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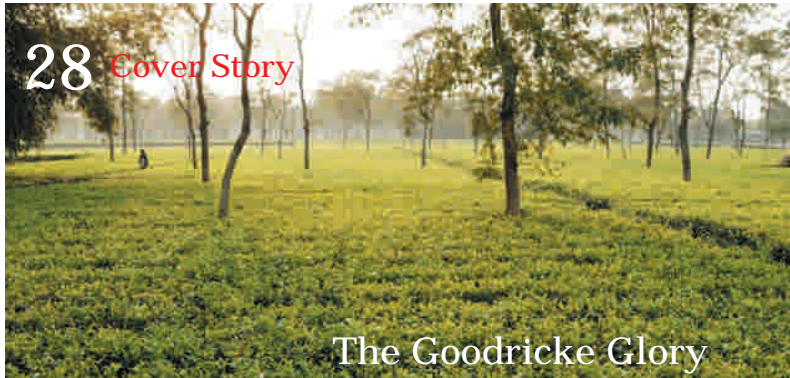
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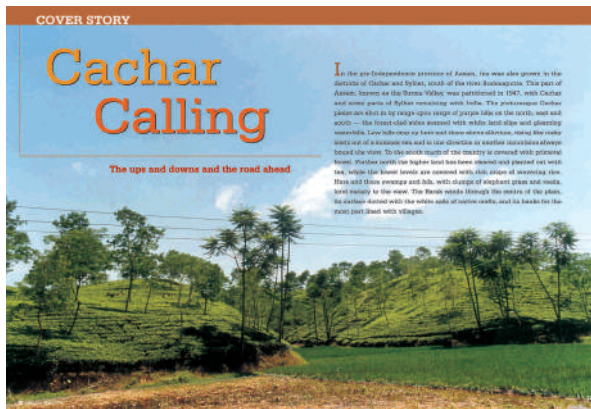
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Readers Write



Dear Sir,

The cover story - *Cachar Calling* - in the January - March 2015 issue of *Contemporary Tea Time* was extensive and illuminating. Both the history - embellished with archival photographs as well as the current scenario, brought forth through the interviews - have given us a holistic picture of the ups and downs of the tea industry in the region. Looking forward to more such coverages.

Thanking your
Yours sincerely

Ruman Baig
Guwahati

Dear Sir,

Face-to-Face with John Mackenzie published in the January - March 2015 issue of *Contemporary Tea Time* seemed straight out of an excellently written history book. Along with the vintage photographs, it provided a window to the tea life in the *koi-hai* days. We shall be very happy if you can publish memoirs of more such old planters who are still alive.

Thanking you
Yours sincerely
Shiva Menon
Calicut



Dear Sir,

Selling Tea in Troubled Time by Kalyan Sircar, published in the January - March 2015 issue of *Contemporary Tea Time* made excellent reading. The scene in India is not too different with big brands (including tea) trying to lure customers with 'exclusive' offers. Not all of these turn out to be as exclusive or as exotic as they promise at the end though!

Thanking you
Yours sincerely

K Tripathi
Mumbai



Dear Sir,

Read about the Nepal tea gardens (*Gorkha Tea Estate*) in the January - March 2015 issue of *Contemporary Tea Time*. Hope these have not been affected by the recent devastating earthquake in Nepal?

Thanking you
Yours sincerely

B Chhetri
Kolkata



Quality leaf needs a definition

In this issue we profile the Goodricke Group and their holistic endeavours to redefine the quality parameters, with some leading innovative efforts.

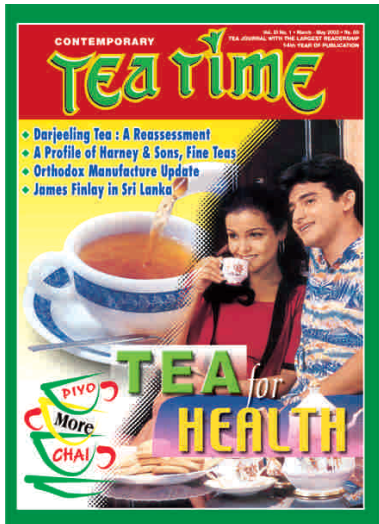


Quality is a crying need of the Indian consumer, due to the proliferation of packet teas. And in each auction sale it is becoming more evident that the demand and prices of tea is directly proportionate to its attributes. But with upto 40% of teas in north India, coming from small growers, a fresh challenge posed is the marriage of the transfer price for green leaf to its quality. To enable a fair transfer price, it has been notified by gazette that 70% of teas must sell through the transparent auction system. On the flip side, can the current infrastructure support the logistics of such a move? And, because quantity clones have been preferred over quality, what is the short term solution to meet this demand? This dearth of quality in sufficient quantity is not only discouraging some leading regional packers from increasing their sales volumes but encouraging them to import and 'punch' their blends with three to four percent teas of other origins. Even at the cost of 100% import duty.



The CROP-CROP-CROP era has long disappeared with the Rupee-Rouble barter trade. The grower must wake up to the demand for taste from the Indian consumer. Because eventually it is only demand and appropriate supply that can dictate prices for his leaf.

A Nandkeolyar



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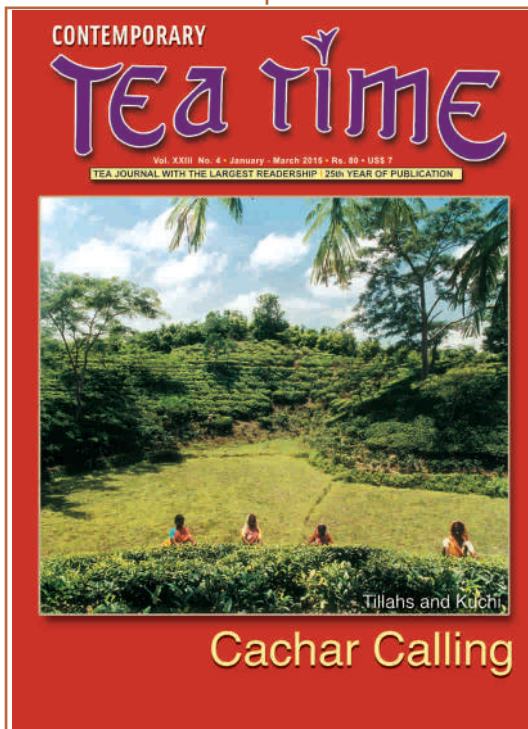
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Assam 1860

"It is great that Indian tea is gaining traction overseas"

James Warren Tea Limited, a company with history dating back to 1858, has launched a premium tea brand named 'Assam 1860'. This tea is available through their website www.assam1860.com, and delivered internationally. The tea has been packed in innovative nylon tea bags while they also have loose tea in different sizes in a zipper pack to ensure freshness. The tea is all from Thowra Tea Estate in the Moran Circle.

The launching of the brand was the idea of James Warren's marketing team comprising of Ankit Ruia and Roshan Petrie. "We always carry our own tea when we travel as I can't stand the weak teabags you get in Europe and the US. In 2013, I was in a restaurant in London waiting to meet buyers of JWTL. I asked the waiter to get me a teapot and some warm water and pulled out some Thowra CTC tea from my bag and brewed myself a cup. It so happened that the lady on the table next to me



was watching me and asked what I was doing. I explained to her my background, the gardens in Assam etc and she asked if I could make her a cup. I did and she really loved it and thought it was completely different to anything she had ever tasted. It turned out, the lady in question, Jancis Robinson, is a leading wine critic in London and she put me in touch with various restaurateurs.

The general feedback was that

the taste was different to any tea they usually procure in England, which is typically multi origin. I actually disagree as I like the



Twinings and Yorkshire Tea blends. Anyway, to cut a long story short, it got me thinking and whilst JWTL's primary business must remain bulk production and sales and export, it is nice to be able to offer a high quality single estate tea to the consumer. I think that without spending on advertising, we can slowly build volumes online and we have found good distributors in Indian metros and in the UK. We have invested a lot in innovative distribution strategies within West Bengal itself.

We are doing a lot of activation in Kolkata. You might see the "Assam 1860 boys" in upto 10 locations per day within the city selling our tea to the discerning customer and explaining to them what Assam tea is and what goes into making it. It's an experience

History of the Company

The history of James Warren dates back to 1858. James Warren was a retired army general and became an entrepreneur. He planted his first tea estate near Dibrugarh and a few years later settled back in the United Kingdom. He gave the reigns to his two nephews who planted several estates like Dhoedaam and Deamoolie. It is said that these two boys were very fond of music and would play late into the night making a "dum dum" sound, so locals renamed the region "Doom Dooma".



Our country's brands like Jivraj No 9, Tata Gold and Society V Blue should be huge all over the world.

What gives us most pleasure is the fact that this venture will also help the estates and the people living there. We got Rainforest Alliance Certification at Thowra and the team led by Mukesh Tandon, takes pride in getting out the perfect CTC for this brand. We are currently a team of around 20 people working on the brand in different spheres like logistics, social media, sales and quality control.

of taste, education and appreciation.

This is just a small start but it is great that Indian tea is gaining traction. We have to do more to promote our product and get customers to appreciate what we are doing. I think MGVK Bhanu started the process during his tenure as Tea Board Chairman and we must take on from where he left off. Bulk export is great but we must market ourselves as a consumer brand as well like Ceylon tea has done. It is so sad when you go abroad and hear people talking about Sri Lankan tea and Dilmah.



Face-to-Face *with* Laila Kabir

MD, Kedarpur Tea Company Limited



Monjur Hossain

Tidings from Bangladesh



A During the reign of Queen Victoria my great grandfather, Khan Bahadur Rahim Baksh acquired land from the British Government in the north-eastern region of India which is now known as Alipurduar. He started Rahimabad Tea Estate which is arguably one of the first tea gardens in that region. Following Rahimabad a number of other tea companies were also incorporated by his family.

The first lease for tea planting to an Indian, Munshi Rahim Buksh, was registered on August 17, 1877.

Q How many tea estates are under your umbrella? What is the present tea production and price realisation of your company?

A Kedarpur Tea Company Limited was registered in 1924 with its office in Manikganj. The company owned only one tea garden, Madhupur Tea Estate in Bahubal, Dist. Hobigonj. In 1960 the company came under the present

CONTEMPORARY TEA TIME: How long have you been in the Board of the Kedarpur Tea Company Limited (KTCL)? How did you involve yourself in the tea sector?

A I was Director, KTCL from 1968 and Managing Director from 1975.

My family has been in tea from the time of Queen Victoria and I have been interested in growing plants since I was a young girl. Therefore I spent most of my time with our head gardener Panchkori of Rahman House in Jalpaiguri.

Q We know you come from a pioneer tea family of India. Contemporary Tea Time readers will be interested to know a bit about that heritage.

management. My husband Ahmadul Kabir managed the company till 1971. After that I have been managing the company as the Director and Managing Director. Subsequently in 1965 the company acquired land on lease for a new tea estate, Dinarpur Tea Estate and began the cultivation of tea. But this was almost fully destroyed and occupied by the local people. The company gradually recovered most of that land and replanted. At present 500 acres are under tea. Then in 1968 the company bought Jhemai Tea Estate.

At present Kedarpur Tea Company owns three tea estates:

1. Madhupur Tea Estate in Dist. Hobigonj

2. Dinarpur Tea Estate in Dist. Moulvibazar
3. Jhemai Tea Estate in Dist. Moulvibazar

Production (2014)

Garden	Production (Kg)
Madhupur Tea Estate	6,58,300
Dinarpur Tea Estate	2,56,070
Jhemai Tea Estate	1,60,180
Total	10,74,550

Price

Year	National Auction Price (Tk/kg)	Kedarpur Tea Co. Ltd. Auction Price (Tk/kg)
2010	183.17	204.21
2011	156.11	186.41
2012	219.90	236.16
2013	194.25	225.64
2014 (up to 42 no sale)	179.34	227.38

Q What is the productivity per ha of your estates in comparison to the national average? Are you happy with the performance?

Year	Madhupur Tea Estate (Yield/ Ha)	Dinarpur Tea Estate (Yield/ Ha)	Jhemai Tea Estate (Yield/ Ha)	Kedarpur Tea Co. Ltd. (Yield/ Ha)	National Tea Estate (Yield/ Ha)
2008	2,430	1,481	1,380	1,939	1,108
2009	2,303	1,428	1,597	1,905	1,096
2010	2,078	1,380	1,433	1,741	1,099
2011	2,092	1,304	1,540	1,749	1,072
2012	1,981	1,088	1,281	1,580	1,144
2013	2,007	1,155	1,317	1,616	
2014	2,030	1,305	1,330	1,734	

I am not happy as yield/ha. in Dinarpur and Jhemai Tea Estates are still much below that of Madhupur Tea Estate – the reason being continuous problem with land grabbers.

Q Bangladesh imported four times more tea than it exported this season. Do you think, this import has any effect on our price of tea in the auction? Do we really need such import of tea?

A We are not against importing quality teas but against the import of low priced poor quality teas into the country.

Q Value-addition and consumer tastes are the

mantras in a market driven economy. Is your company planning any initiatives in this area?

A We have chosen to produce high quality tea for our blenders.

Q You were Chairperson of Bangladesh Tea Association for many years. What are your comments about the growth and success of this industry in Bangladesh?

A I was Chairperson from 1992 - 1995.

Commendable work was done to rehabilitate the industry after the Liberation War when it lost its only market in Pakistan.

At that time the tea industry had to change over to produce for barter trade with USSR. Which meant producing a very different kind of tea to what we were used to produce. Now we are back to producing normal CTC teas. With the rapid rise in demand for good teas in the country, our company is happy to produce for our blenders who cater to the domestic market.

However, in order to keep pace with the growing internal demand for quality teas, we must concentrate on increasing our production of high quality teas. In order to do this we will need to invest heavily in the field and factory. Unfortunately we have to pay interest at a very high rate. This is not reasonable considering it takes five years for the young tea to come into normal production. Further there is also no low interest finance for the development of infrastructure in the field such as water source, fencing, roads, irrigation, equipment and housing for labour. The same is true also in the case of factory.

We need a comprehensive government policy for the development of the tea industry if we are to keep pace with the internal demand and also to export. I strongly believe this can be done if there is a will to do it.

Q Is there any long term strategic plan for the rejuvenation of the industry?

A I don't know of any such plan. However I believe we need this urgently. I sincerely hope that the Bangladesh Tea Association (BTA) and the Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB) will immediately take the initiative to develop a comprehensive tea development project which can be based on the Bangladesh Tea Rehabilitation Project (BTRP).

Q Smallholding tea cultivation is one of the initiatives in the country, playing a vital role in the economy and livelihood of a good population. What are your views on the development of this sector?

A This needs well thought out and practical policy.

The interviewer is Managing Director PMTC (Bangladesh) Limited

ANDREW YULE

A journey begins

The middle of the 19th century was a particularly opportune time for entrepreneurship in India. Political unification under Lord Dalhousie's Governor-Generalship (1848-1856) and the resulting stability in the administration, laid the foundations of a national market in the subcontinent. The technological advances of the steam age and the industrial revolution in Europe were creating an impact on India. The railway, the telegraph and an organised postal service had all started in the 1850s and for those early pioneers from Britain, getting into business in India was a time of great opportunity and adventure and many were placed in positions of advantage. The opportunities of success in India had become even greater from 1st October 1858 when the Government of India Act 1858 was introduced and the East India Company relinquished their rule over the country. India was vested in Queen Victoria with these

historic words: "Let Her Majesty appreciate the gift, let her take the vast country and the teeming millions of India under direct control, but let her not forget the great Corporation from which she has received them."

The infrastructure started to grow rapidly once the railway lines were laid to connect the Presidency cities of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay with each other. Thus creating the foundation for development of the coal mines, engineering and manufacturing companies around the railway centres.

Apart from being the seat of Government, Calcutta was also the principal commercial and industrial centre of the Indian Empire. Three new industries had begun making rapid strides : tea, jute and coal. The first power driven jute spinning unit had been set up in Calcutta in 1855 and the jute industry, which was to have an outstanding contribution to the

prosperity of Bengal in future years, had made a start.

The tea industry in India had been established during the days of the East India Company, and in 1838 the first consignment of tea grown in India had been exported to London. In the years that followed, the industry had expanded rapidly and a new economy had been created in Darjeeling and Assam.

With growth in production, the marketing of tea had to be developed and the first tea auction in the world was held in Calcutta in 1861. The Geological Survey of India was established in 1857 and this body not only co-ordinated the pioneering work previously carried out by individual geologists, but commenced a systematic survey of the coal reserves of India. Large deposits were located in Bengal and Bihar and the foundations of eastern India's gigantic coal mining industry were laid.

Externally, the opening of the



Hooghly River



Clive Street

Suez Canal in 1869 brought India closer to Europe and expanded opportunities for trade with the West; the Crimean War (1853 - 1856) had cut off both Great Britain and the USA from the supply of Russian hemp, thus creating a market for Indian jute. The American Civil War led to similar opportunities in cotton.

Perhaps only expectedly, Andrew Yule's early enterprises in India were in jute, cotton and tea, with the opening of Budge Budge Jute Mill and the Bengal Cotton Mills in 1873, and the establishing of Jheerieghaut Tea Co. Ltd in 1876. Singtom Tea Gardens in Darjeeling followed in 1880. Amongst other acquisitions, there were New Golaghaut Tea Co. Ltd. in 1883 and the Hoolungoree Tea Estate (1887) in Assam. It is recorded in Thacker's Directory of 1866 that Andrew Yule was a Director of the Eastern Cachar Tea Co. Ltd (established in 1863) – his first involvement in tea and a Directorship which he retained until 1878.

Interestingly, his estate was managed by Grant, Smith & Company and then by Octavius Steel of Steel, McIntosh & Company. At the special centenary tea auction held in Calcutta in December 1961, the first lot to be auctioned was from the produce

of Hoolungoree. This tea estate is still part of the Andrew Yule group and is today undergoing extensive replanting thus assuring many more years of life.

In the opening years of the Firm's history, Andrew Yule acted as agent for three British insurance companies – London & Lancashire Fire Insurance Co. Ltd., English &



Chowringhee Road old mansions

Scottish Marine Insurance Co. Ltd. and the Reliance Mutual Life Assurance Society.

Thacker's Directories of the 1960s reveal interesting facts about Andrew Yule's early days in Calcutta. To start with, he took

At the special centenary tea auction held in Calcutta in December 1961, the first lot to be auctioned was from the produce of Hoolungoree. This tea estate is still part of the Andrew Yule group

rented accommodation at 5, Wellesley Place (Now Red Cross Place – Number 5, was the old dispensary of the East India Company and stands next door to what was the old Spence's Hotel). On his arrival, Andrew Yule was employed as an Assistant in the firm of Grant, Smith & Co., 1 Fairlie Place, however from perusal of the Thacker's Directories of this period, it appears that this firm closed down soon after. Today a branch of Standard Chartered Bank occupies the building at this address. Interestingly, Octavius Steel had also joined the same firm as an Assistant along with Yule, Upon leaving Grant, Smith & Co., Steel joined Begg, Dunlop & Co. as an Assistant, where his brother

Donald was already Superintendent of the Eastern Cachar Tea Estates. Steel went on to establish a very successful managing agency named after himself.

Excerpt from : Yule Musings, published by Andrew Yule & Co. Ltd.



A Responsible Partnership



(L-R) Karan Paul, Chairman, Apeejay Group; Dominique Gangneux, VP Markets Transformation, The Rainforest Alliance; Per Bogstad, Senior Manager, Markets Transformation Rainforest Alliance; Subrata Mukerji, Business Head of Typhoo's Indian Operations; H K Sidhu and Ashoke Batra, Markets Consultant for Rainforest Alliance in India

Tythoo and Rainforest Alliance announced their responsible sourcing partnership in India with the launch of India's first globally certified environmentally sustainable teas to be marketed across the country. The suite of products launched in the Indian tea market by Typhoo, bearing the distinct seal of the Rainforest Alliance include popular mainstream blends as well as new 'Gold' products. After the media launch in New Delhi, Typhoo organised Round Tables in Mumbai and Bangalore in collaboration with Rainforest Alliance - "Better Products. Better Practices. Better World" - to bring out the critical connection between climate change, consumers, community and consumption.

Dominique Gangneux, VP Markets Transformation, The Rainforest Alliance, said, "Committing sourcing tea from Rainforest Alliance Certified tea estates and to display the Frog seal so prominently in its luxurious as well as premium popular brands gives consumers confidence that the tea they are buying has been responsibly sourced.

We are looking forward to working with Typhoo in reaching out to a growing community of socially conscious consumers in India. Current market estimates put this segment of consumers between 30 and 35 percent and this segment is growing at an estimated 5 CAGR per year. With their world class certified products now available across India, Typhoo has leapfrogged our

Between Typhoo and Rainforest Alliance

A report by H K Sidhu

campaign in India and we look forward to more national brands across a range of farm products committing to Rainforest Alliance certification in the future."

Announcing the start of Typhoo's plan to offer certified teas pan India, Subrata Mukerji, Business Head of Typhoo's Indian operations said, "Our certified products are aligned with the evolving consumer attitudes; their growing environmental concerns as well as mindful living linking consumption and sustainability. With our products sourced from estates that have implemented stringent best practices as well as rigorous standards for the last few years and a certification seal now on our product packs, we seek to spark a debate on the connection between climate, community, consumption and consumers." Typhoo has been sourcing tea from the tea estates of Apeejay Tea that produce as per Sustainable Agricultural Network standards carrying various certifications, including Ethical Tea Partnership and Rainforest Alliance.

Welcoming the national launch, Tensie Whelan, President of The Rainforest Alliance said, "I am delighted to see this commitment by Typhoo and Apeejay to Rainforest Alliance certification. It helps to guarantee a brighter future for tea production and consumption in India, giving India's wonderful natural heritage a more secure future. The direct consequence



of Typhoo's commitment is that the Indian consumer will have the choice of world class certified products available to them across India. Products that have been produced responsibly, products that demonstrate the important step that all tea brands in India must take so that tea estates meet comprehensive standards for sustainable agriculture that protect India's environment, biodiversity, waterways, wildlife habitats and the rights and well-being of workers and their families."

Per Bogstad, Senior Manager, Markets Transformation for UK, Ireland and India, who moderated the Round Tables maintained that, "Globally, Rainforest Alliance has observed that three constituents need to work together to bring about this change – consumers, companies and the media. The discussions in both the cities showed that the Indian customers are ready and receptive to adding a new attribute to their product choices. Traditionally there has always been one pioneer company which has brought the issue forward and pushed the envelope. Through these launches Typhoo has shown genuine leadership in this direction."

The Indian arm of the over 100 year old iconic British brand Typhoo, which is the second largest tea manufacturer by volume in the UK, hopes to herald an era of responsible food marketing in India with the national launch of its certified teas. The Round Tables drew prominent people from a varied mix of backgrounds, professions and industries. Dominique Gangneux and Per Bogstad from Rainforest Alliance UK were joined by Ashok Batra and Harkirat Sidhu, Rainforest Alliance's Indian representatives in the Round Table. Shikha Mukerjee, advisor CSR for Apeejay Tea joined Subrata Mukerji and Amar Wadhwa, Marketing Head from the Typhoo team.

Inaugurating the Round Table in Mumbai, Subrata Mukerji said, "Typhoo would like to take a pioneering role in encouraging the consumers in India to think about the larger impact of their purchase decisions. While we have had a certified supply chain for many years we have decided to now display the certification imprint on our packs but the fact is that individual buying power can indeed be harnessed to force the change in supply chains towards a more sustainable future. That's the alternative thought we want to put out there". The Round Tables aimed at starting conversations in the areas of consumer concerns for



sustainability and a brand's ability to deliver solutions.

In Mumbai, Bachi Karkaria, columnist, commentator, ex senior editor Times of India, Vikram Aditya Chaudhri, owner Wingreen Farms, a company producing and marketing ethnic food products, Priyanka Bhasin, founder Design Stack, James McIntock Country Head India of a UK based company The Sound, joined the Round Table as influencers in their respective

fields. In Bangalore Nandan Kamath, a prominent lawyer and founder of LawnK Law Firm, Ashok George, Head Sales and Marketing, Kuwait based dairy farming company KDD Industries (now in India), Milan Vohra, a successful advertising professional and a published author, Cherukuri Indira Dasgupta, Director of People's Institute for Development and Training, joined in the Round Table.

Both the Round Tables arrived at the consensus that the consumers can indeed demonstrate their concerns through the purchasing decisions they make provided they are educated and informed about the role that globally benchmarked certifications play and



Panel members for round table conference in Bangalore

why Indian brands must display certifications prominently on product packs.

The panelists in both cities agreed that consumers in India are quite ready for sustainable consumption and inherently understand that the planet does face problems and these need sustained action on many fronts. The WWF Living Planet report reveals that the burden of human consumption is unsustainable and we would need 1.5 earths to regenerate the natural resources that we are currently consuming. The discussions brought forth the real opportunity for brands that display a wider purpose to both meet the needs of aspirational and in doing so, improve the business benefits to the brand. Typhoo and Rainforest Alliance plan to keep these conversations going.



Is India Ready for Sustainable Consumption?

Per Bogstad, Senior Manager for Markets Transformation at Rainforest Alliance, reflects on the recent commitment to Rainforest Alliance Certified tea by Apeejay-owned Typhoo and examines what is required for a wider move in India towards a more sustainable future – one that involves the private, public, not for profit sectors and the media



Per Bogstad

At the Rainforest Alliance, we work all over the world to fulfil our mission to conserve biodiversity and ensure sustainable livelihoods by transforming land-use practices, business practices and consumer behaviour. To fulfil the first of these objectives we need to work with farmers that are willing to join with us, our partners to start a journey towards a more sustainable future. This involves farming in a way that protects the natural environment, safeguards the well-being of workers and local communities and improves productivity.

Apeejay joined us on this journey almost seven (2008/2009) years ago and currently nine of their tea estates in Assam (out of their total holding of 17 tea estates, which will also be working towards certification in the near future) are certified to independent SAN Standard and certified by the Rainforest Alliance.

Earlier this year, Typhoo, a brand owned by Apeejay, made a bold move that will help fulfil two other aspects of our mission: Typhoo decided to change its business behaviour and commit to buying tea produced sustainably on Rainforest Alliance Certified farms. Crucially, Typhoo made the conscious decision to change consumer behaviour too; it became the first nationally distributed tea



(L-R) Dominique Gangneux, Subrata Mukerji, Per Bogstad and Ashoke Batra

brand to use the world-famous Rainforest Alliance Certified seal.

At the Rainforest Alliance we have always believed that the best way to build a sustainable future is to work constructively with producers, businesses and consumers. We have been building strong, productive relationships with tea, coffee and spice producers in India for many years. But during all this time, I and others have also been talking and listening to packers and brands across the country.

Much of this conversation has centred on how, together, we can build the conditions necessary to engage consumers in India. We have debated how we can move

consumers from the pressing concerns of their day-to-day lives to also focus on the deeper cause and effect of their purchasing decisions. Brands are becoming a more prevalent part of consumerism on the sub-continent and with brands, comes the opportunity to tell stories. Sometimes these 'stories' will focus on the principle attributes of the brand, its taste, its sex appeal, its sophistication. But, through brands, other stories can also be told that go deeper, that align the product with a sporting event, a lifestyle or even a cause. Tata Tea brilliantly aligned its brand with a variety of social causes, including the right to vote and women's rights under

the 'Jaago Re' (jaagore.com) banner.

Typhoo too has sought to align its brand with the environmental cause, highlighting on its Facebook page what is being done to protect the environment. It has highlighted how purchasing decisions can help enable and empower farmers to better protect the environment.

But this is actually only the start of a journey for Typhoo, Rainforest Alliance and perhaps, for consumerism and sustainability in India. Dominique Gangneux, our Vice President for Markets Transformation, recently asserted, "There is a growing community of socially conscious consumers in India who want to purchase brands that enable their commitment to a more sustainable world to be realised." This assertion is based on sound research.

At the Rainforest Alliance, we believe producers, businesses, not for profit organisations (like ourselves) and consumers need to come together as part of a wider constituency of stakeholders, a movement that can drive change at a local, national and global scale. We think this movement will be effective if it includes pioneering producers like Apeejay, Goodricke (who on the back of their commitment to the Rainforest Alliance, launched their own range of certified products in February 2013), McLeod Russel (the largest producers of Rainforest Alliance Certified tea in the world) and KDHP. For this movement to succeed we will need to enlist creative brands, such as Typhoo in India, Lipton (which is committed to sourcing only Rainforest Alliance Certified tea globally and in India as well, by the end of this year as part of Unilever's commitment to sustainable agriculture) and Tata. But we also think the media and governments (through the schemes they support, such as Trustea in India) will also need to play a large role.

Upon launching its range of newly certified products, Typhoo wanted to further explore both the

potential for building a coalition of willing participants for such a movement in India. The company, with help from our team of consultants in India and our communications team in the UK, brought together professionals, from very different walks of life and professions to debate the role that brands, consumers and other stakeholders should play in building a sustainable future.

In April, in two cities, Mumbai and Bangalore, Typhoo and

At the Rainforest Alliance we have always believed that the best way to build a sustainable future is to work constructively with producers, businesses and consumers

Rainforest Alliance brought together their own staff as well as a diverse mix of 'influencers' – people who have influenced the industries they work with and who continue to push boundaries – to participate in 'Round Table', facilitated discussions. In Mumbai this included James Mcintock from 'The Sound, India' – a strategic research and brand consultancy, Priyanka Bhasin – the founder of Design Stack – a multi-disciplinary design house, focused on branding, retail marketing and promotion and Vikramaditya Srivastava, one of the founders of Wingreen Farms, a dips and sauces business that



GOODRICKE



Unilever



created products by working to empower farmers and women from underprivileged communities. In Bangalore, participants in this discussion were drawn from just as diverse a group: Nandan Kamath, the Principle Lawyer at an intellectual property law practice, Ashok George, the Head of Sales and Marketing at KDD – a leading food and beverage distributor with a brand portfolio that includes Mother Dairy, Cherukuri Indira Dasgupta – the CEO of Peoples Institute for Development and Training and Milan Vohra, a successful advertising professional and author for Mills and Boon, besides other personalities including Bachi Karkaria a columnist for the Times of India and Benedict Paramanand, Editor, Publisher, Author Management at Next Media & Publications.



The role of telling engaging stories and how sustainability can be 'packaged' were prominent themes of both discussions in these important cities. How sustainability can be a driver for innovation was also a hotly debated topic of the conversations that flowed in front of an audience of assembled local and national media.

James McIntock felt that sustainability could help to 'humanise' a brand and make it more accessible to consumers. Priyanka Bhasin, asserted that for this movement to succeed, sustainability needs to be made 'desirable'. She argued, sustainability can help companies 'better capture existing markets and create new ones'. In Bangalore Cherukuri Indira Dasgupta argued that sustainability could bring 'depth' to a brand that involved and motivated consumers.

For Vikram Srivastava, the contribution his products made to society and the environment was a vital part of what made the products appealing to his customers, in addition to taste and quality. He asserted that the way Wingreen engaged communities from which his primary producers were drawn, helped to build interest in the products and increase customer loyalty. Priyanka Bhasin, from Design Stack argued that sustainability needed to be aspirational if it were to succeed as market driver.

For others participating in the discussions, the media and the channel through which the message of sustainability is communicated was as important as the message itself. For Amar Wadhwa, who leads on the marketing of the Typhoo brand, reaching out to a new generation through social media, is vitally important to building a 'movement' for sustainability. Certainly Typhoo has heavily utilised its own Facebook page to promote its commitment to the

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Rainforest Alliance. Priyanka Bhasin suggested that the international 'Incredible India' campaign could also be something that brands with sustainability credentials could focus on.

Subrata Mukerji, Business Head of Typhoo's Indian operations said, "Any movement for a sustainable future needed to bring Climate, Community, Consumption and Consumers together". Typhoo, he said was focused on better products and better practices delivering a better world. Dominique Gangneux focused on Rainforest Alliance's objective of focusing on growing community of socially conscious

consumers in India who want to purchase brands that enable their commitment to a more sustainable world to be realised and on our desire for more brand in India to commit to sustainable practices.

Clearly the journey towards sustainable tea in India is, through Rainforest Alliance certification and recent innovations like Trustea, well under way in India. How this journey engages consumers, packers, brands and the media to create a 'movement' for sustainability is something that is likely to involve many constituencies.

With additional inputs from Ashok Batra, Markets Consultant for Rainforest Alliance in India and Christina Cullen, Media Consultant for Rainforest Alliance

NEPAL News

Buying
prices of
green
tea
leaves
fixed



Since the beginning of the tea processing season began, most tea factories in Nepal have fixed procurement prices of green tea leaves. This is the price that tea farmers receive. The rates range from Rs 35 to Rs 45 per kg. Quality tea leaves cost as much as Rs 45 per kg. Organic tea factories have set the price at Rs 60 per kg.

are higher this year with some teas being sold for Rs 65 per kg.

The district is home to a number of big tea gardens, namely Kanyam, Ilam, Suktim and Chilimkot, which operate under the District Tea Development Corporation. Apart from the privately owned Gorkha Tea Estate, other tea factories do not have big tea gardens of their own so they have to depend on two dozen large and 39 small gardens belonging to small and medium scale farmers for their tea leaves. Around 12,000 farmers are engaged in growing tea leaves in Ilam. During the current season, Ilam district is producing around 100,000 kg of tea per day. The villages near Darjeeling sell their tea leaves to Indian factories as they offer relatively higher prices.

According to Shiva Ghimire of Shree Antu, Nepali tea factories have been receiving second grade tea in terms of quality. "Traders from Darjeeling purchase high quality tea directly from the gardens," Ghimire said. Around 3,000 kg of tea are being exported to Darjeeling daily, he added.

The tea factories offer good prices during the first few months of the season, then the rates start declining, said Gyanu Rai of Fikkal. Even though the quality of the tea produced during the beginning of the season is good, production is low.



Contemporary Tea Time expresses deep sorrow for the victims of the recent devastating earthquake in Nepal and stands in solidarity with the survivors. The above photo is of the famous Durbar Square – that was a UNESCO Heritage Site – now destroyed by this natural calamity. This once beautiful place will remain forever in posterity through photos like this.

According to tea factories, they have given priority to the quality of tea and hence have fixed appropriate prices. The tea leaves harvested at the beginning of the season fetch higher prices. The prices



Southern Success



P S Sundar

Good news for south Indian tea

Tea Board Chairman Siddharth's visit to Coonoor on March 20, 2015, brought two major developments for the southern tea industry:

- Tea Board's assistance to Nilgiri Planters' Association for the conduct of Nilgiri Winter Specialty Tea Auction will be revived.
- Tea Board's southern regional office at Coonoor will get more powers due to decentralisation.

Connoisseurs of 'Nilgiris Winter Speciality' teas have received a shot in their arm, with Tea Board Chairman Siddharth declaring that the Board will extend fiscal support to revive the speciality tea auctions.

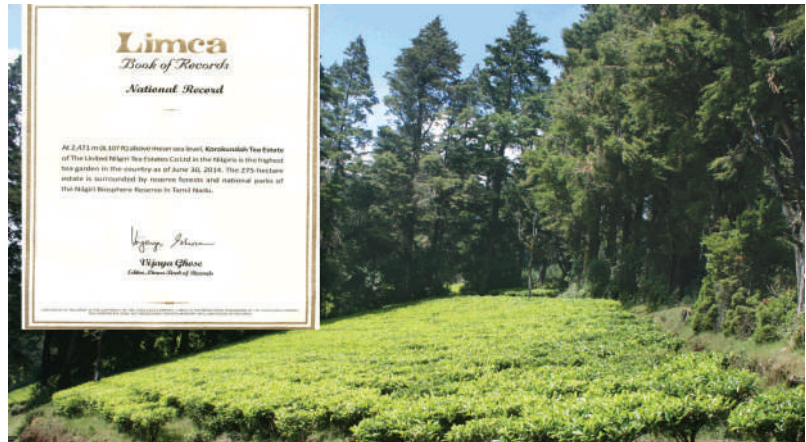
In 2012 and 2013, Nilgiri Planters' Association (NPA) had conducted pan-India e-auctions of Nilgiri Winter Speciality Teas which had fetched prices crossing Rs 10,000 a kg. However, with Tea Board withdrawing its fiscal support, NPA stopped the auctions.

"We have decided to continue to extend our support", Siddharth replied to my specific query.

"We are extending possible assistance to producers. It is up to them to capitalise on market forces and fetch high prices", he said.

"This is good news. This auction had brought in world price records for such teas. We would certainly like to see this auction revived soon", Rajesh Gupta, Managing Director, Global Tea Brokers, said.

On exports, Siddharth observed, "There is no specific target. Our aim is to better previous year's performance. Currently, India's tea exports are facing challenges because of excess



A section of Korakundah Tea Estate at 8107 ft. height; (inset) Limca Book of Record certificate

production in Kenya, higher import duty in Bangladesh, Rupee-Rouble issues in CIS and internal turmoil in some countries. We are however, strengthening our stand in the USA, China for black tea, Egypt and Iran besides focussing on traditional markets".

On domestic marketing, he said that there is no aggressive promotion because with population increase, consumption is on the rise. Tea Board is focussing on specific promotional ventures, he said.

"We have empowered Tea Board's southern regional office in Coonoor with more executive authority. Most decisions can now be taken at Executive Director's level itself. Decentralisation has happened. From headquarters in Kolkata, we will only issue guidelines but decisions can be implemented here as we have full faith in our region-level officers", he said.

"We will extend all help from

Government through Tea Board and urge you to utilise them", he told a meeting of Small Tea Growers' Societies.

"Now, 140 societies are under the Board's guidance in south India. Through them, quality is being emphasised with differential price for quality green leaf", Tea Board Executive Director R Ambalavanan said.

"To commemorate 65 years of service to the tea industry by Coonoor South Indian Regional Office, Chairman has released a postal stamp", Director of Tea Development Soundararajan said.

Former Vice Chairman of Tea Board T Rangaiah, who delivered the keynote address, urged the Chairman to revive tea development project in Kundah. "Tea fields have become an eyesore there as technology is not put to use. There is need to help Small Growers to put up mini factories", he said.

Something near impossible has

happened in the Nilgiris. Tea plantations have successfully been established at a whopping height of 8,107 feet above sea level in Korakundah braving inhospitable weather, challenging terrain and threat from wildlife.

The achievement has not gone unrecognised. Limca Book of Records has documented this as a national record. In his certificate received in March end, Vijaya Ghose, Editor of Limca Books confirmed,

“At 2,471 metres (8,107 feet) above mean sea level, Korakundah Tea Estate of The United Nilgiri Tea Estates Co Ltd (UNITEA) in the Nilgiris is the highest tea garden in the country. The 275-hectare estate is surrounded by reserve forests and national parks in the Nilgiri Biosphere of Tamil Nadu”.

"So far, Korakundah was holding record as the highest tea estate at 7,920 feet. Now, we have broken our own record", UNITEA Director D Hegde said.

This record is not just in India, but the world-over. "Korakundah already has Elite World Record as the highest organic tea garden in the world. Efforts to get entry in Guinness Book of World Records are underway", he said.

"Organic cultivation and high elevation make Korakundah tea a champagne among premium teas from the Nilgiris", Korakundah



Tea Board Chairman Siddharth (2nd right) releasing Tea Board's postal stamp in Coonoor with Board's Executive Director Ambalavanan (2nd left) receiving it in the presence of former Vice-Chairman Rangaiah (extreme left) and Director of Tea Development Soundararajan (extreme right)

Manager Ajit Mathews added.

In a tea-hub, it is quite common that almost all social service organisations will have a high-level presence and participation by people from tea industry or trade. The services they render will help upgrade the life-style of workers and families directly or indirectly engaged in tea business.

An instance in point came to light in February through the Lions Club of Nilgiris which is fit for emulation in tea hubs all through the country.

Daughters of tea estate workers attending schools in and around Coonoor will henceforth benefit from incinerators to burn off used sanitary napkins, thanks to a project of this Club on improving the health and sanitation in girls' schools.

"Tea Board had earlier issued grants to us for erecting some buildings. Now, Lions Club of Nilgiris has installed incinerator

and sanitary napkin supplying machines in our school. This will benefit some 1,300 girls mostly hailing from tea estates and poor economic background", Sister Amalorpavamy, Headmistress of St Mary's Girls Higher Secondary

School, Coonoor, told me.

Another such highlight happened in the tea hub of Kotagiri. "A scintillating Bharathanatyam Arangetram by five girls from different parts of Tamil Nadu conducted by St Jude's Public School and Junior College, Kotagiri, enabled people from different districts to come to our tea town and appreciate the budding artistes along with tea planters here", CTTA Chairman Ramesh Bhojarajan told me.

"The performers, Puja, Dhanya Sakthie, Madhumitha, Miruthanya and Shuvetha are our students staying in our hostel. So, we are conducting their Bharathanatyam Arangetram ourselves inviting their well-wishers from their home districts", St Jude's Chairman P P Dhanarajan said.

"We gave intensive Bharathanatyam training to these students through Guru Gayathiri Punniyamurthy, a graduate of Kalakshetra Chennai. This is our first attempt to stage Arangetram now and already there are requests for more", Principal D Saro said.

Distributing the certificates, I cited some nuances of Bharathanatyam which they should learn to sharpen their skill and excel. It is not common for a regular school to conduct Bharathanatyam Arangetram but St Jude's helped tea and dance come together.

Photo : Author



Students of St. Jude's Public School and Junior College performing Bharathanatyam in Kotagiri

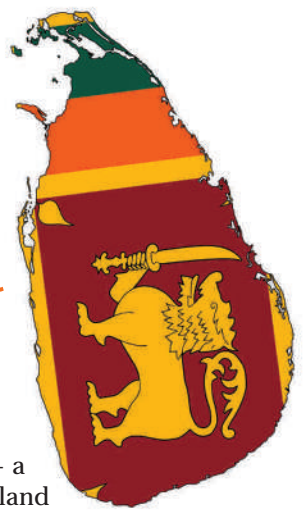


Tea Country in Sri Lanka



S K Dutta

S K Dutta of Contemporary Brokers recounts his recent visit to the Emerald Isles



Due to a late change of our leave plan, we decided to go for a week's trip to our neighbouring country, so I along with my wife, son and grandson took off for Sri Lanka. After



quaint region of Nuwara Eliya – a hill station in the centre of the island which is also the centre of the Sri Lankan tea industry. Spread across the numerous hills in this region, in a setting reminiscent of our very own Kurseong – Darjeeling, are various tea estates dotting the landscape and we could not miss this opportunity of visiting a garden or two.

Our first stop on the winding roads amongst mist covered hills was the picturesque Bluefield Tea Estate, which also included a fantastic museum for tourists like us, complete with a big and very well designed cafe stocked with various grades of tea as well as all the different types / colours / flavours of teas that they produce along with their various accompaniments. Although the factory lends itself to tea tourism by providing guides to show visitors around, the very enthusiastic Director / CEO – Al Razak and the Manager, on learning of my background, were very accommodating and gave us a personalised tour of the factory. We had a very interesting round of *chai* and conversation with the CEO and his colleagues in the picturesque tea museum cafe. It was an amazing experience to talk about and compare notes with our Sri Lankan counterparts whose tea experiences were very similar yet notably different from ours.

an initial short stay at Kandy and Bentota, we proceeded to our next destination.

It felt like a home away from home. One of the stops in the beautiful island of Sri Lanka was the

Onwards and upwards we continued from



Bluefield towards the summit town of Nuwara Eliya passing various tea gardens in the midst of breathtaking vistas, including the huge Hollywood-inspired "MACKWOODS" as well as various vegetable vendors along with dozens of sellers of avocados and strawberries, fruits that are bountiful in the area. The route was steeped in mythology with a temple and the hidden part of a jungle where Sita was supposedly found out by Hanuman. We reached the town situated at a height of over 5600 feet above sea level, to find it possibly even more beautiful than the drive upwards.

The entire place seemed to be straight out of the early 20th century England with colonial style houses, police station, brick designed post office, markets and even a very pretty, 18 holes – 6200 yards golf course along with a beautiful English designed club. The people themselves were also very friendly and while there I also took the opportunity to visit another tea garden namely Pedro.

Next morning I visited one more tea factory of a well known group. The factory is situated at an altitude of 6300 feet and tea areas stretching even higher at 7200 feet above sea level. What is interesting and amazing is how they use every inch of land cultivating either with tea and the small terraces by growing various vegetables, fruits or alternative crops. Sri Lankan tea production is evenly distributed throughout 12 months, because of its rain pattern. Sri Lankan tea growing regions are classified as High Grown which is situated at 1200 metres and above, Mid grown which is between 1200



and 600 metres and Low Grown i.e. area which is below 600 metres. I was given to understand that about 33% of total Sri Lankan tea production comes from High Grown region, which has golden colour, bright liquor with good

flavour. Mid Grown areas contribute about 27% of total production which has rich mellow taste and good cup colour. Balance 40% are produced in Low Grown areas with strong and colourful cup characteristics. There is one tea auction centre in Colombo and main sale auctions are held on Tuesdays and ex-estate sales on Wednesdays. There are eight registered brokers as of now at Colombo Auction Centre. I collected some tea samples from three estates for comparison with our own produce. Few notable things are : smoking in public is banned which is strictly followed, hardly any vehicle use horns with practically nil air pollution, no beggars could be seen on roads. It was pleasing to know, the country has very low crime rate.

Sinhalese are basically peace and fun loving and very friendly and government attempts at better tourism are noteworthy. While we enjoyed Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage, Turtle Hatchery Farm, Madhu river, boat rides, the impressive Royal Botanic Garden, Spice Garden, Zoo etc. we returned back after spending a full day at Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka.

Many colonial buildings influenced by the Portuguese, Dutch and British exist alongside structures built in Buddhist, Hindu, Islamic, Indian and contemporary architectural style.

All in all a very enjoyable visit to Sri Lanka.



INDIA TEA TRADE DINNER 2015



(L to R) C S Bedi, Gopal Poddar, Bharat Arya, A N Singh, A K Bhargava, Azam Monem, Vijay Dhandhania, Tapan Choudhury and Binod Bansal at India Tea Trade Dinner 2015

Indian Tea Association organised the India Tea Trade Dinner (ITTD) 2015 on April 8, 2015, at The Oberoi Grand Hotel, Kolkata.

ITTD, a signature event, brought together all segments of the tea industry and trade in India and overseas, to facilitate exchange of views and take stock of the industry at the onset of the tea production season.



(L-R) Nayantara Palchoudhuri, Sujata Parekh, Madhavi Goradia Divan

TRA begins sale of latest tea clones

Giving a fillip to the tea industry of the state, the Tea Research Association (TRA) started the sales of two kinds of cuttings that contain the recently developed clones (technically called TTRI_1 and TTRI_2), which are enriched with the qualities for production of Orthodox tea and tea with draught-tolerant ability respectively.

According to the TRA scientists, both of these latest varieties of clones will comparatively produce better quality of tea in the state gardens as they are different from the 31 types of tea-clones, earlier developed by it.

As TTRI_1 variety of clone has proved to be drought-tolerant during scientific experimentations, the scientists were categorical in asserting that it would definitely

contribute in production of quality green leaves for the economic benefit of the industry even during the adverse weather conditions while the TTRI_2 variety can be



prescribed for production of the Orthodox variety of Assam-tea, which has a high demand in the international market.

“After releasing these two clones, TRA is taking the initiative to supply cuttings in a limited

number to all its member gardens. This initiative will help the members of TRA to establish these new clones and get full advantage in terms of crop and quality in the near future,” said Dr S K Pathak, Deputy Director (advisory service Assam) of TRA.

He said that 30 cuttings of each of the two clone-contents will be supplied to 100 member-gardens in its initial stage and the gardens are expected to produce the same kind of cuttings for extensive plantation across the state in further stages.

Each of the cuttings were sold at Rs. 15. Asked about the change of its price in the future, officials concerned said price will remain same for five years after which it will decrease to 50 paise after the period as per prescribed guidelines.

Brand Darjeeling to Score

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry **Nirmala Sitharaman** told the tea industry stakeholders that the Centre will be happy to see the Darjeeling tea brand gaining more market in the global arena. The

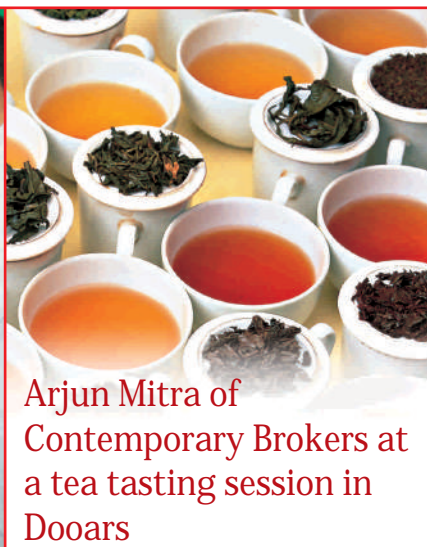
Siddharth, Additional Commerce Secretary **R R Rashmi** as well as representatives of the Indian Tea Association (ITA). On the minimum wage for the tea garden workers, she said she would write to the Chief Minister of West



Nirmala Sitharaman Minister, Small Tea Growers' (STG) umbrella body CISTA requested for restructuring the Small Grower Development Directorate (SGDD) with an active advisory board so that SGDD functions like a small tea grower-friendly institution and for the establishment of a post of Deputy Director (Tea Development) in Jalpaiguri and one Assistant Director (Tea) post in Islampur, Uttar Dinajpur. At present, in India, small growers account for more than 37% of the total national tea production, compared with just five percent in the early 1990s.

Minister was listening to the problems and prospects of the tea industry in Siliguri. Almost all tea industry bodies and other stakeholders presented their prescriptions to clear the hurdles plaguing the sector. The meet was attended by Tea Board Chairman

Bengal, **Mamata Banerjee**, to resolve the issue as early as possible. Unveiling a Rs 200 crore-package for the tea sector under the 12th Five Year Plan, she said all tea trade licencing processes through the Tea Board will be done online. In a memorandum to the



Arjun Mitra of Contemporary Brokers at a tea tasting session in Doars

4th India International TEA & COFFEE EXPO

Niladri Saha of Contemporary Tea Time reports

The fourth India International Tea and Coffee Expo was held at the Science City Ground in Kolkata from February 26 to March 1, 2015. This much awaited trade event that took off in 2009, was enriched by the participation of many countries across the world like Dubai, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan etc as well as Indian companies.

Managing Directors, Chief Executive Officers, Directors and Managers of several companies and Directors and entrepreneurs visited the Expo.

Among the companies that put up stalls at the Expo were Mission Hill Tea Estate with their Darjeeling varieties, T & I Global (Mainak Hill Tea Estate) with their Green tea and other CTC tea bags, Mohani Tea, Chamong Tea with their Darjeeling and Darjeeling Green tea, Glenburn Tea and teas from Nepal, Bhutan etc. The objectives of the Expo are a coming together of 100% focused buyers and new brands, establishing lasting trade relationships and exploring opportunities for market growth. The attendees came to the Expo for a variety of reasons like looking for tea and coffee manufacturers, tea and coffee bag manufacturers, roaster and blender manufacturers, tea and coffee accessories, tea and coffee ware.

Distributors, wholesalers, retailers, international buyers, bulk buying agents, importers, exporters, trade buyers, suppliers, brokers, tea and coffee speciality retailers, brand manufacturers as well as government officials and casual visitors flocked the Expo. A total number of eight countries with 125 participants attended the eight conferences. Three industry awards were given away.





Kolkata CHAI FESTIVAL

Kolkata Chai Festival was presented by Tea Junction at the City Centre, Salt Lake from March 13 -15, 2015. The three-day festival saw tea tasters, tea estates, tea rooms and tea brands come together to offer visitors the cup of their choice. The participants included Tea City Super Cup, Chamong Tea, Yule Tea, Makaibari, Meri Chai, Golden Tips, Teesta Valley, Dhruba Tea, Mission Hill, Dolly's Tea and others. The range of delectable tea was accompanied by mouth watering snacks, hot music and lots of entertainment.



HAPPENINGS



COVER STORY

The single most appropriate adjective to describe the Goodricke Group would be 'responsible'. This is reflected in the top quality of its teas, its commitment to sustainability measures, the facilities it extends to its workers and also in its efforts to uplift the quality of life in areas beyond tea through its CSR activities.

The



GOODRICKE
Glory



The Goodricke Group is a part of Camellia Plc. U.K., the second largest tea producer in the world. The company was incorporated in the State of West Bengal, India, on June 14, 1977, as a Public Limited Company under the provisions of the Companies Act 1956. Pursuant to Section 29(2)(a) of the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973 (the FERA), Reserve Bank of India agreed to grant permission to carry on business to the Sterling Companies, subject to takeover of the gardens by an Indian company to be formed. Accordingly based on schemes of merger and with the sanction of the Calcutta High Court, the eight Sterling Companies were amalgamated, and the Goodricke Group Ltd was effective from January 1, 1978.

These Sterling Companies had established tea gardens progressively in late 1800s and were carrying on business in tea in India. The Sterling Companies together owned 17 tea estates in India, 12 of them in the district of Jalpaiguri and three in Darjeeling in West Bengal and two in Darrang district in Assam. Headquartered in Kolkata, India, Camellia Plc. has



Happy workers

three more companies apart from Goodricke – Amgoorie India Ltd, Steward Holl (India) Ltd. and Koomber Tea Company Pvt. Ltd. Today Goodricke Group Ltd. together with its associated companies comprises 27 tea estates.

There are five in Darjeeling, twelve in Dooars, eight in Assam and two in Cachar region. They also have a state-of-the-art Instant Tea Plant, in an export oriented unit, located in Aibheel in the Dooars, in addition to a warehouse in Guwahati for storage and transport of teas. Besides these, they have three packaging units spread across the country that cater to the packaging of their own branded/ packaged teas. The company continues to pursue its proud legacy of producing the finest teas.

Out of a total of 27 tea estates, which have 15518 hectares under tea cultivation, the Group produced on an average 27 mkg and exported about 5.00 mkg.

The parent company, Camellia's primary businesses are agriculture, food storage and distribution, engineering, banking and financial services.

Seventy four percent of the paid-up share capital of the company is held by UK companies and the balance 26% are held by Indian bodies, corporate, financial institutions and individuals etc.



"Self regulation by the producing countries could lead to a stability of supply in the global tea markets"

Speaking to *Contemporary Tea Time*, Arun Narain Singh, Managing Director of Goodricke said that the greatest challenge being faced by the industry including Goodricke Group, was of climate change. Erratic weather patterns were creating havoc at the plantations. There was rampant proliferation of pests on one hand and crop loss on the other, due to little rain or excessive rains at other times. With having to follow all compliances, strictly, these vagaries of nature were placing additional burden on the producers. Recently, the heavy deluge of rain followed with little or no sunshine in north eastern India, has resulted in huge crop losses during the month of June and has also led to decline in quality.



On the burning issue of the notification that bought leaf manufactures must sell 70% of their produce through the auctions, so that the price sharing formula can be implemented, he felt that the present system could not provide the infrastructure to handle the volumes entailed and some innovative reforms were necessary to facilitate the sales of such teas. The six week cycle between production, sales and prompt was too wide and needed to be shortened to attract these producers into a transparent e-sale system. Perhaps an ex-factory catalog with continuous sales, could provide an answer?

On exports he said that while the Orthodox market is good and will remain good for the best and good varieties, the medium and lower categories will find it difficult to obtain remunerative prices. He was hopeful though that due to the loss of Kenyan crop some demand will come into the south Indian markets from Pakistan, the second largest importer of teas for consumption in the world after the Russian and CIS countries, apart from the traditional importers who are normally active in north India. However, the Tea Board must simplify the shipment procedures. It should work on the basis of self declaration by the exporter. The present system is slow and not conducive to the exports.

Lastly he mentioned, some producing countries have mooted a 'Producers Forum' to regulate global production. Self regulation by the producing countries could lead to a stability of supply in the global tea markets and in turn benefit all concerned. Sri Lanka is promoting this idea.

Management Structure

The Company is managed by the Board of Directors consisting of one Managing Director and CEO, three independent Directors and two Non-Executive Directors, all professionals.



The Goodricke Corporate Office team dressed up for the launch of the Company's premium brand of CTC tea "KHAASS".

www.goodricke.com
like us on [f/Goodricke](#)

প্রতি চুমুকে আড্ডা জমুক

Main marketing thrust and future plans

At present, the main marketing thrust is on bulk exports besides a focus on the FMCG market for value added tea in the domestic market.

Branding exercises

With Goodricke operating in a dynamic and ever changing FMCG category, the company's branding exercises have always been planned and executed in tandem with the current market requirement. Over the years, various branding exercises have been executed, keeping in mind the objectives that needed to be

achieved. For example, with the mass selling brand, Goodricke Chai, the company had to communicate and establish the value for money proposition. This was done with the help of ATL activities such as TV commercials, print ads, radio, out of home advertising, in-film branding and BTL activities like sampling, shop visibility etc. Similarly for its premium Darjeeling brand Roasted, which is also the numero uno selling Darjeeling tea brand in Kolkata, the company wishes to run a brand awareness campaign to validate the choice of its existing consumer base and further attract new users. Using OOH as the lead media platform, the campaign was

supported by frequent BTL activities such as target sampling, loose tea shop branding and consumer offer.

The company's primary motto is to produce top quality teas, always, in all growing areas where it operates. All the factories of the group have been modernised over the last eight years to world class standards and have been certified by global certification agencies. All



Vermicompost at Thurbo Tea Garden

moribund tea areas are regularly uprooted and replanted with fresh high quality clonal and bi-clonal teas/sapling. Also, irrigation facilities have been expanded to all areas, to ensure good health of the tea that leads to good quality crop. Last but not the least, is the high calibre of the estate management which has kept the Goodricke quality flag flying high over the decades.



Well equipped Koomber hospital

The cost of production has gone up considerably on quite a few accounts like fuel, fertilisers and pest control. The workers' wages are also going up periodically, in line with the National Wages Index. Moreover the commodity status of the tea curbs the prices and all of these factors together lead to very low or no margin for the producers. The only way out is to ensure high quality that commands a premium and good yield by maintaining the estates very professionally. To reduce the dependency on synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, the Group has instituted a R&D unit by initiating a Dairy project based out of Danguajhar Tea Garden in the Dooars. High quality vermicompost and bio chemicals are being produced from this facility for agricultural use in the company's own estates.

CSR activities

At the heart of all its activities, the Group earnestly believes in taking it's corporate citizenship seriously. It is involved in quite a few CSR activities, of which a few are:

a) The Goodricke School for

Special Education in Siliguri, north Bengal, has been in operation since April 2006. It is the one and only school with state-of-the-art facilities available in this region for children with special needs, and has been specifically designed and equipped for them.

b) The Goodricke Group's tea gardens employ in the ranks, tribes from remote corners of the country, who belong to the socially underprivileged section; thus bringing political, economical and geographical upliftment to various indigenous people. The Group takes great pride in being the Corporate that empowers the largest number of women in West Bengal, through employment.

c) The company also has four packing centres spread across Siliguri, Kolkata, Indore and Bhopal, that provides employment to people with special needs. This is its endeavour to allow specially-abled individuals to grow independently and become contributing members of their families.

Sustainability efforts of the Group

With its belief that sustainability is an act of responsibility and necessity, all the Group's gardens have several certifications for environment-friendly operations, ethical work processes and contribution towards socio-economic upliftment of its labourers. Rainforest Alliance Certification, Organic Certification,

Fair Trade Certification, UTZ certification and the ETP – Ethical Tea Partnership certificates, to name a few, are held by the company. Water harvesting systems in all newly built factories have created large water bodies, thus contributing to environmental preservation. Also large scale planting of trees in areas not under tea plantation, is just another contribution to the environment.

Two surgery camps are held every year in collaboration with German and Australian medical professionals who come and operate on patients with cleft lips and orthopaedic surgery for children suffering with legs and hand deformity. These are hosted and financed by Goodricke at their Group Hospital situated at Aibheel.



Irrigation

Labour Facilities offered by the company and Management Relationship

Goodricke Group cares deeply about its employees. It ensures that its garden workers have the best possible housing, electricity, access to fresh drinking water, well equipped hospitals, maternity clinics, creches, good schools and subsidised rations. Garden children are provided free school bus services to the nearest schools imparting education at higher level. The Group believes, every individual must be provided the necessary conditions for both the company's growth and his personal growth. The Group also offers scholarship to meritorious students of its workers to help them pursue their studies without any problem.



Bitter Battle over brewing



Kalyan Sircar

Tea evokes arguments, litigations and reconciliations

A bitter and fierce war over brewing has broken out in this country of biggest tea drinkers. Much is at stake – science, experience and old fashioned belief are at each other's throat. Invectives and insults are freely exchanged. The air is palpable with anger, shock and animosity.

The issue is an important one: the time that tea leaves or bags should be brewed in hot water before it is ready for pouring.



The first warning bell came from a group of researchers at University College London. "What frustrates me is that the British think they know about tea, but most people have no idea what they are doing. I feel people are missing out on a drink which is so much more sophisticated than they realise. Tea is made of 30,000 different chemicals, it's a very complex thing and those molecules take time to emerge and influence each other." This pronouncement came from Mark Miodownik, Professor of Materials and Society, who led the research. The problem is that we betray all the people who grow and pick these plants in order for this wonderful complex drink, by throwing all that away by brewing it badly. The enraged professor continued, "Fair enough if you want a hot milky drink, but then why drink tea? It's like using a laptop to hammer a nail into a wall. Yes, it will do the job, but it can do so much more.". Prof. Miodownik recommends that tea should be brewed up to five minutes, anything less is not tea, but "a hot milky drink."

Talking about tea our professor

became emotional. "I wooed my partner, Ruby, over a pot of loose-leaf Assam. She liked the romance of me carefully making a pot of tea for her. A lot of tea drinking is about the ceremony." He lets us know that they now have two children and Ruby even knits him tea cosies!

Scientific arguments and emotional appeal did not receive much appreciation from millions of tea drinkers. One enraged drinker shouted: "Five minutes! Leaving a tea bag in the mug for 300 seconds is an absurd indulgence!" Bill Gorman, Chairman of the Tea and Infusion Association (formerly the British Tea Council) said, "I am always skeptical of any scientist entering the world of food and drink and saying 'this is the way to do it'." Five minutes or less is a matter of personal taste", Bill Gorman suggests pragmatically.

One irate drinker threatens that five minutes is too long, creating a brew as dark and malodorous as anything Macbeth's three weird sisters could concoct.

In the opinion of Alex Probyn, a master blender and owner of Blends for Friends, it takes at least

90 seconds for the just boiled (always freshly drawn) water to start drawing antioxidants out of the leaves. "The longer you brew it, the better from a health perspective. But to many the product may be completely unpalatable.

Most producers of tea bags know that average time tea bags are left in mugs is 40 seconds. As a result, they contain small leaves with lots of surface area allowing us to make decent cups swiftly.

And the fact is that 96 percent of tea drunk in Britain, 165 million cups a day, is made using a tea bag.

A five-minute infusion is 'unpalatable'. Yes, this is because in the process too much tannin is being extracted. The answer, a helpful James T McG from Rafford, Morayshire suggests, is to add a very small pinch of salt. This causes the tannin to fall to the bottom of the cup, leaving an excellent and tasty brew. Always cover the mug

in which you brew your tea bag. Try the mug's own lid or a saucer. This keeps the liquor in proper condition for drinking – another helpful advice from Jo Newton from Barrowby, Lincolnshire.

Finally, we drink tea not for its benefit to our health, but because we like it. And we brew it according to our own taste. This is what the vast majority of people believe, and follow. Scientists and other experts keep out!

Another 'war', this time local and small in scale, was fought in a genteel village on the edge of Epping Forest, Essex. And 'victory' was won, and celebrated.

Hill Wood Hut is an 84-year old tea shop, now run by Bradley Melton, the fourth generation owner. The little place in the village of High Beech is popular with bikers, walkers and horse riders. Now suddenly, the City of



London Corporation has announced that the Hill Wood Hut would be put out to tender. This enraged the village folks to no end. Immediately, a petition was started, and Facebook page opened by the Tea Hut regulars, calling for the Hut to remain under its current ownership. Soon the petition was signed by some 9,000 people and it received the backing of the local MP. After seven months the Corporation backed down declaring that Melton has won the tender, and can keep the family business. Naturally, 'I'm over the



Bradley Melton and (top left) his Hill Wood Hut tea shop

a cuppa and a biccie is just what you need when you've been trotting through a bog on a winter morning, said one rider.

moon', said Melton, and thanked his supporters. Villagers are said to be ecstatic. It has been a long battle.

One commentator took the long view. "Tradition and the right thing seem to be on the slide in UK, but because of the efforts of some good people the right result has come to the fore."

Regulars are now assured that they will continue to enjoy the good refreshments at reasonable prices in such beautiful natural surroundings. Joy all round. Sometimes

Finally, a cup of tea helped breach the 10-year rift between the parents of twin sons

The couple who broke up six months after their sons' birth, have been in conflict ever since, meeting each other in court 24 times.

Finally, when the case came to Justice Pauffley's Court, she said her advice was that the couple sit down for a cup of tea and settle their arguments. They agreed, and started sharing their sons. The Judge said: "I suggest that when the boys were dropped off and picked up, each parent should be made welcome in the home of the other, invited to sit down around

the kitchen table and offered a cup of tea."

Now at peace, the happy father has taken the trouble to provide supplies of health-giving drink, and the mother responded positively.



The former couple, it is rumoured, may now even meet for dinner. Other family members are said to be 'gobsmacked' by the peace.

The writer is an academic based in London



SCOTTISH TEA



Despite cold temperatures and a general belief that the location could not possibly be suitable for tea production, the Wee Tea Farms's tea plants are thriving in central Scotland

When going in search of the world's best cup of tea, you might think of heading to lowlands of Assam in India, or of taking a trip to the Far East and the mountains of Oolong. But the finest brew in the world is actually being grown by a Northern Irishman on a disused sheep farm in Scotland, and has just been awarded the prestigious Salon du The Gold Award in Paris.

The fragrant leaf is so rare and so highly prized that grower Tam O'Braan is selling it for £1,150 per lb – 200 times the usual price – making it the second most expensive in the world. In addition, most of his tea is being exported to China, a feat likened to selling coals to Newcastle.

The Wee Tea Farm in Perth and Kinross in central Scotland has 4,000 tea bushes in the ground and despite the short time since they were established here in 2012, and in contrast with the six or seven years that cold-climate tea farmers would normally wait before harvesting, the tea is already being plucked and processed



O'Braan founded his Wee Tea Company in 2011 with £140,000 and just three plants. He spent years on organic farms around the world, studying how best to grow crops in Scotland's cold climate and convinced himself he could do it.

While he initially met with success, creating 2,000 cuttings from his original plants, disaster



What started your interest in tea? Basically, it was to impress a girl. I wanted to speak to a shy young woman who I'd seen in the university library when I was studying at Edinburgh over 10 years ago, and followed her when she left for lunch. She nipped into a tea shop and I followed. I went up to the counter and asked for a coffee. The tea connoisseurs gave me scornful looks. The owner took pity and made me a ginger *chai* latte, and it was superb. An evangelical beam of light hit me from the great God of *Chai*! That owner was Jamine Russel, now the head teamaker at Wee Tea, and the girl in question is now my wife.

officially the best cuppa on the planet.

What makes Wee Tea so distinct?

It is the first tea grown in Scotland and against all the odds it has turned out to have an amazing flavour that is all down to the "terroir" (as wine-tasters would say). It will not surprise many that Scotland is not a natural growing climate for tea but growing *Camellia sinensis sinensis* the original tea plant, from China – is possible, mainly due to an evolutionary path that stems from the Himalayas as a mountain shrub.

Japanica is the variety of *Camellia sinensis* that is now indigenous to Japan. Likewise, the Assamica is that which we all know grows wild in India, or did before (mainly Scottish) plantation owners built an industry on the back of Indian labour. Going back 179 years, this relationship wasn't fully accepted or maybe just understood in botanical science. Robert Fortune (a Scot from Berwickshire) wrote a synopsis for the Royal Botanical Gardens of Edinburgh covering the likelihood of growing tea in Scotland. He concluded that tea plants 'capable of withstanding the winter in Britain' were growing in India.

struck in 2012 when the coldest winter in 200 years all but killed his crop.

In February last year the plants sprouted again, and batches of White and White Smoke Tea were revealed to the world.

He sold his first tea at Christ-

mas by mail order, with most of it going abroad, and Fortnum and Mason have now started stocking the leaves of £30 for a 35g sachet, or roughly £10 per cup.

The White Smoked variety was handed the top gong at Paris's prestigious tea awards, making it



What teas do you like personally?

"I'm still a fan of that ginger *chai* I had over a decade ago. Since I stopped drinking coffee, I can now appreciate the finer points of a Darjeeling", says O'Braan.



Elegy on Bhaiya

by Shruti Verma

Dear Prafull,

Enclosing an Elegy written by a planter's daughter on her elder brother's untimely demise recently in New Delhi. It is so well written, I feel strongly that it deserves publication in Contemporary Tea Time.

I leave it to you to decide.

Shruti Verma is the younger daughter of M P and Poonam Verma. Of their two children Manish was the eldest son, who recently died of cancer. He was a Chartered Accountant working with Uninor in New Delhi. M P was my Assistant in Dalsingpara and their two children were toddlers then.

That's all for now. Old memories bring back the other days around me, when you were our leader arguing against CPM Labour Minister, Krishnapada Ghosh at the Rotanda, in Writers Building. Those were really glorious days.

With my warm regards,

Yours sincerely

P K Basu
Managing Director
Basu Tea Pvt. Ltd.

Dear Bhaiya

Thank you for your love
And memories that we've created over the years
From today however
life will never be the same
I will never hear your voice again
I will never again get to see your face
I can no longer ask for a warm embrace
One day all that will remain
Will be but memories of our shared past.

We may in the near future
forget our grief
Hoping that you have somewhere found relief
Maybe one day we will manage to talk
without the mention of your name
But not today.

Today all we know is that you've left us behind
Today you're constantly on our mind
Remember you've taken with you pieces of our heart
Take good care as we try and restart
Another chapter of our lives
Without you.

It's been a privilege having you as my brother
I couldn't have asked for any other
Kinder, gentler, nicer
co-conspirator.

Cancer.
We always think it happens to someone else
Why you? Why now? And why so soon?
Questions that remain unanswered
and will continue to haunt us every night
What could possibly have led to your plight?
What I do know
And promise to never forget
Is that you fought like a lion
Till the very end
These are the things I promise to remember you by
Your strength,
Courage and Determination
Till your forced goodbye.

You know I've always believed that you were meant for a
kinder, gentler world
And even if we are never to meet again in this life
I am happy just knowing you found your way there.

All My love
For only Love Remains.

Flavours in tea cups

The consumption of flavoured, green teas, homegrown and imported teas are up

Young corporate executive Rahul Gupta drinks green tea every night after dinner. "It relaxes me and boosts my system with antioxidants," he said.

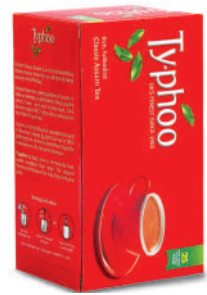
Homemaker Meena Patel's social ladies group meets at least twice a week at each others' homes, when snacks and new varieties of teas are served.

Sunita Bhargava, 46, a housewife with a history of cardiac problems, made room for a cup of green tea in her daily routine, deviating from her usual *kadak* and *masala chai*. And now Kareena Kapoor and Anushka Sharma are

packs in tea. "Today, that number has doubled."

At most retail outlets including Food Bazaar, Nature's Basket and Auchan, tea as a category has been outshining overall sales growth, with increasing sales in organic, herbal, fruit and Chinese teas, besides tea infusions. "From being asked whether we stock green teas, today customers ask, if we have Oolong, jasmine or flavoured green teas," Khattar said.

"Seventy percent of Indian tea drinkers were already using cardamom, ginger and cinnamon to enhance flavour. Now, in larger



Many posh gourmet stores, including those of five star hotels – The Taj and Le Meridien, for example – now stock Japanese Sencha, African Rooibos and Sri Lankan tea blends, alongside the best of homegrown Darjeeling and Assam.

"We even invite tea sommeliers, like wine sommeliers, as we see a huge demand and urge to experiment with new flavours of tea," said Meena Bhatia, VP Operations, Le Meridien. "In a year, demand for green and lemon tea has increased by 25%."

Apart from green tea, tea flavourants inspired from flowers, fruits and spices are emerging populars. "Flavourants gaining favour are the primarily imported smoke, rum and citrus peel teas," said Manuj Terepanthi, CEO, Organic Shop, which claims of a 100% spike in flavoured tea demand over a year. "All these flavours further create over 500 blends."

"Increasing disposable incomes, the influence of western lifestyle, increased travelling and international exposure and the surge in cafes are promoting the culture of experimenting with tea," said Reetesh Shukla, Associate Director, Food Services and Agriculture, at Management Consultancy Technopak.

Courtesy : Hindhustan Times



endorsing green tea (brands) as healthy beverages.

"While some consumers come because of doctors who prescribe white and green tea for stress, hypertension, diabetes and post-chemo cases, the other generation is one which now considers tea as a 'cool' option," said Mohit Khattar, MD, Godrej Nature's Basket. "Three years ago, our stores had 300 active

cities, the trend of deskilling – in cooking – among women has boosted consumption of tea bags and flavoured tea," said Vikram Grover, VP marketing, South Asia, Tata Global Beverages, which owns Tetley and Tata Tea. The company's green tea sales growth has touched triple digits, Grover said. TGB plans to significantly add to its six green tea variants.



Treasure Trove



Important facts and amazing posters on tea

Which is the largest per capita tea drinking nation? The world's most avid tea drinkers are from Turkey, where the average per capita annual consumption is 6.96lb. They are followed by Ireland (4.83lb) and the UK (4.28lb).



Who is the largest producer of tea in the world? China with 1,980,000 tonnes, India is second with 1,184,800 tonnes, Kenya third with 445,105 tonnes (2014 production).



How many cups of tea do the British drink each day? 165 million cups daily or 60.2 billion per year.

What percentage of British tea is consumed from a tea bag? 96 percent of all tea in the UK is made with teabags. Hand-sewn muslin teabags date back to 1903. Teabags became commercially available in 1904.



Are we now a coffee drinking nation? No, the number of cups of coffee drunk each day is estimated at 70 million. Worldwide, around three cups of tea are drunk for every cup of coffee.

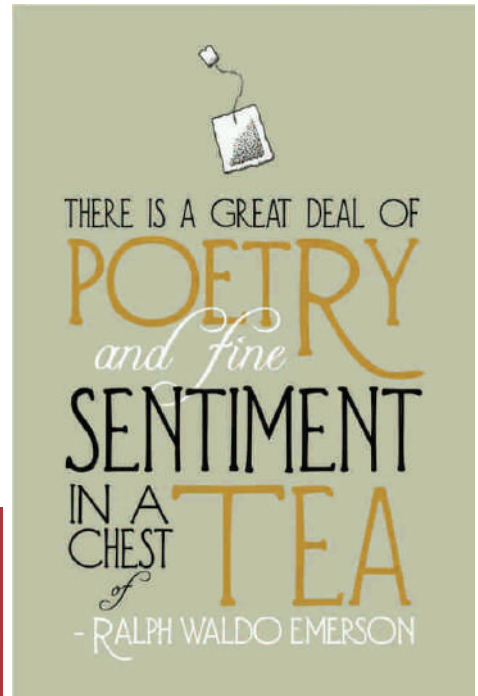


Does tea contain antioxidants?

Tea, like fruit and vegetables is a natural source of polyphenols and flavonoids which have antioxidant activity.

Does the addition of milk reduce the antioxidant value in tea?

No, it does not appear to affect the bioavailability of the tea flavonoids.

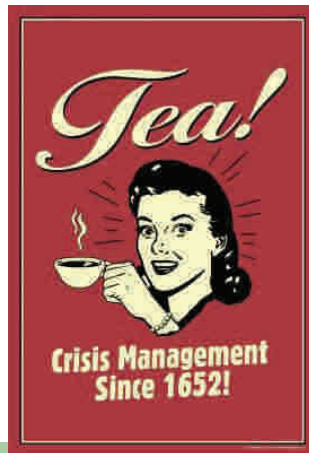


Do green and black teas come from different plants?

No, they both come from the same plant known by its botanical name *Camellia sinensis*.

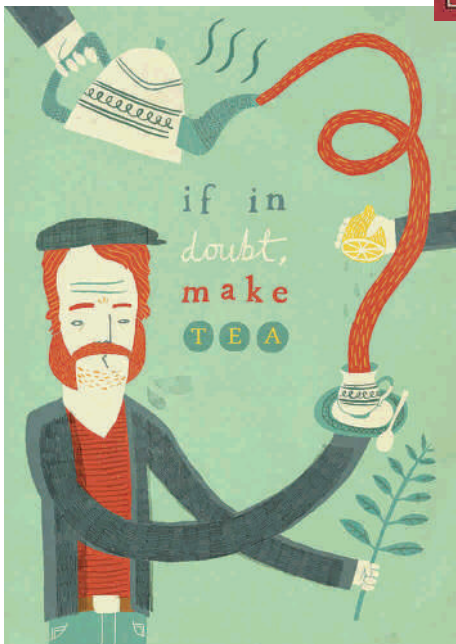
Does tea contain the same level of caffeine as coffee?

No, at least half the level of coffee.



Why does tea refresh you in hot weather?

It simply raises the body temperature momentarily, you perspire and the perspiration on your skin creates a cooling effect. Cold drinks quench your thirst but do not reduce your core temperature.



How do you produce decaffeinated tea?

Simply by "washing" the tea leaves towards the end of the production process in an organic solvent. The method is strictly governed by legal limits.



How many varieties of tea are there?

UK Tea & Infusions Association estimates about 1,500 varieties of *Camellia sinensis*.



What percentage of tea is taken with milk?

98%

Posters courtesy : Ben Ahmed
Information courtesy : Dinesh Bihani,
Secretary GTABA



Ray and TEA



Here is an
interesting story
linking Satyajit Ray
with tea

Kathmandu was one of Satyajit Ray's favourite places. He most often than not visited there.

This passion of his was never publicised much. Satyajit Ray who created many celebrity ambassadors, was once asked to endorse a tea brand by Brooke Bond / Lipton.

The location for the shoot was fixed at Kathmandu. According to HLL, the shooting could have taken place anywhere in the world, but Ray chose Kathmandu.

The attached image of Ray and his wife Bijoya was taken at Soaltee Oberoi, Kathmandu. Ray did the styling and Nema Ghosh chose the clothes.

Unfortunately because of some unforeseen reason the advertisement fell through.

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

Dated : 1-03-2015

A Nandkeolyar

Publisher

125th AGM of ABITA

The 125th Annual General Meeting of the Assam Branch Indian Tea Association was held on February, 14, 2015, at the District Planters' Club at Bokel, Dibrugarh.

Addressing the august gathering, the Chief Guest, Carrie Auer, Chief of Field Services, UNICEF said that the wellbeing of women and children in plantations must be duly addressed in more rights-based mechanism that the country as a whole has already adopted. Lauding the partnership of ABITA and UNICEF she added that in keeping with the social responsibilities of the tea industry, ABITA as a tea management association has emerged as a driving force behind schemes and projects to improve the living conditions of the plantation workers and their families, bringing some positive changes among the plantation workers in ABITA member gardens like minimising maternal death ratio, child marriage, child trafficking, water sanitation issues and anaemia etc.

The ABITA Chairman, Ashok Krishan acknowledged that with the support of the UNICEF, the quality of life of the workers and their families have made remarkable progress, qualitatively and quantitatively. On the programmes of the National Health Mission, the ABITA Chairman urged the State Government to expand its health interventions by including more tea estates.

He further said that the years ahead would not be easy for the tea industry. "We should be prepared to meet the challenges of the environment and those posed by the climate change in relation to production and above all, the ever changing society and their aspirations."



The Chairman said though the Plant Protection Code has been welcomed, the industry hopes that a practical and effective implementation is brought about for uniform compliance. "Our objective is to bring about a reduction in chemical load in the plant and secure a pest free tea growing area. To this end we draw the attention of the Tea Board of India to work out a long term solution for the tea industry for the benefit of all concerned," he said.

A K Bhargava, Chairman, ITA, stressed the need to work closely with all concerned for the success of the tea industry. Azam Monem, Vice-Chairman, ITA, Sujit Patra, Additional Secretary, ITA, Sandip Ghosh, Secretary, ABITA were also present. Paban Singh Ghatowar, former Union Minister and Chief Advisor of Assam Chah Mazdoor Sangha, attended the open session and gave away the Best Farmer Awards as nominated by the ABITA Gramin Krishi Prakalpa. The open session also had an exhibition area which was visited by the participants after the meeting.

Chai-ho-jaye Campaign

To reach out to the youth with their aspirational lifestyles and present tea as an exciting and appealing drink, Indian Tea Association has been initiating several B2B and B2C promotion programmes in many cities like Hyderabad, Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Delhi, Kanpur, Amritsar, Indore, Nagpur, Pune and Gurgaon.

After overwhelming responses to the above programmes, ITA in consultation with Tea Board initiated a B2Y (Business to Youth) Tea Carnival targeting the youth segment through *Chai Ho Jaye* – a generic tea promotion campaign aimed at making tea the most



preferred beverage amongst the youth.

Through the carnival, ITA has been trying to open up the

magnificent world of tea – its rich history, various types of tea, preparation styles interwoven with cultural diversity. And to make Indians aware of the versatility of Indian tea.

In the first phase of the B2Y campaign, ITA participated in six college fests in institutions like Hindu College, Venkateshwar College, Shri Ram College of Commerce in Delhi, Amity Institute of Biotechnology in Noida, Government Medical College, Khalsa College and Chitkara University in Chandigarh and Jadavpur University in Kolkata.



A herd of elephants is seen in a lush green tea plantation. The elephants are of various sizes, including adults and calves, and are scattered across the tea bushes. The background is filled with tall, thin trees, creating a dense forest setting. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Partners in Conservation

Apeejay Tea and WWF-India join hands to reduce the impact of Human-Elephant Conflict in Assam

APEEJAY Tea and WWF-India announced their partnership for finding lasting solutions to prevent and manage Human-Elephant Conflict (HEC) in Assam by implementing a three-year, exhaustive management strategy in the most affected elephant landscapes of the state. Focused on decreasing human and elephant mortality levels substantially from that recorded in 2013, the first phase of work of this alliance will commence immediately with an intensive conflict management effort in Sonitpur district.

Speaking about the partnership, Ravi Singh, SG and CEO, WWF India said, "WWF-India has been working relentlessly towards managing this conflict – due to unprecedented fragmentation of elephant habitats isolating resident wild elephants – in Assam. We welcome Apeejay Tea's interest in thinking beyond securing their own tea estates in Sonitpur from wild elephant attacks and considering a holistic approach at reducing wildlife conflict in the entire state. The partnership has the potential to set an example for collaboration in this region for the benefit of both

people and wildlife."

Over the past few years, HEC has become more severe with large volumes of crops getting destroyed, people getting killed, and ultimately elephants being killed in retaliation. Sonitpur, the second largest district in Assam, is also known to have historically borne the brunt of HEC, recording the most human deaths and damage to crops in the state for years. In Sonitpur, there have been 206 human and 131 elephant fatalities between 1996 and 2009. More than 50% HEC related human deaths have been recorded from the tea estates. From 2001 to 2014, out of 245 people who died in Sonitpur due to HEC, 128 people are from the tea estates. The large number of people killed by elephants escalated in 2001 leading to 32 elephants being killed in retaliation in a single year.

Apeejay Tea, one of India's largest and oldest tea producers, has four tea estates in the "hot zone" – Dhulapadung, Ghoirallie, Borjuli and Sessa – in Sonitpur district. Speaking about the alliance, A K Bhargava, MD, Apeejay Tea, said, "By making this commitment, Apeejay Tea in partnership with

WWF-India, recognizes the need for bringing into action a sustainable plan for minimising and resolving human elephant conflict in the tea gardens of Assam, a plan which can be easily replicated by other impacted tea estates. So far, Apeejay Tea has done its best to work with other NGOs and Forest Department of Assam to conserve and protect wild life, including elephants. Our approach has been 'our home and theirs'. A better and stronger and sustainable coexistence strategy was needed as the forest habitats of elephants have depleted rapidly and more and more animals have sought shelter in our estates."

The three-year project entails building on the very successful 10 year old "Sonitpur Model" enhancing its scope and impact with the focus on piloting new ideas in view of the severity of damage and loss shouldered by the tea estates as revealed in the statistics above. WWF-India has been actively working on elephant conservation and HEC management in the Sonitpur district since 2004, along with the Department of Forests, Government of Assam, community groups and a civil society organization called District Community Development Programme. A unique, ongoing model of HEC management set up by this alliance, now referred to as the 'Sonitpur model' – that includes the use of *kunki* or captive elephants to drive wild elephants from fields and tea estates, training anti-depredation teams to facilitate elephant drives and empowering the local community – has shown a marked decrease in human deaths and reduction in crop and property damage over the last decade.

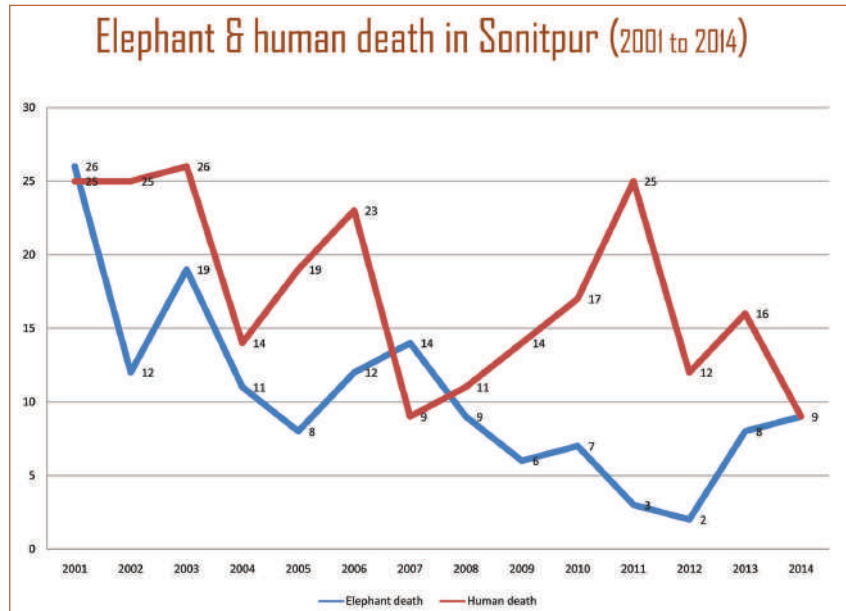
The way the project will address the key issues are:

- ❖ A matrix will be developed to calculate the



quantum of loss that is usually borne by the tea estates on account of damage to property, including tea bushes and shade trees, infrastructure and injuries among residents.

- ❖ This matrix will bring the issue in strategic focus and will attract attention and investment for a new agenda for adaptation and management that would



benefit the state, region and country.

- ❖ Mapping of the new paths that elephants have established, to move away from forest areas, will be done for the first time in the tea gardens.
- ❖ Securing elephant movement path adjacent to Sessa, an Apeejay Tea garden in Sonitpur, will be the start point for tracking and early warning of elephants on the move.
- ❖ The route used by elephants through Sessa Tea Estate will be formalised as a movement corridor.
- ❖ The corridor will be hedged by a bio fence, in place of the electric fence that has been the norm so far. This is the first time that bio fencing will be used as protection that is safe for elephants and other wild life.
- ❖ The nurseries for growing the thorny bamboo will be inside the Apeejay Tea estates in Sonitpur. The nurseries will be replicated in other Apeejay Tea locations in Upper Assam in the next two years.

Further, a structure to monitor HEC in Sonitpur district and replicate it in Nagaon, Golaghat, Sibsagar and Tinsukia districts will be developed. As part of the comprehensive management plan, 16 monitors will be put in place in various strategic locations of the district to gather maximum information of the raiding elephants and damage done. Apeejay Tea and WWF-India envisage a substantial reduction in conflict and mortality rates of both humans and elephants.



GREEN CURE

A review of Green tea constituents on reducing risk of cancer and its treatment

Amongst the thousands of degenerative diseases that afflict human populations worldwide, cancer is considered by the majority to be one of the most devastating and traumatic. Although the etiology of cancer is unquestionably one that is multifactorial in nature, there is a constant emphasis placed upon the attempt to identify specific areas that can be targeted for prevention and conjunctive treatment of this disease. Cancer's cell cycle hinders healthy cells from living and flourishing, resulting in the eventual destruction and overtaking of the body's organs/tissues and the eventual cessation of the individual's health. These subsequent cellular degradation events result in death of the host from cellular starvation and homeostatic disruption. With an estimated worldwide cancer rate increase of 75% in the next two decades, it is crucial to identify and implement the use of chemopreventive substances into our diets that reduce the likelihood of developing cancer and

facilitate the treatment.

Alike the manner in which cancer cells disrupt normal physiological processes of human cells, so must a therapeutic phytochemical be capable of interrupting the normal life cycle that allows cancerous cells to metastasise and overtake healthy functioning human tissue. Being in the best interest of both health practitioners and their patients, the oncological medical research community is in a constant dynamic of searching for effective methods to help (1) reduce the risk and prevalence of cancer within a given population and (2) identify and incorporate therapeutic substances into the conjunctive treatment plan for those afflicted by cancer. Through the use of the 21st century positivistic research methods and technologies, a therapeutic imbibed substance known to many as Green Tea (GT), has in recent years been identified to have strong therapeutic capabilities as a result of its high potency of a strong antioxidant catechin phytochemical; Epigallocatechin 3-gallate





Regular consumption of GT has been shown to aid tone the immune system, specifically by promoting T-Cells to recognise and phagocytise cancerous cells

(EGCG). The oncological capabilities of GT can now be not only considered simply as a palatable beverage with medicinal capabilities rooted in thousand year old Asiatic Medicine, but rather be seen as an effective therapeutic substance that after undergoing rigorous and scrupulous scientific analysis has shown to possess true medical practicality in combating cancer.

Regular consumption of GT has been shown to aid tone the immune system, specifically by promoting T-Cells to recognise and phagocytise cancerous cells. A specific cellular chemical property known as an alkylamine, is shared amongst a number of cells which include cancer cells and more astonishingly amongst edible plants such as GT. Therefore, drinking GT primes T-cells to mediate a response to re-exposure of such alkylamines which could be caused by cancerous cells, thus teaching the body to recognise such cellular property markers and better mount an immunological response to it in future. The similar



alkylamine characteristics found in GT expose the T-Cells to their structure and unique composition allowing them to recognise similar patterns in the future which could be found on cancerous cells. The ability that GT has on toning immunological memory allows for a bridge between the innate and acquired immunological abilities of the body.

Excerpted from Review Article – A review of Green tea constituents on reducing risk of cancer and its treatment published in International Journal of Tea Science





Errol O' Brien

TEA QUIZZY

QUESTIONS

- 1) Because of its hardness it was used as an alternative for grass. Buckingham Palace still sports such lawns. Which plant is this, whose flowers are used to make a medicinal tea as a cure for insomnia?
- 2) How are Random, Herringbone Gridiron and Interceptor connected?
- 3) On which Darjeeling Estate was the Hollywood film, *The Way Back*, shot?
- 4) If you ordered Matcha ice cream in Japan what would be the flavouring?
- 5) Describe Ronga Saah, a popular brew in Assam.
- 6) Tea gardens are often named honouring or are romantically attached reminiscing incidents and people – Margherita, Manjushree and Diana. However name the tea brand of limited vintage from Margarets Hope created as a mark of respect for a ninety eight year old worker from this estate.
- 7) Which rule to make a perfect cuppa as laid down by the British Standard Institute tea making guide is conversely divergent to the taste of George Orwell – the author of *Animal Farm* – born in India as Eric Blair?
- 8) Which type of tea was once produced with a tobacco cut and no wither?
- 9) What would a tea taster refer to when describing the body in the liquor of a tea?
- 10) The clones of Purple Tea are being propagated by Tocklai. a) Which country is mainly associated with Purple Tea and b) the bushes of this tea are apparently scattered through which tea growing area in India?

Answers

- 1) Chamomile • 2) Four types of drainage systems required in tea areas • 3) Cedars/ Rungmook • 4) Powdered Green tea • 5) Red tea without milk • 6) The Brand under the worker's name is Purney Subba • 7) Orwell was a protagonist of – tea first in the cup and then the milk • 8) Legg Cutt • 9) Possessing fullness and strength • 10) a) Kenya b) Cachar

Ensuring consistent cuppage value, flavour and taste

Manoj Jhavar, a major tea buyer operating in Siliguri, Guwahati and Kolkata Auction centres speaks to Contemporary Tea Time about his tea journey

I am not from a tea background. I was a chemical engineering graduate from Kanpur and had tried to start something on my own in the chemical industry. My father was a dealer of edible oil in Kanpur and Siliguri. In 1986, I visited Siliguri Tea Auction Centre, saw the running auction and was very much influenced by the selling system of tea. I decided to start my own tea business with the support of my tea community friends.

I began as a freelance taster and blender. I purchased from different auction centres by tasting and evaluating the average cost price and blend sheets. I generally preferred to buy teas from the Siliguri and Guwahati auctions. I used to first evaluate the consumer taste and quality of other popular brands in that particular area and tried to give a blend which had a better taste and strength. We accept packet tea projects on a turnkey basis.

We continue to assure consistent cuppage value,

flavour and taste throughout the year to the packet tea consumers. We also assist in marketing flavoured tea and tea lounges. Now I am a full time tea taster and blender.

I believe that a tea should have taste and flavour otherwise there is no point drinking it. I guarantee the quality of tea inside the packets. A packet tea blend must have cuppage, colour and strength, natural taste and a good shelf-life.

I worked for different packeters whose brands were selling very successfully in Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, parts of Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. K. B. Tea Products Pvt. Ltd., Nuddea Tea Co. Ltd., Sugandh Tea Co. Ltd. and Jai Bharat Tea Estate Ltd were some of my clients. Today our major clients include Pataka Industries Pvt Ltd. Kolkata, having brands like Pataka Special Leaf Tea, Pataka Mukta, operating nationwide; K. B. Tea Products Pvt Ltd. Siliguri, having brands like City Gold, Magic, Royal Taste, operating mainly in north India; Dalmia Tea Packaging Pvt Ltd. Siliguri, having brands like Dalmia Gold, operating mainly in Bihar, West Bengal and Jharkhand; Rungta Tea Pvt Ltd. New Delhi, having brands like Real Gold Premium, Real Gold Select, operating in north India. We are also working for regional clients having operations in Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh.

I have often been asked about my views about e-auctions. There is a difference between teas sold through a website and that sold through auctions. A tea auction is a live system which respects the sentiment of the buyers as compared to online auctions.



Obituary

Narendra Kumar

Narendra Kumar, Chairman of Wearit Group and a former Director of Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd. (BCCL), passed away recently



in Kolkata. He was 81 and is survived by wife Pramod Rani, son Manish and daughters Neerja and Nandita.

Known as a visionary in the tea industry, Kumar held several important portfolios. He was the Chairman of Indian Tea Association (ITA) from 1989 to 1991. He also headed Consultative Committee of Plantation Associations (CCPA) and was the Chairman of Tea Research Association (TRA) from 1993 to 1996.

According to his son Manish, Narendra Kumar has left behind two tea companies and a robust textile business. The tea companies – Scottish Assam India and SPBP Tea India Ltd. – have gardens in Assam. Wearit Group has textile plants in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The Group has four plants in these two states.

Sarala Birla

Sarala Birla, wife of industrialist Basant Kumar Birla, passed away in New Delhi recently. She was 90 and is survived by her husband and two daughters, Jayshree Mohta and Manjushree Khaitan and grandson Kumar Mangalam Birla. She lost her son, Aditya, at a relatively young age. A human being of rare quality, Sarala Birla was an accomplished academic, an extremely supportive wife, a doting mother, a philanthropist, and a pragmatist.

She was born on November 23, 1924 at Kuchhaman



in Rajasthan to Brijlal Biyani, a respected freedom fighter. She did her schooling from the Government High School, Akola, Maharashtra, acquiring fluency in Marathi, Hindi and English. This not only opened doors to the world outside but refined her abiding interest in the languages. She went on to complete her higher studies from Pune's Fergusson College. She developed a keen interest in the French language in the later part of her life and continued to study it till the end.

Sarala Birla had wonderfully balanced progressive thinking and upholding traditions throughout her life.

Tea rooms *desi* style

Innovation and creativity have taken tea lounges across India to a new high

AAP KI PASAND

The Aap Ki Pasand business has been built around a passion for aromas, flavour and a commitment



San-Cha tea boutique at Dariyagunj, Delhi

to quality that took shape back in 1981 in the form of a tea boutique nestled in the busy business district of Old Delhi. The Sancha story is a passionate one scripted by a young professional tea taster who set up Delhi's first and only Tea Boutique catering to the epicure and offering the finest teas produced in the country. The Aap Ki Pasand Tea Gallery as it was christened back in 1981 is now a historic landmark in old Delhi and a favourite haunt for travellers to Delhi and connoisseurs alike. Written and reviewed by almost



San-Cha tea boutique at Gurgaon

Sanjay Kapur's letter to Prafull and Nayana Goradia

Dear Prafull and Nayana,

You recruited me as a student from Mumbai in 1975 and I have returned to the city with a gift of fine teas for Mumbaikars.

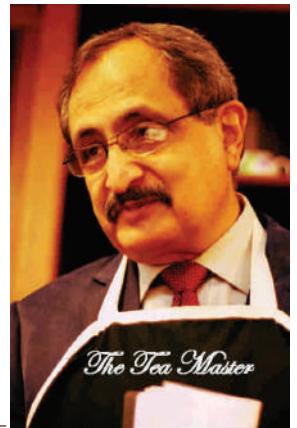
During this eventful journey, I learnt my alphabets (TGfOP) at Duncans under your aegis. Your dynamic marketing strategies injected a spoke of energy which has lasted all these years. I keep going on, non stop, drinking cups of tea and discovering more flavours.

Thanks for noticing Sancha. It is a tributary of the big river you set in motion

Thanks once again

Best Regards

Sanjay Kapur



Sanjay Kapur

every international travel writer and food critic, the brand remains India's most revered for quality.

The Sancha Selections

The Sancha selections represent teas that are painstakingly assessed and selected by the professionals from amongst thousands of batches



Dariyagunj boutique interiors

produced in the country of origin, India. The brand is professionally managed and guided by Sanjay Kapur, a master tea taster with four decades of experience in tea manufacture, blending and marketing.

Sancha offers over 35 successful SKUs which include unique single estate teas and blends of Indian varietal teas and teas with natural spices/herbs.

Aap Ki Pasand has built its worldwide reputation as exporters of fresh teas through skill sets that enable the team of tea tasters to choose the finest teas from select tea gardens that have a longer shelf life. The master tea taster and his team have extensive knowledge of various teas grown across India. In fact, the company's research has dug deep into understanding soil, climate and rainfall which have resulted in Aap Ki Pasand being able to mark out areas which produce exotic teas which naturally possess grassy, woody, flowery, floral and muscatel notes. These discoveries are the company's trade secret and a part of a specialised body of knowledge.



The newly opened San-Cha tea boutique in Mumbai



TEA TRAILS

Be it Lapsang Souchong, the Chinese tea with a smoky flavour or a Yerba Mate, the favourite Argentinean green tea for Lionel Messi, one can have a cuppa of both these and much more at Tea Trails, the cheerful tea lounge in Mumbai's Bandra-Kurla Complex



Kavita Mathur of Tea Trails

(BKC). The brainchild of Kavita and Uday Mathur – who made their mark in the education sector before moving into tea – they are targeting 20 to 40 year old Indians who are willing to explore a whole new world of teas. "We want to open 500 outlets in five years," says Uday. Tea Trails has four outlets in Mumbai currently. The Mathurs are experimenting with different formats from tea cafés and takeaway kiosks in malls, to tea lounges in office buildings to a high-street café.

Two more outlets are in the pipeline in Mumbai. And over the next year, they plan to move into markets like Hyderabad, Bangalore, Pune and the NCR. Tea Trails has over 100 teas from



around the world. You can sip a Temi Black from Sikkim or try the gourmet white tea, Silver Needle, from Darjeeling. There are green teas like Genmaicha and Sencha from Japan and also international teas like the Russian Caravan. Prices range from Rs 75 to Rs 160. Innovative tea-infused dishes like Tea Marbled Eggs and a Burmese Tea Salad are available at their BKC outlet.

WAGH BAKRI LOUNGES

In Delhi, Wagh Bakri, a 122-year-old Ahmedabad-based tea company, has opened three tea lounges – the latest is in the upmarket Greater Kailash neighbourhood. Wagh Bakri is famous for its mass market offerings that are highly popular in Gujarat and Western India, but at its lounges, it is offering everything from Assam tea to Earl Grey and even iced teas, green teas and also organic Darjeeling tea



Wagh Bakri tea lounge

brews for health conscious connoisseurs. Wagh Bakri's first tea lounge opened in Ahmedabad some years ago and it also has two in Mumbai. "The urban consumer doesn't mind paying extra for better tea and the youth want to experiment with a variety of tea forms and flavours. Our tea lounges are changing consumer perceptions about tea," says Parag Desai, Executive Director, Wagh Bakri Tea Group.

CHAI POINT

Amuleek Singh has started Chai Point, which serves tea at

'micro hubs' and also offers 'chai on call' delivery services – to offices and shops – from 72 locations across Noida, Delhi, Gurgaon, Bangalore and Pune. "We had seen the power of the beverage. We just gave people a more hygienic option, because the average working Indian professional drinks *chai*" says Singh. Chai Point, which offers six regular flavours, starting at Rs 20, such as *dum* (or strong), *masala* and ginger, also serves innovative flavours like apple ice tea and a cold caramel ginger latte, priced from Rs 60 onwards. Chai Point serves and delivers nearly 100,000 cups of tea a day today, and has 60 companies from Infosys to Yahoo subscribing to its Chai@Work service. Singh plans to take Chai Point to Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad later this year and to triple his stores over the next two years.

VARIE TEA

One of the early players to spot the opportunities in relatively upmarket offerings was Rishit Patel, who is a fourth-generation tea estate owner. Patel's family owns several tea gardens such as Belfari in Upper Assam, and the family firm, Variety Foods, has been exporting tea for years. "Since we were already packaging teas for high-end international brands, we thought we should get into retail on our own in



So in 2009, Rishit Patel of Varie Tea

Patel moved from Kolkata, where he grew up, to Gujarat to open his first VarieTea lounge in Vadodara. "Gujarat and Maharashtra are among the largest tea consuming markets in India," says Patel, who is now based in Ahmedabad. Patel now has three VarieTea lounges in Vadodara, Ahmedabad and Surat. His lounges offer around 90 teas including 15 signature teas specially blended at his tea estates like the Rose Oolong, a mix of Oolong, rose buds and lemongrass. Patel is looking at 50 outlets in the next two years. He's already set to open two more in Ahmedabad and also move into Bandra in Mumbai by November.

ANAMIKA SINGH'S TEA BOUTIQUES

Anamika Singh offers bespoke blends at her Anandini Tea Boutique in Delhi's fashionable Shahpur Jat. "Till about four years ago, people in India didn't think too much about tea. It didn't have



Anamika Singh

the flavour profile that it has today," says Singh, who grew up on Darjeeling's tea estates and is a tea sommelier by training. But that's changed today. And Anamika has people queuing up for her bespoke blends like the handcrafted Indian Bouquet with its flavours of rose, chamomile, cardamom and lemongrass. "People are more aware of what they sip – and eat –

today. And definitely tea appeals to a younger clientele as well," says Anamika as she serves a pot of pine-wood smoked black tea along with some tea-infused *naankhatais*.

Apart from her own hand-crafted teas, which are sourced from the family-owned Manjhee Tea Estate in Dharamshala, Anamika offers a range of black, green and Oolong teas and also gourmet teas like the limited edition needle tea in her tea room.

CHAI THELA

Pankaj Judge and Nitin Chaudhary saw an opportunity in the corporate workers' tea-drinking habits and came together to launch



Nitin Chaudhary and Pankaj Judge of Chai Thela

Chai Thela in Noida last year. Chai Thela runs tea kiosks across IT business parks and also at the Fortis hospital in Noida. We recognised the potential that tea had. It just needed to be packaged better," says Judge, who wants to dispel the notion that coffee is a premium drink while tea is something that you drink from a street-cart. He adds: "If you offer the same freshly brewed cup of tea in a branded cup at Rs 15 and in a more comfortable environment, why won't people buy it?"

CHAAYOS

IIT graduates Nitin Saluja and Raghav Verma wanted to appeal to everyone from young students to their grandparents when they set up their comfortable and affordable tea café, Chaayos, in the



Raghav Verma of Chaayos

National Capital Region (NCR). It was the search for that elusive perfect cup of tea that brought the two tech firm colleagues together. They have billed Chaayos as a place where you can chill out with friends over a cup of *desi chai* – it can be customised from 12 ingredients. Chaayos offers 25 varieties of tea including surprising ones like *aam papad chai* and *hari mirch chai*.

"We didn't want to set up a gourmet tea room. Chaayos is a place where my parents can eat *vada pav* with ginger tea and feel at home," says Verma. The first Chaayos outlet opened in Gurgaon's Cybercity in November 2012. It has since spread to eight locations across the NCR and he has plans to move into Mumbai, Pune and Bangalore within 18 months. Chaayos has also launched a 'chai on demand' delivery service in Gurgaon recently.

Tiger Global has led a \$5 million financing round in Chaayos. This is the first round of institutional funding for Chaayos. The funding will help the startup expand to 50

outlets across Delhi NCR, Mumbai and Bangalore. The tea parlour will also use the freshly raised funds for pushing its delivery service through its mobile app.



The Fragrance Remains

by Nayana Goradia

In a mood for nostalgia I had taken my mother to see her old neighbour and friend Mrs Adhikari.

A great desolation had swept over the once ornate flat, the tapestry sofas sagging with sunken springs and the satin curtains looking long unwashed. Mildew crawled along the wall's edge and weeds now trailed from the window boxes. The photographs were everywhere as before, covering the piano and standing three deep on spindly-legged tables. The silver frames had dulled from lack of polish and blotches of dirt smudged the glass.

But I could pick out the faded portrait of Mr and Mrs Adhikari as newly weds, their arms intertwined; there were pictures of their two sons as overfed babies growing to lanky manhood and several close-ups of the lady herself – younger, stylish, with tight curls and dancing eyes, now at the race course, now languidly masquerading as Cleopatra at a fancy dress ball.

The lustre had dimmed from the eyes she turned to us, sending misgivings into my heart. Was this the same exquisitely turned out society hostess of my memories hurrying from one fashionable rendezvous to another? She looked so old and forlorn as she crouched over a solitary game of cards.

As recognition dawned she leapt up, sending her chair crashing to the ground as she rushed forward to grip my mother in a bear-like hug. The years melted away and they were young housewives living next door once more, untried by loneliness and tragedy, brimming over with *joie de vivre*.

The years melted away and they were young housewives living next door once more, untried by loneliness and tragedy, brimming over with *joie de vivre*

I thought of the happier days when my brother and I had romped in this home with Mrs Adhikari's sons, the boys condescendingly agreeing to include me in their all male games.

My eyes went to the long wide corridor where priceless China goblets had shivered in their wooden stands as we played a hearty game of indoor cricket. Mrs Adhikari's supercilious bearer had reported the matter subjecting us to confusion, a scolding and loss of a week's pocket money. His snowy-white eyebrows had now become permanently raised, no doubt stiffened from years of continuous frowning at the world at large. Silent, suspicious, he had stared at me without expression. I forgave him. He was a part of the nostalgia.

Much water has passed under the bridge since those days. My younger brother is no more and both Mrs Adhikari's sons have settled abroad. But the ladies chatted as though their talk could have no ending with no recrimination against the merciless sequence of their destiny.

It was time to say goodbye. "Wait", ordered Mrs Adhikari, her voice by now having regained most of its penetrative, all pervasive vigour. She disappeared into her bedroom and returned with an old bottle of scent and pressed it into my mother's hand.

"Don't think I've forgotten", she declared. "I remember it is your birthday. This is all I have to give you today. Some of the perfume may have evaporated but the fragrance remains."



Courtesy: The Times of India



vikram
vision in action

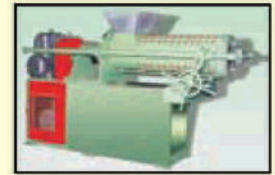
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The stirring tale of Indian tea



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