sobriety and morality in England than the severest laws, or even the most eloquent harangues of many Christian orators.

There was also a group of people who strongly criticised tea drinking, pointing to its many harmful effects. “Some complain that after a tea breakfast, they find themselves rather fluttered; their hands less steady in writing or any employ that requires an exact command. Those who drank tea in the afternoon find themselves very easily agitated and affected with a kind of involuntary trembling.” Not only tea drinkers but also those exposed to tea dust (blenders) were at risk. “Those who mix tea and in the process breathe in an air loaded with the fine dust of tea, suffer from bleeding from lungs or from nostrils; others are attacked with violent coughs, ending in consumption”.

Further, tea drinkers were warned that tea relaxed the coat of the stomach, weakened the bowels, predisposed them to flatulence and destroyed the energies of the digestive organs. Tea, it was believed, could also cause a thinning of the blood and irritable habits. “The vapours arising from it weakens the lungs and disposes its votaries to colds and catarrhs, which readily make a transition into consumption”.

Christian preachers were also against the habit of tea drinking, which they insisted, led to all kinds of evil – moral, religious and political. In 1775 one Dame Dorothy Bradshaigh founded an alms-house in Lancashire; among the rules of the charity was a ban on tea drinking: “Those who can afford to indulge themselves in an article, so unnecessary, so expensive, so destructive to both time and health (the tea such people drink being poison), I shall not allow to be proper objectives of this charity”.

By 1822, according to William Cobbett, “The troublesome and demoralising habit of drinking tea had demoralised the English countryside, having by then largely supplanted home-brewed beer as the agricultural labourers’ favourite beverage, wasting his money and his wife’s time without providing any nutrition whatever.”

Over time, in the debate between the tea drinkers and their opponents, the supporters won hands down. No less a person than Dr Johnson declared himself “A hardened sinner in the use of the infusions of this plant, whose teapot had no time to cool, who with tea solaced the midnight hour and with tea welcomed the morning.” As its popularity increased gradually among all classes in society, more tea was imported, causing a fall in price, thus leading to another spurt in demand.



DUTCH TEA TRADE HISTORY

Extract from “All About Tea”, by Willam Ukers.

In this detailed, image-rich book, first published in 1935, William Ukers describes the history, cultivation method and etymology of the world’s teas. His research led him to Brazil, Sumatra, Colombia, India, China, Japan, and the ports of Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Currently, we follow his footsteps as he traces the history of the Dutch tea trade.



THE HARBOR OF TANDJONG PRIOK, BATAVIA

Sumatra Teas Enter the Market

The first Sumatra tea was shipped to London in 1894 by the British Deli & Langkat Tobacco Co., Ltd., from their Rimboen Estate at Deli. The shipment consisted of Six large, and seventeen small chests, and brought 2d. per pound. It was not until after Sumatra tea-growing was undertaken on an important scale by Harisons & Crosfield, in 1910, followed in succeeding years by the Nederlandsch Indisch Land Syndicaat and other producing and exporting concerns, that teas produced on a big scale by the best modern methods gave Sumatra a place all its own in the tea trade.

Outstanding Companies in Sumatra

The three leading companies in the tea trade of Sumatra are, in the order of their importance: Harrisons & Crosfield, Ltd, Ncdcrlandsch Indisch



HARRISONS & CROSFIELD’S BRANCH HEADQUARTERS
AT MEDAN, SUMATRA



THE OLD EAST INDIA HOUSE, AMSTERDAM
From a painting before the rebuilding



Dutch Trade at Amsterdam

As previously stated, tea was brought to Amsterdam regularly after 1637, and in 1685 the importations became of sufficient importance for the Dutch East India Company to reserve to itself the exclusive right of importation.

The directors of the Amsterdam Chamber of the East India Company divided themselves into five sections, which in the course of time came to be known as the Departments of Equipage, Delivery, Warehousing, Audit, and Indian Trade.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Department of Warehousing, or “*Comptoir of the Warehouse*” as it was called, was managed by two warehouse masters, who were required to be sworn before the Mayor of Amsterdam, and had their offices in East India House, the Headquarters of the East India Company.

The Pakhuismeesteren van de Thee

About the latter half of the eighteenth century, the Department of Warehousing was consolidated with the Department of Equipage, and renamed the Department of Commerce. The latter survived the East India Company, which passed out of existence December 31, 1798, and from the Department of Commerce, in 1818, came the present firm of Pakhuismeesteren, or “Warehouse Masters.”

Mr. Josua van Eik, the last warehouse master appointed by the East India Company, was founder of the present firm. He died in 1831, and was succeeded in the firm by his son, Mr. Josua van Eik, Jr., who remained a partner



Dr. J. Bierens de Haan



Mr. Josua van Eik, Mr. A. Bierens de Haan
FOUNDER AND PARTNER, PAKHUISMEESTEREN

Land Syndicaat, and Handelsevereniging “Amsterdam.”

HARRISONS & CROSFIELD, LTD., is a name that looms large in commerce and trade throughout the East and Far East. Nowhere, however, is the firm more important than in Sumatra, where the name was associated with the pioneer tea estate enterprise. A British concern, it acts as general promoter and developer of estates, and as agent for the estates once they have become established. Mr. James Morton is the manager at Medan.

THE NEDERLANDSCH INDISCH LAND SYNDICAAT, floated at Amsterdam in 1910 by the late Mr. Johannes Hermanus Marinus leader among the Dutch pioneers of Sumatra’s tea industry, followed closely in the footsteps of the British concern in promoting and developing estates. Today, the Syndicaat occupies a commanding position in the Sumatra tea trade. Mr. Marinus was the managing director until his retirement, in 1927, to Holland, where he died in 1930.

The HANDELSVEREENING “AMSTERDAM,” probably the largest plantation organization in the world, occupies third position among Sumatra tea shippers, although it has been interested in tea only since 1917. It is an extensive producer of tea and other products in Sumatra, with headquarters for the island at Medan; and has somewhat similar interests in Java, with headquarters at Soerabaya.

TEA TIME

until his death in 1878. The present partners are Messers. A. Bierens de Haan, C. F. Bierens de Haan, and L. L. Bierens de Haan.

For a time during the last century the firm specialized in coffee, as well as tea, but since 1858 it has handled tea only. The Association of Java Tea Importers, the *Vereeniging van Thee Importeurs*, which conducts the Amsterdam tea auctions, intrusts all of its importations to the Pakhuismeesteren.



Mr. F. H. de Kock van,
Leeuwen
Secretary, 1916-34

Mr. A. E. Reynst
Director, Propaganda
Since 1914

The interests of the tea industry are represented at Amsterdam by two important organizations, the *Vereeniging van Thee Importeurs*, or Tea Importers' Association, and the *Vereeniging voor de Thee Cultuur*, or Tea Growers' Association. The first of these, the Tea Importers' Association, was established in 1916 by firms and companies importing tea for garden account on the Amsterdam market. This association arranges the Amsterdam tea auctions in coöperation with the *Pakhuismeesteren van de Thee*, and its members are obliged to sell all tea consigned to them exclusively at the Amsterdam sales. In addition, it is required that buyers admitted by the association.

The first chairman of the Tea Importers' Association was Mr. Abr. Muller, who served for five years, from 1916-17 to 1920-21. He was followed by Dr. C. J. K. van Aalst in 1920-

21 and 1922-23; Mr. C. J. A. Everwyn, six years, from 1923-24 to 1928-30 to 1933-34; and Mr. A. A. Pauw in 1934. Mr. F.



Mr. S. W. Zeverijn
Chairman, 1918-20

Mr. W. C. Loudon
Chairman, 1920-32

OFFICIALS OF THE TEA GROWERS' ASSOCIATION

H. de Kock van Leeuwen was secretary from 1916 to 1934 when Dr. F. W. A. de Kock van Leeuwen succeeded him.

MR. A. A. J. PAUW, present chairman of the Tea Importers' Association, was born September 1, 1880, at Haarlem. In 1898 he entered the employ of the *Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij* at Amsterdam. For twenty-six years he served in the company's offices in Surinam, Netherlands India, and the Far East. In 1930 he became managing director of the head office Amsterdam.

DR. J. BIERENS DE HAAN, former chairman of the Tea Importers' Association, became one of the leaders in the Amsterdam market by his election to the chairmanship in 1929, and by his election, in the same year, to the board of the Tea Growers' Association. He was educated at the University of Utrecht, where he received the degree of Doctor of Laws. He became secretary to the managing board of the *Nederlandsche Handel Maatschappij* [Netherlands Trading Society] in 1900, and continued in this capacity until his election in 1918 as its managing director.

The Tea Growers' Association was organized in 1918 to unite and protect the Dutch tea-planting industry. It includes in its membership



all Netherlands Indian tea companies having their seats in Europe, and has as special members numerous individuals interested in tea. The association maintains, as a regular branch of its activities, a statistical bureau connected with the Secretariat, and a propaganda department under the direction of Mr. A. E. Reynst, a former Java tea planter. The propaganda undertaken by the association covers Holland and adjacent countries. Funds for propaganda purposes are obtained from a planting cess collected by the Netherlands Indian Government.

The first chairman of the Tea Growers' Association was Mr. S. W. Zeverijn, who served for two years in 1918—19 and 1919—20. The late Mr. W. C. Loudon was chairman from 1920 until his death in 1932. He was succeeded by the present chairman, Mr. P. Leeddertz. Mr. F. H. de Kock van Leeuwen has been secretary from the time the Association was formed in 1918.

MR. S. W. ZEVE RIJN went to Netherlands, India in 1889. He got his early training with Wallenstein,

Krause & Co., and Hard & Rand. He finally joined Tiedeman & van Kerchem, with whom he has been associated for over 32 years.

MR. F. H. DE KOCK VAN LEEUWEN, secretary of the Tea Growers' Association, is a former officer in the Navy. He resigned in 1899 to take up a commercial career, becoming managing director of tea and rubber estates in Java. He is a partner in the importing and estate agency firm of de Kock & van Heel, Amsterdam. He was one of the promoters of the Amsterdam Tea Importers' Association, of which he was the secretary of eighteen years.

MR. A. E. REYNST, director of the Tea Propaganda Office of the Tea Growers' Association, is a grandson of the founder of the firm of Reynst & Vinju, Batavia. For thirty years he was a planter in Java; the first ten years on the Sugar Experiment Station, and the last twenty years in tea. He returned to Holland in 1922, and since 1924 has been active in the Propaganda Office. He is the author of several monographs on tea.





DOCTOR BABU

After my post-graduation (MRCP) and one year-and-a-half of work experience, I found myself at a loose end. After all, there is only so much pub crawling and sight seeing across Europe that one can do!

I decided to do something original for once and though fairly common amongst Western students, I decided to take on a job, unheard of in medical circles: it was the post of Chief Medical Officer in Assam's tea gardens.

The job involved overseeing the medical facilities and supervising a dozen odd small quaint 'Cottage Hospitals' attached to each beautiful, almost fairy-like garden. Both my parents and friends were aghast at the notion, calling it an escape from reality.

But I thought of it as a year's holiday and felt that a lot of socializing and elbow bending in well apportioned clubs would do me no harm. Well, off I went aboard a Dakota, a World War II relic, landing on a grassy strip where grazing

cattle had to be collared before we could land.

It was not much of a professional challenge, but a perfect start to the eventual grim and back breaking and heart breaking stint in Delhi's overcrowded and understaffed hospitals. The stint was to last the customary one year, the time many young medicos take before settling down to the grind of a permanent job or of regular practice.

But there was no way I could have known that this love affair would stretch from one year to an entire decade - so attractive and, at times, rewarding, was the sumptuous life in the tea gardens.

My daily regimen occasionally involved travelling around one hundred kilometres by jeep - on - unpaved roads - to supervise the many hospitals' work. This was interspersed with innumerable rounds of tennis and golf and the frequent late night parties. I made many good friends who have remained so after 35 years.



But what I miss the most is one little nugget - interaction with the Doctor Babu - the medical officer-in-charge of each garden hospital.

I cannot forget their toothless, infectious smiles, their shorts hanging below their knees - precursors, no doubt, of the Bermuda shorts. Their pidgin English - Sir this case was 'phatal' five times last night - their capacity to work round the clock and their ability to please some dour and tough Burra Saheb's both English and Indian.

After 10 years of absolute bliss - there are no cliches left with which to describe its romance -

and with a heavy heart, I said goodbye to tea and my many charming Doctor Babu friends who I admire and of whom I am proud.

They gave me a grand farewell complete with a framed farewell address which is an affectionate masterpiece. Over the years I have read this address innumerable times but remain unable to make any sense of it.

I reproduce it for your below to see if you can fathom it or make any sense of it. (If nothing else, Peter Sellers would have loved its entertainment value!).



QUOTE

FAREWEL ADRESS TO
DR.S.K. VOHRA,
M.B.B.S. (PUN), M.R.C.P. (EDIN), D.C.H. (ENG), D.P.H.(CAL), F.R.S.T.M &H (LON) CHIEF
MEDICAL OFFICER, BISHNAUTH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
DARRANG, ASSAM

Hon'ble Gentleman,

At this moment of your departure, you are leaving us in a sad and painful momentary feelings for your bright personality, non classified cooperation of activities in respect of medical aspects amongst even the junior most people, the dignity of actions of your individual attentiveness, the nature of gifts of appropriate sincerity of services with prompt appliances of your attempts to the suffering humanity and your kind hearty feelings with applicable sympathised dealings.

This ray of sorrowful power of hints, abandoning our constant touch of immediate approach for your meritorious services has thrown a very unpleasant situation creating unhappy, undelighted and undesirable atmosphere, in the midst of our social and individual standings.

We, in this occasion, accord a happy farewell and pray to Almighty for a prosperous and long life and to remember us for all the time to come.

Jai Hind

Yours sincerely,

Dated,
Chariali,
Darrang, Assam
The 11th, July, 1971

Medical Staffs,
BISHNAUTH & EAST BOROI CIRCLES

UNQUOTE



But I still wish to say-

We'll meet again

Don't know where

Don't know when!!!!

(S.K. Vohra)



Café Niloufer's Golden Tips Tea Makes a Come-back

When it was first launched in 2021, it was a sensation among the tea lovers of Hyderabad – a cup of tea worth Rs 1000! Well, Café Niloufer brought it back again this year at selected outlets to let people have an unforgettable tea experience. Under the aegis of tea connoisseur and chairman, A. Baburao, the customers at this high-end tea lounge at Hyderabad have had a chance to experience this one of a kind single estate tea. The main reason for the extravagant price is that it takes a huge number of tea plants to make this tree, as only one bud from each tea is chosen for production. It is also picked within a very short period, from four to six am, so that the flavour is not affected by strong sunlight. According to the press release from Café Niloufer, this is also the “healthiest beverage on the planet”, professing to boost heart health, reduce stress and promote digestion.



Blooming Tea – A Visual Feast

Humans are visual creatures – when we have risen beyond the need to pursue survival, we have always looked for beauty not only in our homes and attire, but also in what we eat and drink. Blooming Tea, a new trend on the Indian tea scene, uniquely satisfies this urge. Tea buds and leaves are gathered and sown or rolled together in different configurations like ‘seeds’ and once hot water is added it blooms beautifully in peonies, lilies, marigold, jasmine and even hearts. Often dried flowers are also added for scent. Usually

it is based on white tea or green and the visual impact is remarkable in a transparent teapot. Golapdhara in Darjeeling makes Peony rosettes. Karma Kettle has a blooming tea with three flowers – jasmine, chrysanthemum and amaranth. San Cha Tea offers osmanthus as a flavour in blooming teas.





Matcha Tea for Skincare

Matcha – the powdered green tea, originating in Japan, has long been known for its beautifying effects in oriental cultures. Unlike in other teas, in matcha the whole leaf is ground into a fine powder which is then whisked to make a frothy, complex drink.

Recently, more people are becoming aware of this versatile ingredient which can help with a whole host of skin problems – starting from acne to skin-aging.

- Matcha has a much higher anti-oxidant content than regular green tea, which can protect the skin from UV damage and pollution.
- It is useful for individuals who are acne-prone or tend to be allergic, as its anti-

inflammatory properties help to soothe the skin.

- Its anti-aging properties come from the abundance of catechins which boost collagen production in mature skin and help to reduce fine lines.
- Matcha used in a face pack exfoliates and improves skin tone and texture as well.

Making this useful and delicious ingredient a part of your daily diet and lifestyle is sure to be beneficial in terms of not only beauty, but also overall health.



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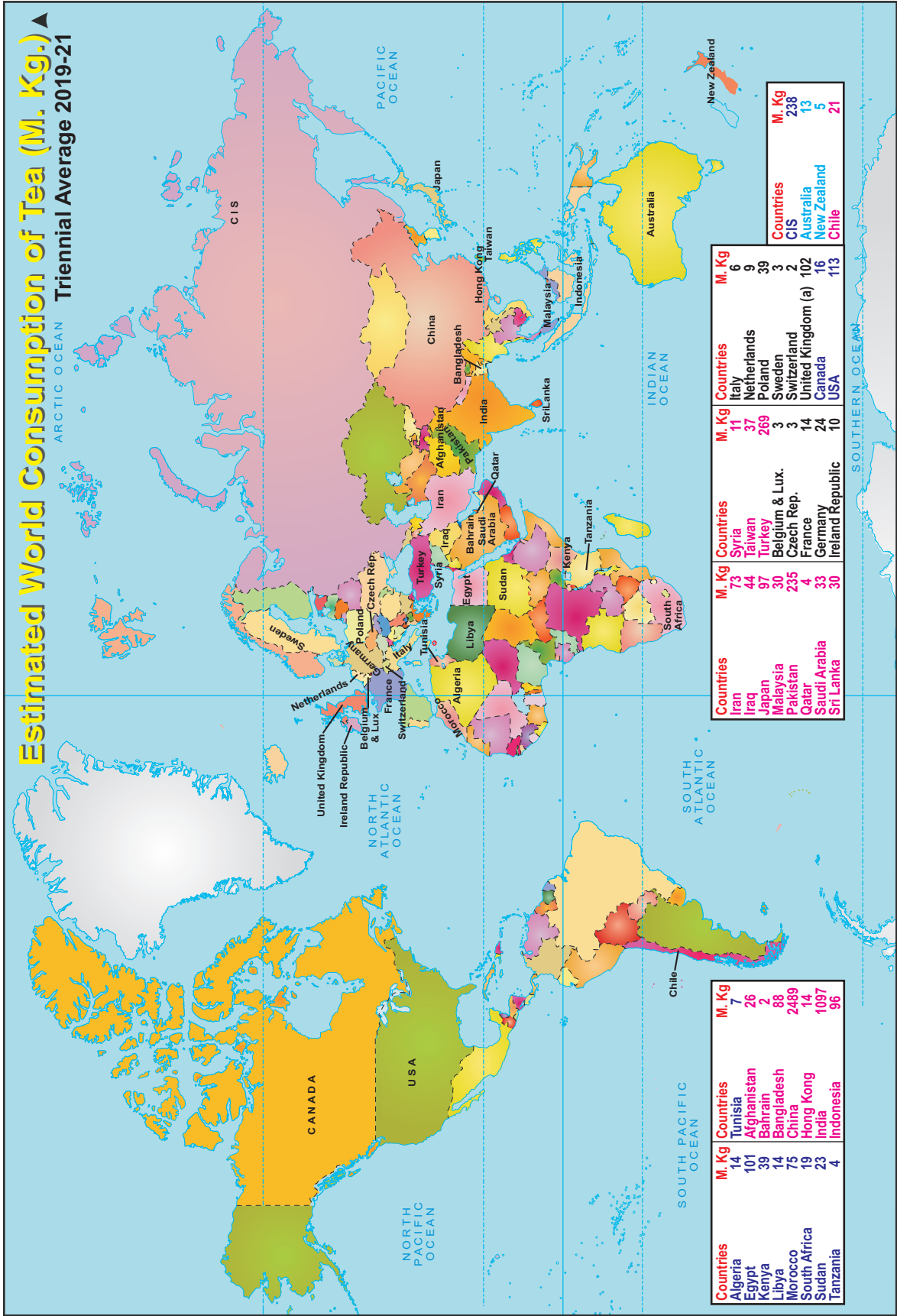
Drink Tea to Your Heart's Content

Drink tea, drink tea to your heart's content.
Let a cup of tea be your friend and strength
When you go through life's despairs.
When you are tired with the world's affairs
Sip your friendly tea in solitude.
Shrug off the world's injustices and prejudices,
Let go your pain and wounds,
Sip your friendly tea, it makes you feel good.
When you sit with your friends
Reliving sweet memories,
Telling and retelling your stories
Chatting and laughing the evenings
Drink tea to your heart's content.
When you travel on long country roads
Through green fields and yellow meadows
Take a break, sit on the wayside grass
Pour a cup of tea, from your flask
Drink tea, drink it to your heart's content.
Tea is Divine, Tea is Bliss
Make tea your soul drink.
On days when you are full of despair
Or days, when your happiness you want to share
Drink tea, drink tea to your heart's content.

Vijaylaxmi Sarmah.

Naharani T.E.





Estimated World Consumption of Tea						
Triennial Average (Million Kg)						
	2014-16	2015-17	2016-18	2017-19	2018-20	2019-21
Algeria	15	15	14	15	14	14
Egypt	93	91	93	100	99	101
Kenya	30	32	35	39	40	39
Libya	15	16	18	18	15	14
Morocco	64	68	72	77	77	75
South Africa	21	21	20	19	18	19
Sudan	28	26	24	22	22	23
Tanzania	5	5	5	5	4	4
Tunisia	6	7	7	8	7	7
Total Africa	277	282	289	302	297	296
Afghanistan	59	48	39	30	28	26
Bahrain	2	2	2	2	2	2
Bangladesh	76	80	82	83	85	88
China	1807	1935	2050	2169	2322	2489
Hong Kong	11	11	11	12	12	14
India	947	991	1036	1084	1088	1097
Indonesia	87	90	94	94	95	96
Iran	71	73	77	82	78	73
Iraq	37	37	42	44	43	44
Japan	107	105	104	104	100	97
Malaysia	26	25	27	28	29	30
Pakistan	155	167	180	191	216	235
Qatar	3	4	4	4	4	4
Saudi Arabia	24	26	29	31	33	33
Sri Lanka	28	29	29	29	29	30
Syria	13	11	11	11	11	11
Taiwan	39	37	36	37	37	37
Turkey	247	250	251	257	263	269
Total Asia	3740	3921	4105	4291	4478	4674
Belgium & Lux.	3	3	3	3	3	3
Czech Rep.	3	3	3	2	2	3
France	13	14	14	14	14	14
Germany	32	31	30	28	25	24
Ireland Republic	8	8	9	10	10	10
Italy	7	7	7	7	6	6
Netherlands	8	9	9	10	10	9
Poland	35	36	37	37	39	39
Sweden	3	3	3	3	3	3
Switzerland	2	2	2	2	2	2
United Kingdom (a)	109	110	108	107	108	102
Total Europe	223	225	223	223	222	215
Canada	17	17	17	16	16	16
USA	130	129	126	121	114	113
Total North America	147	146	143	137	130	129
Australia	11	12	12	13	12	13
New Zealand	4	4	4	5	5	5
Total Oceania	15	16	16	17	17	17
Chile	21	21	21	20	21	21
Total South America	21	21	21	20	21	21
CIS	257	253	249	246	242	238
Grand Total	4681	4865	5045	5237	5407	5589

Source: International Tea Committee

Month wise District wise Auction averages

● CTC Leaf & All Dust ●

Assam : Estate

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	280.07	231.20	48.86
May	212.55	235.07	-22.52
June	256.77	263.23	-6.46
July	258.83	228.45	30.38
August	258.55	211.02	47.53
September	234.49	214.29	20.20
October	231.39	213.27	18.12
November	213.42	223.03	-9.61
December	187.31	205.04	-17.73
January	164.09	177.87	-13.78
February	156.62	163.92	-7.30
April to February	223.04	214.06	8.97

Dooars & Terai : Estate

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	257.17	240.63	16.54
May	205.59	220.86	-15.27
June	241.23	237.60	3.64
July	223.82	207.77	16.05
August	218.97	197.91	21.06
September	202.05	187.76	14.30
October	209.07	190.43	18.65
November	198.51	205.99	-7.48
December	186.17	197.01	-10.84
January	167.93	172.73	-4.80
February	152.57	155.90	-3.33
April to February	207.18	201.94	5.24

Cachar : Estate

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	237.73	206.44	31.29
May	182.99	202.45	-19.46
June	182.20	202.87	-20.68
July	190.18	176.95	13.23
August	200.91	163.55	37.36
September	192.89	159.83	33.07
October	187.01	159.94	27.07
November	180.36	169.34	11.02
December	161.93	164.10	-2.17
January	144.96	156.83	-11.87
February	139.72	149.31	-9.60
April to February	176.82	167.11	9.71

Tripura : Estate

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	227.34	187.58	39.75
May	160.47	175.96	-15.49
June	151.56	177.98	-26.42
July	153.80	152.42	1.38
August	161.65	136.01	25.64
September	167.57	134.09	23.47
October	149.58	130.82	18.76
November	146.68	135.71	10.97
December	136.92	127.30	9.62
January	126.89	128.96	-2.07
February	126.31	109.24	17.07
April to February	149.99	137.75	12.24

Assam : BLF

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	196.08	182.39	13.69
May	157.74	188.55	-30.81
June	164.39	198.17	-33.79
July	166.68	164.21	2.48
August	178.46	148.52	29.94
September	172.62	150.74	21.88
October	173.51	152.34	21.16
November	163.15	159.03	4.12
December	145.09	155.35	-10.27
January	128.67	138.97	-10.30
February	126.96	127.61	-0.65
April to February	162.63	159.46	3.16

Dooars & Terai : BLF

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	159.63	161.49	-1.87
May	131.46	170.07	-38.61
June	123.53	155.69	-32.17
July	121.20	134.50	-13.30
August	127.60	126.38	1.22
September	128.30	122.99	5.31
October	135.18	123.83	11.35
November	134.97	131.46	3.51
December	126.83	130.93	-4.10
January	116.85	121.99	-5.14
February	114.88	114.65	0.23
April to February	127.92	132.71	-4.79

● CTC Leaf & All Dust ●

South India

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	104.52	123.91	-19.39
May	101.39	128.65	-27.26
June	96.05	110.99	-14.94
July	92.65	100.51	-7.87
August	103.99	99.09	4.90
September	107.04	100.85	6.19
October	110.30	95.17	15.14
November	120.66	101.56	19.10
December	117.09	107.88	9.20
January	126.83	116.21	10.62
February	108.42	118.38	-9.96
April to February	107.24	108.74	-1.50

● Orthodox ●

Assam

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	282.51	258.25	24.26
May	265.71	241.60	24.11
June	354.47	258.83	95.65
July	355.10	254.15	100.94
August	343.30	238.42	104.87
September	284.86	243.61	41.25
October	278.51	230.47	48.04
November	284.07	216.47	67.60
December	226.96	199.90	27.06
January	186.15	178.02	8.13
February	162.65	163.27	-0.62
April to February	285.42	229.94	55.48

South India

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	139.38	157.80	-18.41
May	160.43	154.89	5.54
June	161.63	158.27	3.37
July	167.62	155.69	11.93
August	160.19	137.37	22.82
September	170.60	138.45	32.15
October	165.89	140.06	25.83
November	172.00	142.50	29.49
December	163.78	137.32	26.46
January	156.76	139.38	17.38
February	153.97	143.05	10.92
April to February	162.07	146.24	15.82

● Darjeeling ●

Darjeeling

Month	2022-23	2021-22	Diff (+/-)
April	877.62	750.10	127.52
May	433.96	736.01	-302.05
June	360.23	486.58	-126.35
July	477.07	481.75	-4.68
August	360.89	433.19	-72.30
September	302.79	398.64	-95.85
October	281.43	328.66	-47.23
November	356.34	309.06	47.28
December	306.89	269.26	37.63
January	176.45	189.83	-13.38
February	164.40	170.84	-6.44
April to February	348.92	381.79	-32.87



Compiled by *Soumen Bagchi*

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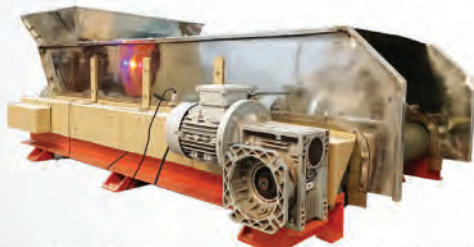


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