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Errol O' Brien

# TEA QUIZZY

## QUESTIONS

- 1) Name the Japanese Green tea combined with roasted brown rice colloquially referred to as Popcorn tea because a few grains of rice pop during the roasting process.
- 2) What is a Doko in a Darjeeling tea estate?
- 3) Which evergreen shrub with fragrant flowers during summer is used in a black tea blend such as Earl Grey?
- 4) This is an American tea concoction to describe a hot drink made with milk, water and sugar together with a dash of tea and named after a white linen.
- 5) Name the type of tea rich in Anthocyanin and a money spinner for Kenya. Its bushes are also found in the Karbi Anglong district of Assam where it is termed as 'Ox Blood'.
- 6) What began at the Retreat Club of Manipur?
- 7) Why is it essential for a teapot lid to have a hole on it?
- 8) Where would you be if on the outskirts of Hamilton you were taken on a tour to uncover the history of the culture of tea and watch a tea expert brewing a flavour of exotic teas?
- 9) Under which nomenclature of contemporary forms are Instant Tea, Tea Mix and a Frozen Concentration of tea regarded?
- 10) What connects the Assam tea estate of Doomini and Thurbo in Darjeeling?

## Answers

- 1) Genmaicha Tea
- 2) A basket with a tight weave used by a tea plucker in Darjeeling
- 3) Lavender
- 4) Cambric tea
- 5) Purple tea
- 6) Tea planters playing polo, a game adopted from the native Manipuris called *Sajol Kanjei*. It was set up by John Sherin and seven tea planters in 1850
- 7) To allow a steady flow of air which prevents the tea from dribbling down the spout after pouring
- 8) Zealong Tea Estate in New Zealand
- 9) Convenience Teas
- 10) Both gardens have broken convention and produced Oolong teas which have recorded top prices.





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# Siliguri Tea Auction Committee AGM



The Annual General Meeting of Siliguri Tea Auction Committee (STAC) was held on June 19, 2017, at the Siliguri Tea Auction Centre. Basant Agarwal, outgoing Chairman, handed over the baton to Ajay Garg, new Chairman.

Sanjay Chowdhary, Binod Agarwal, Arun Periwal, Arjun Mitra, Basant Agarwal, Ajay Garg, Nayantara Palchoudhuri, S V Kalyani, Pinaki Majumdar, Prabir Seal and Mr. Dalmia



Speaker ex Chairman Basant Agarwal, Pankaj Das, Secretary STAC, Chairman STAC Ajay Garg



(Back L to R) G D Sariya, Ajay Garg, S K Sariya, Kamal Tewari, Rabi Agarwala (Front L to R) Pinaki Mazumder, Nayantara Palchoudhuri

# Fourth India Tea Forum Meet Under CII

The Fourth India Tea Forum meeting under Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was held in Siliguri on February 26 and 27, 2017.

**The discussions were mainly on:**

- Quality, value addition, packaging and better price realisation
- Innovation in tea, online marketing, branding and success story of startups of tea entrepreneurs
- Synergy between small tea growers and bought leaf factories.

A cross section of buyers from various states of

India – including a lady from Japan – attended the meeting along with some sellers and brokers.

Ravi Agarwal of Hind Associates is the Chairman of India Tea Forum.



HAPPENINGS



# Tea auction traverses turbulent waters



**G**ST has been the buzzword for the past quarter and with trepidations, has been implemented from auction Sale 27, the first sale, post July 1, 2017. The Brokers' operational methodology was revealed only on the eve of the sale. In spite of this, though the transition sailed through very turbulent waters, it has traversed successfully.

A level playing field from a tax point of view is now in existence – whether or not this will disrupt the markets is to be seen. After all, the auctions and its efficient distribution system is well honed and has withstood the test of time.

Looking ahead, the African crop except for Malawi, which is in the plus, and Uganda which is at par, all others are behind by over 55 mkg. While the Sri Lanka and Indian crops are ahead, they do not make up this deficit of over 20 mkg globally. All in all, the effect of the shortfall is likely to be felt as the north India season draws to a close. Pakistan which imports as much as 80% of its teas from Kenya, may have to look towards south India.

Darjeeling is in trouble. The thought is frightening, as to whether these teas will be replaced in cups by Nepal's flavoury Himalayan varieties, who have been strong competitors.

In this issue we cover Prime Minister Narendra Modi's trip to Sri Lanka, Legacy Awards received by the Wagh Bakri Group and the Evergreen Award received by the Ambootia Group.

Excerpts from Prafull Goradia's book – *Fly me to the Moon* and his experience with National Tobacco gives us an insight into Bengal of those times.

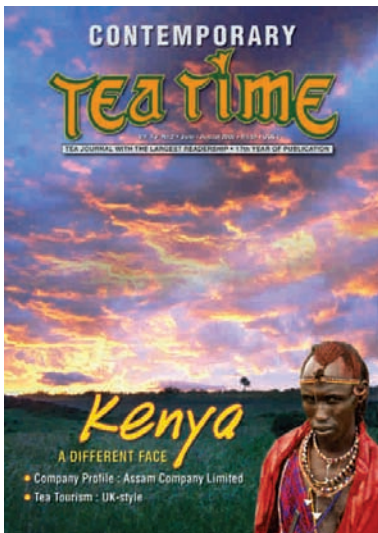
The top tea consuming countries, in the world are profiled, with all our other regular features.



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# Kishoribagh Tea Estate

Setting new goals in production of best teas in the Dooars-Terai region

**R**D Tea Limited has been in plantation and tea manufacturing since 1983 after acquiring the Hansqua Tea Estate in Terai from Duncans. The company was started by the ex-Chairman Kishorilal Dhandhanian and the tea business was taken to greater heights by Vijay Dhandhanian, Managing Director and Sushil Dhandhanian, Joint Managing Director, implementing innovative ideas in plantation and manufacturing best quality tea. The tea plantation was extended to other nearby areas by acquiring freehold land with young plantation under Hansqua-2 and an independent factory under BLF segment with the RD mark.

## The Garden

The tea estates produce excellent quality leaves giving teas of the finest qualities as per auction records. Further, RD plantations give some of the highest yield per hectare in Dooars-Terai. The entire garden is with complete irrigation facility, with young tea bushes, which support the manufacture of good quality tea.

The company has recently set up a modern manufacturing tea processing unit adjacent to the existing manufacturing unit for its own leaves, instead of using the Hansqua factory – to reduce

transportation hurdles – with a new brand Kishoribagh under STAC Code No. K083. The BLF factory continues manufacturing under RD brand under BLF category STAC Code No. R019. This extended setup is fully equipped with advanced technology. The machines with all equipment supplied by renowned suppliers – Kilburn, Vikram, Babu Das, Bharat Engineering, Parucco, Vinar etc. are fully updated. The entire flow also has been fully mechanised with best of handling.

With this new mechanism the company pledges to use its green leaf to produce tea of excellent quality with a complete monitoring process ensuring best of hygiene, cleanliness and moistureless tea. The entire process will be as per the requirements of TrusTea. The existing factory has also been updated with massive improvements in all the machines and in the processing line for best of hygiene in the manufacturing of BLF-RD quality tea.

## Ensuring Quality

Applied for TrusTea The company's teas have always ranked among the best in Dooars and Terai region Starting from the plantation itself from the processing and its manufacturing,

the company takes the utmost care to produce the best quality tea both in appearance and aroma to satisfy customers

Newly installed vacuum cleaning and electronic water



jet system to keep the factory dust free and damp free, with green belt around the area.

## Our Plant

With RD mark incorporated, the company has all amenities, technology and ability to produce best quality of tea even at very crucial times. The tea processing unit is under full CCTV surveillance and equipped with latest vacuum cleaning machinery to keep the factory dust and moisture free. The entire unit has a new set-up with latest machineries supplied by eminent manufacturers for constant quality check. A battery of experts monitor the quality of each gram by a random system.

The company believes in growing with its customers, auctioneers, employees, encouraging a sense of pride in its tea.

With 33 years of experience and expertise in tea manufacturing, the Joint MD Sushil Kumar Dhandhanian and his team's motto is to offer the customers the best flavoured tea with the finest aroma and strong liquor. RD tea has the potential to provide the best tea due to its unique niche.





# Award for Wagh Bakri Tea Group



**W**agh Bakri Tea Group received the Family Legacy Business Award from Pranab Mukherjee, President of India, in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on May 14, 2017, in New Delhi. Wagh Bakri Chairman Piyush Desai was honoured with the award in presence of Executive Directors Parag Desai and Paras Desai at

Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium. The award was given for outstanding performance by a family business and exemplary family values.

Parag Desai and Paras Desai are the fourth generation entrepreneurs of the Wagh Bakri Tea and are spearheading the business. Wagh Bakri Tea Group has a turnover of over Rs 1000

crores.

On this occasion Parag Desai mentioned “Wagh Bakri Tea Group dedicates this award to crores of Wagh Bakri Tea loyalists and business associates who have exhibited undeterred faith in the brand and encouraged the Group to serve the country by its excellent quality teas for over a century.”

## Goodricke to boost retail biz

**G**oodricke Group is planning to expand its retail footprint across the country to give a boost to its packet tea sales in the coming years. The tea giant will increase its marketing, distribution and sales points



A N Singh, MD and CEO  
Goodricke Group

by 25%-30% this year, said a top official of the company on the sidelines of its 41st AGM here on July 27, 2017.

“For packet tea push, we will look for all modern trade channels. From our direct sales points of 90,000 kirana shops in India, we should

be taking the number to 1,30,000 in a year. We will spend Rs 15 crore for this marketing boost,” MD and CEO A N Singh said. On exploring new territories in the country, Goodricke will spread its packet tea

business in Uttar Pradesh and a few other north Indian states. “We will also look at expanding our online sales of packet tea,” he added.

The Group’s branded tea business was at eight mkg in the last year in spite of stiff competition in the

segment. The company has established a few tea lounges under the flagship Goodricke Tea Pot across metros. “We have plans to open one tea lounge every year as Tea Board offers subsidy for the opening up of such lounges. High end tea bags have been introduced to the luxury hotels and other premium outlets to target high-end consumers,” added Singh. Goodricke has exported 5.5 mkg of tea last fiscal and kept a moderate five percent growth target now.



HAPPENINGS





# Southern Successes

Many happenings in the South draw world attention

**T**hree records from Nilgiris – the Golden Leaf India Award 2017, a joint initiative of Tea Board and UPASI, deserve mention.

A market leader in speciality tea, Avataa Beverages, located in Billimalai Estate, 10 kilometres from Coonoor, has scripted a new page in the annals of south Indian tea by bagging an all-time high price at Sale No: 19 of the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association (CTTA). “It is double crown for us – first, our whole-leaf green tea won the coveted Golden Leaf Award. Now, this tea has fetched the highest price adding another feather to the crown”, Avataa Director G Udayakumar said.

“This tea created history by fetching all-time highest price in entire south India when Sree Sai



**P S Sundar**

Corporation bought it for ₹ 2,086 a kg at CTTA auction. It is proposed to be sold in retail in different countries”, Ravichandran Broos, General Manager, Paramount Tea Marketing, who auctioned it, said.

“This tea has gone to the USA through International Tea Importers, Los Angeles. Chado Tea Mumbai is also selling this tea”,



Avataa Directors Udayakumar and Adithi with their Golden Leaf Award winning tea at the celebrations with the introduction of Lexus range of new cars at Billimalai Estate

Udayakumar said. “This is the third time this grade has fetched Golden Leaf title for us”, Avataa Production Executive ENR Vejayashekara added.

This year’s coveted prize and topmost price was celebrated at Billimalai Estate amidst the presence of the newly launched luxury cars of Lexus India, a division of Toyota. Three Lexus cars – LX450 D, RX 450H and Sedan ES 300H – priced from Rs 55 lakh to over Rs 2.30 crore were driven up the Billimalai picturesque tea estate road as part of ‘Lexus Life’ promotion. This marked a meeting point of one of the best cars of the world with one of the best teas of the world at a height of about 6,400 feet above sea level.



Vigneshwar Estate Tea Factory Managing Partner Ramesh Bhojarajan (*extreme left back row*) explaining Golden Leaf tea manufacture at his factory to visitors



Another noteworthy winner is Vigneshwar Estate Tea Factory which created a consistency in clean sweep. "We competed in five categories and won Golden Leaf award in all. In particular, our Hittakkal group has bagged the Golden leaf in all the 13 editions held so far. For the fifth year, we won titles in Leaf, Fannings and Dust categories in Nilgiris beating even corporate entries. In Orthodox among bought-leaf, we won both BOP and Fannings segments", Vigneshwar Managing Partner Ramesh Bhojarajan said.

Darmona Tea Industry has done hat-trick by bagging Golden Leaf for the third consecutive year. "We competed for Dust category among bought-leaf segment and our Red Dust emerged winner. We have won Golden Leaf award seven times", Darmona Managing Partner Dinesh Raju said.

Newer ventures in the tea hub of Kotagiri in the Nilgiris to link tea with tourism are serving as greater attractions to discerning visitors. The recent such facility comes from the Hittakkal group family of tea plantations and factories under the Chairmanship of M Bhojarajan, former Vice Chairman of Tea Board. Located around seven kilometres from Kotagiri town centre, Silent Woods Resorts is on the world-famous Kodanad Road.

"This 10-hectare property is in the midst of tea field. It is nearly 90 years old. We have been retaining it for our family use so far. Only in the last couple of years, we have converted it into home-stay for the benefit of discerning visitors", Bhojarajan told me. His son Rajesh Chander, former Chairman of Coimbatore Tea Trade Association, who looks after the property, has done remarkable improvements to suit the requirements of the city-bred. "We have created four major rooms in the names of some of the birds which visit here – Woodpecker, Laughing Thrush, Emerald Dove and Hanging Parrot", Rajesh said.

"The beauty of the place is its



Darmona Tea Industry Managing Partner Dinesh Raju with his award winning tea in packets

unpolluted serene air attracting birds and some wild animals", he disclosed. I heard a plethora of birds chirping happily early in the morning.

"We do not allow non-vegetarian food and liquor in this campus. People do not smoke in the serene ambience", Rajesh's brother Ramesh Bhojarajan, Chairman, Coonoor Tea Trade Association, said. Equally attractive is the food prepared by Jagadeesh, young graduate in catering, and the hospitable way his sister Rani serves the guests. "This is the perfect home-stay I was looking for to relax with my family. Spacious, historic and amidst tea plantations, it takes us to a different world. Catering and home service are excellent", S Ramaswamy from Noida told me.

Since the Bhojarajan family is closely linked to tea, it is possible to purchase nice packets of Hittakkal tea from their outlet in Kotagiri town-centre. "Visitors can also get other Nilgiri products like eucalyptus and essential oils, home-made chocolates and varkey", Bhojarajan said.

"We also visited Vigneshwar Estate Tea factory, an upcoming green tea factory, Kodanad estate and view point, trekked through estate to Catherine waterfalls and enjoyed varieties of tea", said R Parvathy, another visitor.

Drought has been a major challenge to tea plantations in the South. Prolonged dry conditions in the opening months of 2017 caused concerns to producers. There was some rain in the Nilgiris in May and June. It is too early to judge whether the impact of drought would be mitigated

because of this as everything depends on monsoon. If south west and north east monsoon are successful, it will be possible to overcome the impact of drought.

Among the measures taken by plantations to beat drought, is invoking the celestial blessings. For instance, migrant labour of tea estates and their families from Jharkhand and Bihar joined Tamil workers and their families to pray for rains at the 40th Annual festival of Arulmigu Devi Karumariamman Temple in Billimalai, 10 kilometres from Coonoor.

"Managerial staff and field workers jointly conducted special puja to invoke the rain Gods as Nilgiris is reeling under drought with acute water scarcity for both plantations and people", G Udayakumar, Director, Billimalai Avataa Estate, which manages the temple, told me. "Priests from various centres conducted the ceremonies. Workers collected holy water from Rattaipalam which was used for Abishegam. Maa Vilakku pooja was also held", he said. Corporate Directors and managerial staff served Annadanam (feast) to over 600 persons from neighbouring villages, including estate workers and their families.

"The deity was taken out in procession in the area. Uriyadi and Manjal Nerattu ceremonies were conducted, to please the rain gods. And, some useful rains followed", Estate Executive Vejayashekara recalled.

In any case, Research and Development staff should face this challenge of overcoming drought with more scientific answers.

Photos : Author





# TEA *for* WOMEN'S RIGHTS



**Peter G W Keen, shows how tea has been a running thread in the history of women's rights movements**

**T**earooms are romantically portrayed as cozy and pleasant places to relax and enjoy teas with cakes, biscuits and sandwiches. Their mythology is reinforced through evocations of scones and clotted cream. Hidden behind the Olde Worlde facade is a darker history of these unobtrusive locations becoming a force exploited by militants pushing aggressively to undermine the Constitution of the USA and the foundations of British and Canadian law. It helped them succeed in their seventy-year effort. Tea rooms were also a business fifth column, undermining stable practices of long standing.

There were three thrusts to this Tearoom Subversion:

1. Use demographic and social shifts to create a new cash economy that bypassed established regulatory and business procedures.
2. Create an organisational base for mobilising militants and co-opting sympathisers.
3. Destabilise family life and roles.

The single cause of all this can be summarised in one word: Women.

This opening is phrased flippantly but is entirely serious and accurate. Tearooms played a core role in all the Women's Rights and Suffragette movements of the 1850s-1920s, freed women to build their own small businesses and provided a space for women to

build an identity and action outside the home.

The commercial innovations reached critical mass in Britain and the US in the 1880s and peaked in the 1920s. Business had essentially been closed to women, as were professional jobs. They could not become doctors or lawyers or get college degrees. Even office work was off limits. In Dicken's Christmas Carol, Scrooge's clerk was Robert Cratchit, not Roberta, and in Western movies just about every bank cashier, telegraph operator and waiter is male. Tea was associated with women – in their place. That meant at home, as hostesses and in small social gatherings.

The story of radical tearooming begins in the very name of "room." In the 1680s, the combination of coffee and sugar had created an entirely new type of establishment in Britain: the coffee "house." It was also entirely masculine; women were legally barred.

Tea took over from coffee as the national drink of choice but there was no tea equivalent of the coffee house. Tea stayed at home.

Thomas Twining built his reputation through Tom's coffee house. He never set up a tea house, but opened a store next door. It wasn't until the 1860s that the

first establishments serving just tea began operation. They were given the disarming name of "rooms."

Women could not run "restaurants" (even as late as the 1910s, many US and UK reports show they could not even get served in them without male accompaniment), apply for business loans, be involved with alcohol sales or intrude on the coffee house culture.

But as mobility and economic growth increased, they could open up a little space in their house or in a rented location. Tea was a natural, familiar and socially acceptable commercial opportunity – just a room. It was a cash business and needed little capital or inventory. It also attracted a new base of women customers. They could meet in groups and even enter alone. The servers were invariably female. It was unthinkable that men should work for a woman boss. Families on a day out wanted to be able to stop for light refreshments, encouraging



the expansion of small women-run businesses in rural tourist areas.

In the US, the Temperance movement boosted tea rooms at the expense of bars. The boom in Home Economics training, the only available career development education for professional women, expanded the range of food and times of serving: adding breakfast and lunch to afternoon tea.

Creative and outstanding entrepreneurs took the home extension to new levels. Catherine Cranston's famous Willow Room in Glasgow, Scotland has been reconstructed and replicated in museums for her innovation in design and sponsoring of major art nouveau in the architecture and fittings of her tea rooms. Frances Virginia built a tea establishment that daily served an estimated one percent of Atlanta's population in the 1920s.

A new cliché emerged: A woman's place is in the tearoom, not the home. For thousands, this translated to running small-scale startups but increasingly it meant using tea as a base for organising, mobilising, educating and collaborating for social reform.

It is impossible to write a history of the Women's Rights movements in the UK and US in which tea is not a dominant running thread. The most noted leaders recognised that the association of tea with women provided a symbolic shared sense of identity plus more tangible advantages for action. The Suffragettes, Women's Rights, Unionisation (women were excluded from membership in craft unions) and related social reform movements of the 18th through early 20th centuries faced a distinct problem: where do women meet to get organised?

Elizabeth Cady Stanton exemplifies both the answer and its impacts. She brought her iconic three-foot travelling tea table to gather together the women who mobilised from all social classes for



the convention – a tea event – that resulted in the 1848 Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments, the opening salvo in the "grand movement" for female suffrage.

Penelope Barker's tea for a larger group of women led to their creating The Edmonton (Carolina) Tea Party in 1774. That initiative raised more than eyebrows. It was among the first key initiatives that mobilised women to manage boycotts of British goods, find substitutes – the aptly named Homespun Movement – and compensate for cutoffs in imports. Barker said, "We are signing our names to a document, not hiding ourselves behind costumes like the way the men in Boston did in their tea party. The British will know who we are." They did and they weren't pleased.

Barker's tea event presaged Stanton's but points to just how powerful a subversive weapon tea was to become. The Declaration of Sentiment is an epochal document. It was signed on the table, which was placed at the head of the casket of Susan B Anthony at her 1906 funeral.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton was joined at her traveller's table by other tea subversives; Mary Shaw the actress and playwright who used tea and theatre to mobilise her community to raise their voices in action, including founding the Gamut Club for them to drop by, fully equipped with gas burners

and kitchen; Alva Benton, the rich Vanderbilt family member, employing her wealth very cleverly to provide tea places and events to host sympathisers, activists, donors and allies; and Emma Pankhurst, the British specialist who used tea clubs/rooms as guerrilla outposts.

In London and New York, tea rooms comprised a walking tour of haunts for radical feminists, social activists, actresses, journalists, fund raisers and organisers. The tearooms played a similar role to the churches of Abolitionists and community bases of Martin Luther King's era of leadership. Tea was associated with anti-alcohol social reform. However, middle class white women naturally were drawn to the tea culture versus underprivileged or perhaps more unprivileged who centred more on their churches.

Tea rooms and clubs aren't landmarks in the anti-slavery movement. They tended to use the tea rooms to store their hoards of stones used to break windows in their demonstrations. The rooms in turn were the easily recognisable targets for a few flash bombs from feminism's legion of opponents.

One of the most imaginative and effective tea-rights link was the Pink Teapots marketed by the Famous Five in Canada who spent decades in the early 1900s fighting for women to be legally declared to be "persons."





# 1975 Turning Point

An excerpt from *Fly me to the Moon* by Prafull Goradia

**I**t was the morning of October 23rd. I was up early as I had to reach the National Tobacco Company's factory at Agarpara, some 20 kilometres from my home in Alipore in Calcutta, picking up Sudhir, a young colleague, on the way.

October in Calcutta is pleasant and freshness permeated the air, though the nippy cold was still some weeks away. But this pleasant turn that nature had taken was the last thing on my mind.

We left the comfort of our taxi a kilometre short of Agarpara, and caught the next available double-decker bus to National Tobacco. I wanted to see the factory's premises from a vantage point, which the bus' upper deck afforded easily. It was yet to strike eight in the morning when we passed the factory, and saw the half foolscap-size notices near the factory's iron gate, and some workers gathered around to peer at them. Sudhir and I proceeded to Khardah, two kilometres ahead, and then took another double-decker bus back. Half an hour had passed by the time we neared the factory gate the second time. The notices continued to hang there. But now many more people had crowded around and there was a degree of agitation in the air.

The serenity of the morning did little to soothe my heart. I felt it throbbing a few inches above my left ear, but there was no heart beat in the place where it should have been. We again boarded another bus to head back toward Agarpara a third time. As we neared the factory premises, Sudhir noticed that a number of workers were now moving towards an open space near the factory compound, where some fifty persons had already gathered and a meeting was being addressed. Intense relief



surged through me. My pulse stopped racing. I felt less tense now.

There had been none of the violence which I had secretly feared. Sudhir and I got off the bus soon after crossing the factory, walked up to the gate and boldly entered the factory premises. The sheets of foolscap papers we had glimpsed earlier in the morning were still hanging.

It was circa 1975; another time, another world. Retrenchment or rationisation, which causes barely a ripple in today's post-liberalisation India, was absolute sacrilege in the mid-1970s. Besides, Calcutta was in the grip of communist ethos.

Retrenchments and layoffs, were common in the fully industrialised West, but in India they aroused fear and dismay. The prejudice against reducing jobs or firing someone was deep and widespread. Not unnaturally, as I was planning the retrenchment of workers of National Tobacco, I was assailed by an uneasy conscience. Was I not committing a wrong by depriving so many workers of their livelihood?

We entered an empty compound. The workers had assembled at the nearby park

hearing their union leader speak. I told the watchmen that the gates must be kept open on all count. Surprisingly the factory staff we met inside seemed relaxed. They informed us that after seeing the retrenchment notices at 7.30 in the morning, the union general secretary Nandu Srimani had told the factory manager to immediately withdraw the order. Else, be prepared to face an indefinite strike. As expected, the 2,360 workers struck work.

I had spent the preceding eight weeks in meeting several lawyers and experts of industrial law. While each of them was clear in his own mind about the likely reaction of the employees to the company adopting one line of action or another, none of them was of any help to me in framing a plan of action. Besides, there was my own dilemma, compounded by my total lack of experience. Hitherto, I had been until 1970 in the business of tasting tea in an auctioneer's firm with little exposure to industrial relations.

**The prejudice against reducing jobs or firing someone was deep and widespread. Not unnaturally, as I was planning the retrenchment of workers of National Tobacco, I was assailed by an uneasy conscience**

I underwent several weeks of deliberations in my own mind before arriving at a tentative conclusion. If the overhead cost of the company had to be brought in line with the probable quantum of sales, declaring a closure of the factory seemed to be the best approach to save the sinking ship that was National Tobacco. As things stood, the company was losing about 22 lakh rupees a month. A closure carried a distinct advantage. The factory could reopen, provided the excess number of workers agreed to take their legal compensation and retire. But unfortunately, the company chairman rejected my plan. Closure would demoralise the banks, the trade, other employees of the company. He therefore preferred straight retrenchment.

This put me in a quandary. Direct action like retrenchment was fraught with its own dangers. The union could very well tell all the workers to crowd the factory the morning the notices would be pasted. The workers, once inside, could wreak havoc, by resorting to violence against the company's officers, or by simply squatting in protest. A sit-in could last days; the management could not prevent food from reaching the protesting workers, while the use of physical force to evict them from the factory premises was out of question. Mind you, this was West Bengal against the backdrop of Naxalbari.

Moreover, the Agartara factory had an ominous history. In May 1967, the workers had set upon some twelve officers inside the factory, the agonizing ordeal lasting for six hours before a rescue team could be allowed to come.

The then labour minister Subodh Banerjee, who would later go on to earn notoriety as the 'gherao minister', was reputed to encourage workers to browbeat managements into conceding their demands. On the afternoon of May 1967, when the workers had relentlessly attacked their officers, no ambulance had been allowed to enter the factory premises until



In Parliament, 2000

after 7 pm. That incident of violence and a consequent hundred-day lockout triggered the downfall of the company. The figures told their

**My background had been tea-tasting. Why my employers chose me, therefore, to handle a sick cigarette company still remains a mystery to me**

own tale: from profits of Rs 25 lakh a month, performance plummeted to the loss of Rs 22 lakh for the same period.

I stood on the cusp of something similar on that day of October 23, 1975. Irrespective of whether the workers resorted to violence or preferred the option of a sit-in, the management was going to find it difficult to regain control of its factory and re-establish its writ.

My background had been tea-tasting. Why my employers chose me, therefore, to handle a sick cigarette company still remains a mystery to me. For my part, I was clear why I had accepted the





assignment, The business world in Calcutta and its vicinity knew that National Tobacco was suffering from a fourth degree cancer. The reason I seized this opportunity and earlier left a professional British group to join this family dominated concern was in the hope of exactly such a chance. Having landed one now, how could I turn my back on it?

Let me explain. For some time now, I had been contemplating a move from Calcutta to Delhi. My obsession with politics, which I had confided to my wife before marriage, had not abated. I was now thirty-eight and impatient to take the plunge. But I first needed a base in Delhi where the action was and then look for a constituency in Gujarat, the state from which I hailed. All this required an independent income, something almost impossible for a working man. From where and how it was going to come had been the nagging question.

At this point of time I was very comfortably ensconced as a director of Duncan Brothers, and in charge

**The reason for seeking a business of my own was my desire to achieve financial independence so that I would not have to ask friends or allies for money, and also not resort to what is called corruption by politicians**

of their tea department. Duncans was one of the largest tea-growing companies in India. They had 18 tea gardens of their own and were Indian agents to another 20 belonging to a major British group. Though largely owned by an Indian family, Duncans was run on British lines with more professionals than family members elevated to the directorial board. My employers had taken over the sick National Tobacco in 1973 from a Jewish family in Calcutta called Elias, and had hoped to achieve a revival, which alas, was not happening.

Life for me till then had been pleasurable. We lived in the upper half of an elegant bungalow in Calcutta's prestigious Alipore, a residence we had been lucky to acquire, largely because the fear of Naxalite attacks, not uncommon in Calcutta in the early 1970s, had driven people to the more protected central localities like Ballygunge and Park Street. As chief executive of the tea conglomerate, I was invited to select tea-circle parties together with my wife. When I visited tea gardens in the Dooars on the foothills of North Bengal, where Duncans had a concentration of properties, I was fêted and flattered. It was difficult not to get carried away. But I had not allowed myself to forget my single minded aim to secure an independent income.

The pay and perks at Duncans were excellent but hardly sufficient to save up for political activity after the premature retirement I had in mind. Another source of independent income had to be discovered. I had reasonable savings, which I had declared to my employers before joining them, but now needed a godfather who would help me set up a business that required little capital and less management by me. The reason for seeking a business of my own was my desire to achieve financial independence so that I would not have to ask friends or allies for money, and also not resort to what

**It was in search of this elusive business that I had made a deliberate switch from a British company in 1971 to a family-dominated concern, believing that such a company was more likely to award a business opportunity to an able employee for exceptional services**

is called corruption by politicians.

It was in search of this elusive business that I had made a deliberate switch from a British company in 1971 to a family-dominated concern, believing that such a company was more likely to award a business opportunity to an able employee for exceptional services, even enabling him to set up his own concern, unlike a British agency, which had its fixed rules and hierarchies.

Those well-wishers who had seen me grow up in tea had looked askance at my unprovoked move from what was looked upon as a prestigious blue-blooded English firm to an Indian Agency House, however large and influential, believing me to be jeopardizing my future prospects in commerce.

Such was the unspoken snobbery of those times. And I could hardly explain what might have seemed a pipe dream to them. But the opportunity did come my way and in a most unexpected manner.



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# Contemporary Tasting Sessions

Contemporary Brokers Pvt. Ltd. successfully organised Tea Tasting Sessions at Nagrakata Club in Doars and Borailview Hotel at Silchar recently. Many senior planters attended the tasting sessions.

## At Doars



Managers look on as tasting begins at Nagrakata Club in Doars



Participants at the Doars Tasting Sessions

## At Silchar



The Tasting Sessions at Borailview Hotel, Silchar, was held on July 14, 2017. It was attended by a large number of senior planters. The sessions ended with a useful discussion on outlook on market and the general condition of the industry.

*(left row L to R)* : G S Singh, Factory Assistant, Kalline; Chandan Dutta, Factory Manager, Craigpark; S Taparia, Senior Manager, Kalline; D P Sahi, Factory Manager, Burtoll; V Rathore, Manager, Rampore

*(right row R to L)* : Satyanjoy Hazarika (Director of Contemporary); Swashat Dutta (Assistant Manager of Contemporary); Subhrajit Sarkar (Senior Executive of Contemporary)



Serious discussion amongst senior planters of Barak Valley : *(L to R)* S Taparaia, Senior Manager, Kalline; V Rathore, General Manager, Rampore; I Lama, Dy. General Manager, Koombor; I B Ubadhia, General Manager, Rosekandy



*(L to R)* : Chandan Dutta, Factory Manager, Craigpark; Choudhary, Factory Manager, Serispore; R P Sinha, Manager, Serispore; T K Das, Factory Manager, Borojalingah; S B Singh, Manager, Borojalingah



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# Improving **quality** standards **value addition** and **food safety compliance** -- key to strengthening image of Indian tea

Says **P K Bezboruah** newly appointed Chairman Tea Board of India



**R**enowned tea planter from Assam's Jorhat, Prabhat Kamal Bezboruah, is the new Chairman of the Tea Board of India. He is the first non-IAS and an industry insider to occupy the post. P K Bezbaruah, 58, owner of Bokahola Tea Co. which manages around 12 gardens in Assam with

an annual output of 55 lakh kg, will be first full-time Chairman after a gap of four years. He started his career as a banker in the US after finishing his Masters in Finance from the University of Pennsylvania.

The new Chairman says his thoughts are on bringing back the



golden years of the Indian tea industry and he plans to get over the trying times of stagnant pricing and ever-rising input costs, labour wage row and social costs.

**□ What would be your priority areas to bring the tea industry back in shape?**

Maintaining quality of green leaf in terms of fine-ness, stress on value-added export, generic promotion of tea within the country, reduction of pesticide load and regulation of new plantation in reserve forest areas will be my areas of priority I want to bring in a different perspective from my 29 years of industry experience which may boost the Board's policies and programmes.

**□ Would it not be more important to free this industry from tight regulation of the Tea Board?**

Actually, a plantation sector like tea is fragmented and heterogeneous in terms of viability of the gardens. It is also the largest rural employer in India. Thus, some degree of government control is unavoidable.

**□ How will you fight higher cost of production (COP) and climate change?**

Tea Board is funding Tea Research Association to work on climate resilience. Higher COP can only be offset by adoption of new technology and by raising productivity. We are working on identifying those cultivars from existing germplasm that are climate-resilient. The project is just three years old and findings will be disseminated by 2018-end.

**□ How would you pull the plug on the influx of Nepal tea which is hitting Indian tea's price realisation and brand value?**

There may be an influx of Nepal green leaf. However, I don't see a major volume of finished product being smuggled into India from Nepal. The green leaf issue has to be solved by self-regulation.

**□ Is there any scope for self-regulation as there are many traders and producers willing to indulge in it for more profit?**

I don't think we can stop Nepal-made tea from entering India. If unscrupulous producers are buying this and remarking it as Darjeeling or buying Nepal green leaf and selling it as Darjeeling, it seems to me to be a police issue. The laws are already in place.

**□ Many tea estates across the country are on the verge of closure. Your take?**

We cannot have the same prescription for all the closed gardens which are closed due to owners' malpractices, structural issues like huge work force, natural calamities like erosion and flood etc. The different reasons need



different tailor-made solutions. The plan will have to be worked out. A simplistic answer won't serve the purpose.

**□ How will you fix over-supply problem?**

Improvement of quality will solve the problem of oversupply. Also we should ensure that new plantation is not subsidised in view of oversupply. We'll try and convince the Centre for providing fund-backed generic promotion but industry, too, needs to contribute its fair share for such initiatives.

**□ Why is the Board functioning as an auction governing body via regulation and day-to-day interference in the trade?**

The platform upon which all auctions are functioning was paid for and continues to be paid for by Tea Board, hence the interference. Also, TMCO (Tea Marketing Control Order) mandates the Board to manage the primary sale of tea. Since the industry keeps on running to the government for assistance every time there is a downswing. It is only natural that the government will keep a control over these aspects.

**□ Has Tea Board noted the fall in demand and prices post-pan-India auction?**

Only the rates of high-priced

teas dropped. This happened due to a reduction in the demand for quality teas from some major blenders due to their blend rationalisation and profit maximisation initiatives, as the unit profits from lower priced packets was found to be higher. We hope that there will be a correction this year and that quality will pay once again.

**□ Do you think conversion of gardens' social responsibility aids to wage components will be a better option?**

No, workers are used to many of these facilities and withdrawing them will lead to unrest. However, there should be better monitoring to ensure uniform delivery of these benefits by all gardens.

**□ How to improve the export market and extend it to further new geographies?**

It is a challenge but if industry contributes to its strength, it will not be impossible. A thrust on speciality teas and value-added products and improving our quality standards and food safety compliance would help. Better plucking, better planting materials, right agricultural practices, safer plant protection techniques and packaging and a better strategy of making it aspirational will uplift Indian tea's brand image.

*Courtesy : Times of India*





# The EVOLUTION

# of a WORD



Kalyan Sircar

An elaboration on what's in a name

**H**ow do you name and call your favourite beverage? Te, Chha, tay, chiai, or thea?

In the records of the East India Company we find the following entry: On 1666, June 30 imported 22 and 3/4 of thea at 50s. per lb.=56 pound.

For the two chief persons that attended his Majesty, **Poet Alexander Pope**, to rhyme his verse spelled the word tea, to be uttered as tay:

*Here thou, great Anna, whom three  
Realms obey,  
Dost sometimes counsel take, some-  
times tea.* (Rape of The Lock, 1711).



**Samuel Johnson** in c.1770 composed:

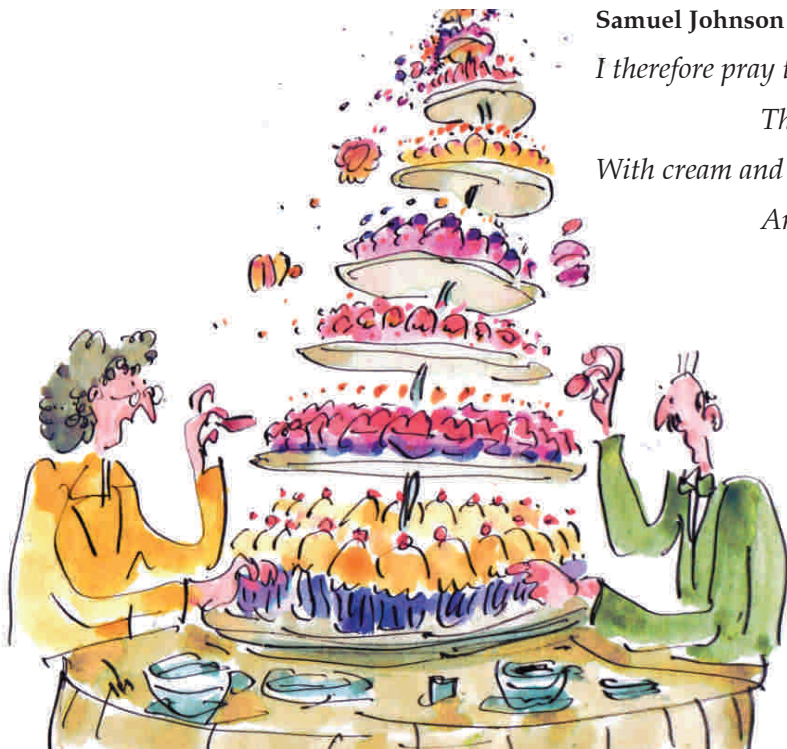
*I therefore pray thee, Renny, dear,  
That thou wilt give to me  
With cream and sugar soften'd well  
Another dish of tea.*



The change in pronunciation occurred gradually, the modern form of saying tea became generally acceptable.

**Poet Edward Moore** composed about 1750:

*One day in July last at tea,  
And in the house of Mrs. P.*



Much earlier the following advertisement in the Gazette of September 9, 1658 :

That excellent, and by all Physitians approved,  
China Drink, called by the Chineans Toha,  
by other nations Tay, alias Tee, is sold at  
the Sultanness Head,  
a coffee house in Sweetings Rents by  
the Royal Exchange, London.

Marco Polo (1254-1314), the famous merchant and traveller, wrote that he spent some time in Chathay (China), but the truth of this claim is doubtful. Interestingly, he did not mention tea, the most popular drink of the country. Elsewhere, though, he wrote that he had heard from Hajji Mahommed, a Persian merchant who visited Venice, about the excellent properties of Chiai-Catani, and if these were known in Persia and in Europe, traders would cease to purchase rhubarb, and would purchase this herb instead. The Chinese, the Hajji told him, take this plant whether dry or fresh, and boil it well in water, and this decoction they take one or two cups on an empty stomach. It removes fever, headache, stomach-ache, pain in the side or joints; taking care to drink it as hot as you can bear. It is good also for many other ailments which I (Marco Polo) can't now remember, but I know gout was one of them. And thus it is so precious and highly esteemed that every one going on a journey takes it with him, and judging from what he said these people would at any



Marco Polo

time gladly swap a sack of rhubarb for an ounce of *Chiai Catai*.

The Italians have two names for tea: *cia* and *te*. In some old English dictionary, it is *cha*, and *tcha*. In Concise Oxford English

Dictionary it is *cha*, a variant spelling of *char*; *char* Brit. informal tea. Origin C19 (as *cha*): from Chin. (Mandarin dial) *cha*. We Indians are happy to ordering *cha*, *chai*, or tea.





Grown at an elevation of 4500 to 7500 ft where cooler conditions prevail and where intense ultra violet rays cause the plant high levels of red and purple anthocyanin which is related to compounds found in blueberries, egg plants and blue grapes.

Genetic mutation gives the leaves an unusual purple appearance. This special variety of tea is derived from a crossbreed of common tea leaf *Camellia Sinensis*.

Purple teas are produced by tea cuttings rather than seeds to ensure that all plants have the same traits to



produce purple leaves.

Purple teas help the Kenyan farmer in a competitive global market and have now been developed to carve out a niche for the tea growers. It fetches three to four times the revenue of black teas.

The new tea product diversification and value additive

heighten its productivity and enhances its growth in the agricultural sector.

It has polyphenols called GHG, a compound responsible for purple tea and obesity lessening. It decreases fat mass and thickness while increasing lean body mass.

Tea liquors made from Purple tea leaves have a dark appearance and the brewed result will have a slightly purple cast to it.

The teas will have a savoury, floral lingering flavour and aroma described by tea tasters as brisk, woody and rustic but not astringent.

Wild purple tea plants have been discovered in the Karbi Anglong district of north eastern India and Longai of Cachar in the Barak Valley. The Purple Tea Spectrum at Tocklai refers to it as 'Ox Blood Tea.'

Pu'erh tea from China is made from purple leaves prized for its mild taste with reduced bitterness and astringency.

The colour purple has a variety of effects on the mind and body including the upliftment of spirits and an association with spirituality,

The Purple Patch resembles artistry with all its rich colours and textures.





# Evergreen Award for Ambootia

**D**arjeeling Organic Tea Estates Pvt. Ltd. (DOTEPL), a subsidiary of Ambootia Tea Group, received the prestigious Platinum Award in the SKOCH Evergreen Revolution Award 2017, in New Delhi. This follows the award of the SKOCH Order of Merit Award for being in the Top-30 Evergreen projects in India. The SKOCH Awards celebrate human excellence and agents of change in Indian society and are based on the philosophy of spearheading positive socio-economic changes through recognising persons who have contributed immensely to salutary transformations in society and governance by displaying exemplary leadership abilities.

They are the highest independently instituted civilian honours in India which salute individuals, highlight projects, and focus institutions that go the extra mile to make India a better nation. The awards are conferred on the



Bharat Khemka receiving the Platinum Award on behalf of Ambootia Group from Sameer Kochar and others at the SKOCH Awards 2017

mighty and the ordinary alike. Darjeeling Organic Tea Estates' nomination was entitled 'Holistic Sustainability at the Tea Estates' and illustrated the following

through data and photographs: innovative aspects of the business; biodynamic organic farming practices; holistic development of the farm and farmers.

## Obituary

## Bhaskar Mitter

### A company man and much more

**B**haskar Mitter, a highly-regarded name in corporate India, passed away at the age of 97. He was, Andrew Yule's first Indian Chairman. He later became Chairman of Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation.

He served on the boards of several leading Indian companies as well as the Reserve Bank of India, and was President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and the Associated Chambers of Commerce (ASSOCHAM).

Mitter was educated at St. Xavier's School and Cambridge University and qualified as a Barrister from Lincoln's Inn in London. Instead of practising law, he joined Andrew Yule in 1947 and about 20 years on, rose to head it.

He was a founder trustee of the Unit Trust of India when it was launched in 1964. An early proponent of modern management education, he was associated with the Indian Institute of Management in Kolkata.

A man of diverse interests, Mitter was a keen gardener and was involved with many voluntary conservation efforts in the city. He was an authority on the local history of Kolkata and its environs and travelled extensively around Bengal. He also supported numerous philanthropic activities through such organisations as the Ramakrishna Mission and the Rotary Club.

He was known to a wide section of the Kolkata society and was elected President of Bengal Club and Calcutta Club. He had a special interest in music, particularly Rabindra Sangeet. An avid sports lover, he was associated with Mohun Bagan Club for many years and was an enthusiastic supporter at cricket test matches at Eden Gardens. In his younger days, he played tennis with proficiency and won the Bengal Junior Doubles.

Those who knew Mitter well will testify to the fact that he could tell a story with great verve and humour — a quality he retained well into his 90s. His was a life well spent.





# Your sweat and toil makes Ceylon Tea the choice for millions



## Narendra Modi to Indian-origin tea workers in Sri Lanka

In an outreach as well as a gesture of solidarity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi connected with Indian-origin tea workers in Sri Lanka, mostly of Tamil ancestry, during his travels to the island nation in May 2017.

India has built a hospital for the use of tea workers in Dickoya, where the Prime Minister addressed them while handing over the facility.

Speaking to the tea workers, Narendra Modi said, "It is a great pleasure to be here today. And, I am most grateful for your warm and enthusiastic welcome. It is a tremendous honour to be the first Indian Prime Minister ever to visit this beautiful region of Sri Lanka. But, it is a greater honour to have the opportunity to speak with you. People the world over are familiar with famous Ceylon Tea that originates in this fertile land. What is less known is that it is your sweat and toil that makes Ceylon Tea the



brew of choice for millions around the globe. If Sri Lanka today is the third largest exporter of tea, it is because of your hard work. It is your labour of love which is instrumental in Sri Lanka meeting almost 17% of the world's demand for tea, and earning more than 1.5 billion US dollars in foreign

exchange. You are that indispensable backbone of the thriving Sri Lankan tea industry that justly prides itself on its success and global reach today. Your contribution is deeply valued across Sri Lanka and beyond. I for one truly appreciate your hard work. You and I have something in common. As some of you may have heard, I have a special association with tea. *Chai pe Charcha*, or discussions over tea, is not just a slogan. Rather, a mark of deep respect for the dignity and integrity of honest labour. Today, we remember your forefathers. Those men and women of strong will and courage, who undertook the journey of their life from India to then Ceylon. Their journey may have been uphill and their struggles hard, but they never gave up. Today, we remember and salute that spirit."





# Tidings from **BANGLADESH**



## Smallholding Tea Cultivation - A Social And Economic Model

**Monjur Hossain**

**T**ea plantation business has been known as a business owned by the elite class since inception of the tea industry and currently in Bangladesh all 156 tea estates in greater Sylhet and Chittagong districts are owned by national, multinational companies and rich entrepreneurs of the country. Introduction of small holding tea farming concept – giving marginal and poor farmers the ownership of small tea plantations ranging from 0.35 to 5.00 acre of land – has given a new dimension to the ownership and management structure of the tea industry. Tetulia Tea Company Limited (TTCL), the pioneer of this concept, came forward with their model "Tea for Poverty Alleviation", in the year 2000. In this model, farmers are not labourers, they are entrepreneurs at the grassroot level and owners of the small plantations. They put in maximum effort and work more hours sincerely to increase production of their plantation ensuring higher income for them.

The present scenario of the small holding tea farming in the northern district of Panchagarh is:

- ▶ 9,000+ families are proud owners of a tea plantation
- ▶ Total area under cultivation is approximately 9,000 acre
- ▶ Massive social and lifestyle changes through employment generation
- ▶ Economic self-sufficiency achieved by the farmers opting for tea cultivation
- ▶ Six tea processing factories currently operating
- ▶ Additional six factories in the pipeline in 2017
- ▶ Four mkg of made tea produced in 2016 (approximate value Tk. 70 crore)
- ▶ 18 mkg green leaf sold by farmers to factory owners in 2016

- ▶ Direct economic value of tea leaves more than Tk 36 Crore
  - ▶ Ancillary and support services to the industry generate equivalent economic impact
  - ▶ Government revenue – VAT, Tea Cess, other taxes
- These made direct contribution to poverty alleviation of the region, developed entrepreneurship at grassroot level, the farmers became economically empowered and financially sustainable. Their lifestyle also changed and children's enrollment in schools increased.

The following case studies speak about the sustainable upliftment of small farmers from below poverty level to an affluent middle class status due to tea farming.

### Case Study : Nurjahan

- ▶ Nurjahan is involved with tea cultivation since 2007
- ▶ Originally an employee of TTCL
- ▶ Presently cultivating on 10 acres of tea, started with two acres
- ▶ Originally lived in the village of Tetulia
- ▶ Now lives in Panchagarh town
- ▶ Son goes to KG school and has access to quality medical facility
- ▶ Family relationships improved
- ▶ Received woman entrepreneurship award
- ▶ Credits to small holding contributing to poverty reduction





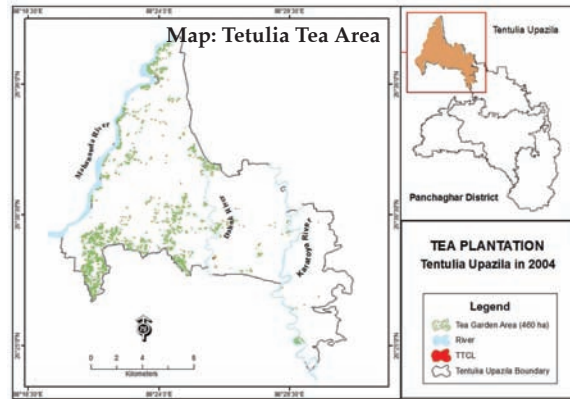
A recent study revealed that tea is the most viable economic crop over sugarcane and paddy as shown in the following Table:

**Table No. 1: Comparison between Sugarcane, Tea and Paddy**

Sugar Cane	Tea	Paddy
□ Poor growth in acidic soil	□ Suitable growth in acidic soil	□ Cannot grow in acidic soil
□ Productivity Tk. 35,000/acre	□ Productivity Tk. 200,000/acre	□ Productivity Tk 25,000/acre
□ Income Tk 10,000/acre/year	□ Income Tk 100,000/acre/year	□ Income Tk 15,000/acre/year
□ Can purchase 400 kg of rice	□ Can purchase 3,500 kg of rice	□ Can cover staple food for six months
□ Family of five members can sustain four months in a year	□ Family of five members can sustain a full year + surplus funds	□ Family of five members can sustain six months in a year
□ Yearly crop of unpredictable and unsustainable productivity	□ A very long-term crop with life cycle spanning 60 years	□ Seasonal and exposed to vagaries of nature

**Case Study : Mondal**

- ▶▶ Mondal, aged 70
- ▶▶ Presently cultivates 10 acres of tea
- ▶▶ Very first farmer inducted by TTCL
- ▶▶ Believes there is difference between this model and micro-credit
- ▶▶ Considers tea cultivation profit to be four times that of sugarcane
- ▶▶ Son attended private university in Dhaka and qualified as a lawyer
- ▶▶ Intends to go to the UK to take the Bar exam



**Case Study : Nasir**

- ▶▶ Nasir Uddin of Tetulia, Aged 60 years.
- ▶▶ Was an illiterate man and neither of his two sons were educated
- ▶▶ Now his two granddaughters are studying One doing B.Sc in nursing and the other is a HSC student
- ▶▶ Could earn Tk 6,000/- per year from traditional sugarcane cultivation
- ▶▶ Now earns Tk 2-3 lakh annually from tea plantation
- ▶▶ Started cultivation on 40 decimal land on an experimental basis
- ▶▶ Subsequently included additional 1.2 acre, satisfied with the profit
- ▶▶ Purchased all plants with his own money for new cultivation



revenue to GoB. There will be manifold benefits from economic activity and its multiplier effects. This could be further maximised

- ▶▶ If there are farmer friendly government policies and laws
- ▶▶ With formalisation of regulatory framework for pricing and marketing mechanism, government subsidy for new tea plantation as practiced in Sri Lanka, India and Indonesia
- ▶▶ Direct financing support at a subsidised rate of interest.

In 2008 domestic consumption was very close to our production though only about 30% of the total population is under the coverage of tea consumption, drinking only 1.5 cups of tea a day on an average. These figures are also changing fast and even with this trend Bangladesh entered into the world tea market as a tea importer also. This is a sorry situation for a developing country like Bangladesh which has ample scope for increasing its tea production.

Since there is no scope to open new tea estates now or in the future in Bangladesh due to perpetual shortage of land, tea cultivation under the concept of "Tea for Poverty Alleviation and Food Security through smallholding tea cultivation" is the answer to save the country from the burden of importing tea by spending hard earned foreign exchange.

*The writer is Managing Director of PMTC (Bangladesh) Limited*

In Panchagarh there is a potential of an additional 30,000 acre being brought under tea plantation in the next 10 - 15 years. This will account for 25 - 30% of the national production in the long term. Income of the local population will increase resulting in more





# GLOBAL BREW

## United Kingdom

Since the eighteenth century, the United Kingdom has been one of the world's greatest tea consumers, with an average annual per capita tea supply of 1.9 kg (4.18 lbs). The British Empire was instrumental in spreading tea from China to India. British interests controlled tea production in the subcontinent. Tea, which was an upper-class drink in mainland Europe, became the infusion of every social class in Great Britain throughout the course of the eighteenth century and has remained so. Tea is a prominent feature of British culture and society.

In the United Kingdom, the drinking of tea is so varied that it is quite hard to generalise. While it is usually served with milk, it is not uncommon to drink it black or with lemon, with sugar being a popular addition to any of the above. Strong tea, served in a mug with milk and sugar, is a popular combination known as builder's tea.

But cruel winds of change seem to be brewing. A study of consumer purchases mixed with decades of data from National Food Surveys reveal that tea consumption has fallen steadily over the course of two generations.

Since 1974, the BBC reports, weekly purchases of tea have "experienced almost a two-thirds fall" from 68 gram (2.4 ounces) per household per week to just 25 gram (0.88 ounces). There are many factors that could help explain the decline. First and foremost is the rise of coffee culture. In 1986 coffee sales in the U.K. outpaced tea sales for the first time in history.

Tea is often linked to sweets/ biscuits/ cakes, which have also fallen out of favour as British consumers have tried to move away from sugar and bread toward healthier trends.

Another likely factor is a yen for something different, even just a departure from traditional tea. A sales analysis by The Guardian offered that while traditional tea fell six percent from 2009 to 2014, sales of less traditional teas (fruit, herbal, specialty, green) grew steadily from 2012 to 2014. Some feel, one of the most quintessentially British pastimes was losing its lustre, largely because it was falling out of favour with younger people who hadn't the time – or really the interest – to prolong the tradition.

Consumers associate standard tea with "tradition" more than anything else. And there is little younger generations care for less than parading around as their elders do. Tea's fading popularity is attributed to faster-paced living, a generation gap and a stodgy image. Many people these days do not want to take the time to brew tea, and even fewer will interrupt their busy days for the leisurely, civilized ritual of afternoon tea. To many young Britons, tea drinking apparently has a dated image, vaguely reminiscent of the "old England" stereotype that young people find irritating. 'It is unfortunately viewed as a down-market drink.

Is tea still the favourite beverage the world over? Five countries with the world's highest tea consumptions show a mixed picture.

Contemporary Tea Time finds out how tea is faring in United Kingdom, Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and India.





Even within the tea world, a number of other less popular teas – many of them green and herbal – have been branded as exotic, tied to health benefits, and, as a result, associated with coolness in a way their run-of-the-mill counterpart is not.

The problem is that standard black tea still accounts for the vast majority of tea consumption in the United Kingdom, making the bore that is standard black tea all the more important for the overall tea market. Volumes sales of standard black tea have fallen by eight percent since 2010, bringing the broader tea market down with it.

Fewer than one in six Britons aged between 25 and 34 has five or more cups of English Breakfast tea daily, whereas those aged 55 to 64 are twice as likely to do so according to research carried out by consumer analysts Mintel.

Almost half of the young adults surveyed were concerned that drinking too much tea would stain their teeth. Twenty-three percent avoid the beverage because of its high caffeine content and the rest say no to a cuppa because it isn't good for their hydration.

However, despite the 22 percent drop in tea sales by volume over the past five years, the value of the tea market declined less steeply, buoyed by increasing popularity and higher prices of novelty varieties.

The tea market hasn't cooled



entirely. Tea consumption is expected to continue its decline at a slower rate, while the value of the market was expected to start increasing from 2016. The rate of consumers switching from tea to coffee is likely to abate and the tea market will begin to innovate better, creating premium products and venues that will encourage more spending.

## Tea as a break

British workers by law, have the right to a minimum of a twenty-minute break in a shift of six hours; government guidelines describe this as "a tea or lunch break". More informally, this is known as *elevenes*, i.e. a couple of hours before the midday meal, traditionally served at 1pm. When the British have a "cuppa" (a cup of tea), there is usually a biscuit nearby. Dunking biscuits in tea is a custom that was exported around the globe.

Builder's tea in a mug is typical of a quick break in the working day.



# Iran

Every morning, in houses all over Iran, a gas burner flickers to life under a kettle that will continue to boil all day. It boils through morning prayers, lunches of rice and kebabs, afternoon conversation and late into the evening meal, sustaining talk of politics, gossip and news well into the night.

Tea production is a major industry in the Caspian Sea area and a large part of its economy. Before 1900, there was no tea production in Iran, but in 1895, an Iranian diplomat named Kashef Al Saltaneh decided to change that.

At the time the English had a strict monopoly on tea production in India, with rigid rules against non-Europeans engaging in this trade. Kashef Al Saltaneh, who had studied in Paris as a young man and was fluent in French, went to India, posed as a French businessman, learned the trade and smuggled some tea saplings and seeds to Iran. After six years of experimentation, he introduced his first product to the market, and started the industry that revolutionised the economy of two northern states, Gilan and Mazandaran and made Iranians avid tea drinkers. He is known today as the father of Iranian tea,

and his mausoleum, in the city of Lahijan, houses the tea museum.

## TRENDS

One of the key trends of 2016 was the rapid growth in popularity of imported tea, which made many local companies eager to import large volumes of tea from countries such as India and Kenya and package products domestically. Consumer attitudes towards tea changed significantly. Many households switched to branded packaged tea in line with increased availability of different brands on store shelves. Tea bags, once a product for affluent consumer groups, became widely available in line with the more hectic lifestyles of tea consumers especially in key urban areas.

## COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE

Golestan Co with its popular Golestan and Twinings brands remained the leader in tea and accounted for 39% of retail value sales in 2016. The company has a long history producing packaged tea and is well known for its wide range of products, from affordable mass Golgis black tea to mid-range Golestan and premium Twinings, which address demand at all income levels. One of the pillars of



success for Golestan is its strong distribution network, which enables the company to ensure availability of its products in nearly all small grocery outlets, even in remote areas.

## PROSPECTS

However illicit trade remains one of the key barriers to growth and there is no expectation of prompt action by the government to control smuggling. It is also expected that domestic production of tea will vanish gradually due to high prices of production and lack of support from the government. In addition, conversion from unpackaged tea to high quality branded tea is expected to continue at a faster rate for a specified period.

*Chaikhanehs*, have been in existence since the Persian Empire. They gained prominence after the 15th century, when coffee was abandoned in favour of tea leaves that were easier to come by through China's Silk Road.

Though once the purview of men, *chaikhanehs* have increasingly become frequented by all members of society, and especially by Iran's large youth population.

Iranian tea comes in a variety of subtle flavours, but its defining characteristic is its deep reddish-brown colour, which tea-drinkers can choose to dilute with water depending on their preference. Despite its cultivation in the country's northern provinces, other teas from Sri Lanka and India are also widely consumed as the





country imports a majority of its tea in order to meet the large demand.

Most *chaikhanehs* will serve tea on the stronger side. The stronger the tea, the higher the concentration of tannin and caffeine, so a good cup of tea is like a good cup of coffee for those who take it straight. Because of its bitterness, many prefer to have sugar with their tea.

The traditional way to do this is to take a sugar cube and place it between your teeth. You then sip the tea and allow the sugar to melt. Iranians, especially in colder regions of the country, find this a convenient way to drink multiple cups.

The taking of tea is a ritual unto itself: most meetings or formal occasions will begin with the offering of tea, and most meals will end with it. Some *chaikhanehs* have



*takhts*, or low-rise platforms covered in rugs and pillows that you may recline on. Remove your shoes before doing so; most meals are served on a tablecloth laid at your feet. *Chaikhanehs* come in all shapes and forms, from the simple kitchen-turned-tea room in villages to ornate venues in urban centres and from underground venues to popular tourist destinations.

Traditionally, tea is served from a samovar, a heating vessel

originally imported into Persia from Russia. Literally meaning “self-boiler”, the samovar is used to keep water hot for prolonged periods of time through a fuel-filled pipe in the middle of the structure that heats the contents surrounding it. Made from copper, brass, silver or gold, the samovar is still used

throughout Russia, central Asia and Iran, and ornate versions from the Qajar dynasty may still be found in use.

Any Persian will tell you that they love to drink *Chai*, pronounced *Cha-ee*. Tea, in general, is what Persians drink in the morning, after each meal, and not to mention throughout the day. Additionally, the first drink that one is offered when visiting someone else’s home is usually tea.

## Pakistan

The consumption of tea in Pakistan, where it is called *chai*, its name in Urdu, is of central significance to its culture. It is one of the most consumed beverages in Pakistani cuisine. Pakistan does produce its own limited tea in Chinkhari (KP) farms, however it ranks as the third largest importer of tea in the world. In 2003, as much as 109,000 tonnes of tea were consumed in Pakistan, ranking it at seven on the list of tea-consuming countries in the world.

While green tea has been an ancient tradition in Pakistan for thousands of years, black tea was originally introduced and popularised during the colonial British era in South Asia. Cities such as Lahore had one of the most vibrant tea cultures, as the drink quickly absorbed into local culture. The shield on the State emblem of Pakistan notably features a tea crop in one of its quarters. Tea is usually consumed at breakfast, during



lunch breaks at the workplace and in the evening at home. Evening tea may be consumed with biscuits or cake, depending on the amount of time one has. Guests are typically offered a choice between tea and soft drinks. It is common practice for homeowners to offer tea breaks to hired labour and sometimes even provide them with tea during the breaks. Tea offered to labour is strong and has more sugar in it.

High teas are common at hotels and restaurants and are usually buffet-style meals with light snacks.

Tea making techniques vary

from home to home and person to person, but tea is typically made from loose tea leaves and steeped for a couple of minutes before serving. A teapot and tea cosy may be used, if time permits, or tea may be steeped directly in the kettle off the heat. After steeping, the tea is poured into cups through a strainer. Milk may be added before or after the tea, but sugar is typically offered separately so that each individual may add sugar according to his or her own taste. Teabags are usually reserved for when time constraints do not

enable one to prepare tea from loose tea leaves.

Tea served is typically black, with milk, although green tea is becoming increasingly popular. While black tea is very rarely consumed without milk, green tea is never served with milk.

Most of the tea consumed in Pakistan is imported from Kenya. After 1995, the Pakistani government began to implement a tea plantation project, which established green tea estates in Pakistan and achieved good performance.

### Varieties

Different regions throughout the country have their own different flavours and varieties, giving Pakistani tea culture a diverse blend. In Karachi, the Black tea and Masala *chai* (spiced tea) are popular while the thick and milky *Doodh Pati Chai* is more preferred in Punjab. Biscuits and *paan* are common delicacies and staples enjoyed with tea. In the northern and western parts of the country, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and much of Kashmir, the popular green tea called "kahwah" is predominant.

In Kashmir, Kashmiri *chai* or Noon *chai*, a pink, milky tea with pistachios and cardamom, is consumed primarily at special occasions, weddings, and during the winter months when it is sold in many kiosks. In the further north Chitral and Gilgit-Baltistan regions, Central Asian variants such as salty buttered Tibetan style tea are consumed.

The per capita consumption of tea in Pakistan is one of the highest in the world with about one kilogram and is continuously increasing due to increase in demand.

Pakistan is a small producer but high per capita consumer. The import of 150,000 tonnes of tea reached 170,000 tonnes in 2010. The average annual tea imports came to Rs 17.4 billion in 2008-'09 – putting massive burden on the national exchequer.

Tea is used as common beverage in almost all over the world. Pakistan is the fourth largest tea importer of the world, after Russia, United Kingdom and Egypt.

Pakistan has a market of 170 mkg for black tea, which is imported from 21 countries including Kenya, Indonesia, India,



Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Black tea is the only kind of tea that is subject to international quality regulations.

To meet the demand, Pakistan reportedly imported tea \$120 million in 1998-'99 to \$210 million in 1999-2000, showing an increase of over 65 percent. Its imports were Rs 9.611 billion in 2001-'02, increased to Rs12.965 billion in 2006-'07, Rs 6.53 billion in 2007-'08 and Rs17.417 billion in 2008-'09. Tea prices in Pakistan have increased almost six times since 1990-'91.

Tea smuggling is the main problem that is not only hurting genuine tea importers but also depriving national exchequer. During 2006 about 48,000 tonnes of tea was brought illegally into Pakistan as compared to 40,000 tonne in 2004-'05, causing a revenue loss of Rs 2 billion. The tea smuggled further increased to 100,000 tonne in 2009-'10.

Apart from increasing inflation in Pakistan, the use of tea has become an essential part of almost all the Pakistanis. According to

census more than nine million rupees are being spent on the usage of tea. All the classes including the rich or poor, younger or elder take tea on daily basis.

In Pakistan especially in Karachi a tea hotel usually known as Dhabba can be easily located near every stop, which shows how much Pakistanis like to have tea

and this is one of the reasons why import of tea is increasing in Pakistan.

Tea drinking is now a national habit, addiction and part of the evolutionary culture in Pakistan. Guests are now offered tea as a minimum and they expect at least a cup of tea when they visit somebody.

In Pakistani commercial *bazaars* (market), all shopkeepers drink tea en-masse at least twice daily. Cups full of tea are distributed in the whole market and then collected later on. Tea is even offered on credit. One can choose from a variety of payment plans like 'pay as you go', pay weekly or monthly. Tea is also offered to prospective buyers by the shopkeeper to show how sincere he/she is in the upcoming transaction.

### Fountain of Youth?

There are reports that Government of Pakistan is now awakening to this massive demand of a massive population of 160 million Pakistanis. There are reports of a plan to grow tea locally





in Pakistan on 4000 acres. This will be done in private sector. Semi government sectors will also chip in by growing tea at 800 acres in NWFP, 200 acres in AJK and 50 acres in FATA.

### Pak Tea House

Pak Tea House is an intellectual tea-café located in Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan, known for its association with progressive academics and left-leaning South Asian intelligensia.

Traditionally frequented by the country's notable artistic, cultural and literary personalities, it was founded by a Sikh family in 1940 and quickly acquired its current name after it was leased to one of the locals in Lahore following the independence of Pakistan in 1947. Intervention of Lahore High Court and personal initiatives of Nawaz Sharif led to the re-opening of the Tea House in 2013. Noted for being the birthplace of influential literary movements, like the Progressive



Writers' Association, the place is described as "house of writers and

thinkers who serve the nation selflessly.

## Turkey

**T**ea is an important part of Turkish culture, and is the most commonly consumed hot drink, despite the country's long history of coffee consumption. Offering tea to guests is part of Turkish hospitality. Tea is most often consumed in households, shops, and by *kiraathane* - social gatherings of men. Despite its popularity, tea only became the beverage of choice in Turkey in the 20th century. It was initially encouraged as an alternative to coffee, which had become expensive and at times unavailable in the aftermath of World War I. Upon the loss of southeastern territories after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, coffee became an expensive import. At the urging of the founder of the republic, Atatürk, Turkish people turned more to tea as it was easily sustainable by domestic sources. Turkish tea is traditionally offered



in small tulip-shaped glasses which are usually held by the rim, in order to save the drinker's fingertips from being burned, as the tea is served boiling hot.

Most often, salty or sweet biscuits called *kurabiye* are served with tea.

### Tea plantation in Rize

Tea became the widely consumed beverage of choice in Turkey only relatively recently, in the 1930s. In 1878, Mehmet Izzet, Governor of Adana, had published the *Çay Risalesi* (Tea Pamphlet) describing health benefits of drinking tea. This led to the opening of several tea houses in Istanbul, although coffee remained the preferred hot beverage at the time. When the Ottoman Empire collapsed in 1923, the Turks lost Mocha in Yemen, and coffee became an expensive import. The nation's founder, Atatürk, encouraged tea as an alternative to Turkish coffee. Coffee had to be imported, mainly from Brazil, but tea was easily sustainable domestically. The Turks turned to tea.

Finding that the Rize Province on the eastern Black Sea coast had an appropriately mild climate with high precipitation and fertile soil,



# The Colour Purple

Errol O'Brien unravels the mystery of Purple tea

**P**urple intensifies the serene constancy of blue and the passionate energy of red, the royal colour of the Caesars.

A personage with the rank of the Roman Emperor was referred to as The Purple. In fact royalty in this epic age was draped in purple Togas to evidence luxury.

Black, the rust of CTC, green and Oolong teas have moved on to the mystique of moonlight magic in Darjeeling teas. The agricultural innovations move on.

The exquisite white, hand rolled platinum teas are money spinners. The tea colour now moves on to purple.

Across the safari tracts and the picturesque highlands of Kenya, fields glisten in shades of emerald and moss green under an equatorial skyline providing a strikingly clear image of a landscape of tea.

Warangi Mathai, a Nobel Peace Prize winner started the Green Belt

Movement in 1977 wherein over 10 million trees were planted to prevent soil erosion and provide firewood for cooking fires.

Tea was first taken to Kenya from Assam and planted in Limuru in Nairobi in 1903. The first tea bushes have grown into large trees on what is now Unilever's Mabroukie Tea Estate.

The lime green fields of Kenya with its deep alluvial soil proved suitable for the growth of tea.

Kenya now is third in the export of tea after China and India. It has hardly a domestic market but the brightness of its cheap teas finds its way into the

tea bags of the European tea blenders. Remunerative prices are not a forte for the Kenyan farmer.

A Purple variety of tea was developed by the Tea Research Institute of Kenya with a clone under the nomenclature of TRFK 306/1 for commercial utilisation.





the Turks began to produce their own tea, Rize tea. The first tea plantations were started in 1924 in Rize, with tea seeds brought from neighbouring Georgia.

Rize tea or Çay is a form of black tea and produces a crystal clear liquid that is mahogany in color. The tea is produced without additives or chemicals during either the growing or processing stages. After picking, the tea leaves are withered for a time to reduce their water content and then rolled by machine to facilitate the oxidation process essential to the fermentation that produces black tea.

Brewed for a long time, at least 15 minutes, this tea is then mixed with hot water and sweetened with sugar to taste. As in other Muslim countries, tea (and to some extent still coffee) takes the place of alcohol as the social beverages. Turkish tea became popular everywhere, drunk at any time.

In 2004, Turkey produced 205,500 tonnes of tea (6.4 percent of the world's total tea production), which made it one of the largest tea producers in the world. Furthermore, in 2004, Turkey had the highest per capita tea consumption in the world, at 2.5 kg per person - followed by the United Kingdom (2.1 kg per person).

Turkey is the second biggest tea market in the world with a total tea volume of about 180,000 tonnes in 2004 according to Euromonitor International. In terms of tea consumption levels, Turkey has the highest per capita consumption at 2.5 kg, followed by the UK (2.1 kg) and Morocco (1.4 kg). All these figures represent consumption of packaged and branded tea sales. Tea-drinking is a long-standing Turkish tradition and the country is not only a large tea consumer but also a tea producer and virtually all of the tea is produced in the Rize province. Nearly 60% of tea is produced by the state-owned company Aykur, and as tea is a consumer staple, the industry

is regulated by the government. Black standard tea is the most common cuppa. Despite the maturity of the Turkish tea market, retail volume sales of tea has enjoyed steady growth except for a dip during the recession period of 2000-2001. Retail volume sales of tea grew by about five percent to reach about 108,000 tonnes in 2004. In terms of the product category, black standard tea continues to be the biggest contributor of volume sales,



accounting for around 89% of retail volume sales in 2004. Drinking black standard tea is an integral part of the Turks' life and culture. According to reported, 90% of the Turkish population drinks tea at least once a day, with 33% of the population mixing different teas in order to create their own blend. Turkish consumers drink tea at home, at work, when visiting friends and at school. In every work place there is at least one tea maker employed solely to make tea and coffee. When visiting friends, the first thing that guests will be offered is tea in small traditional tea glasses. With regards to the tea format, loose black standard tea is the traditional and most common type, representing 99% of black standard tea volume sales. However, loose tea is

gradually losing share to these as tea bags are considered to be more modern and easier to use. Tea bags are particularly popular among young urban consumers who have relatively higher levels of disposable incomes. Research findings show that retail volume sales of tea bags (a growth of 34%) largely outperformed loose tea (24%) between 1997 and 2004.

Turkey is the fastest growing consumer market in Western Europe. Black speciality tea has clearly benefitted from the improving economic conditions and has enjoyed double-digit volume growth between 1997 and 2004. Major players for speciality tea are foreigners including Unilever and Lotte. Unilever dominates the category and accounts for nearly 70% of retail value sales of speciality tea. Unilever's Lipton brand has strong brand equity in Turkey.

#### Tea culture

There is a folk saying in Turkey that "Conversations without tea are like a night sky without the moon," revealing the extent to which tea has become an integral part of Turkish culture. Tea is served with meals, at social gatherings, business meetings, and is available on the street from vendors shouting Çay! People drink tea at home, at work, when visiting friends and on all social occasions. Workplaces often employ a person just to make tea and coffee for the employees, and the first thing that guests are offered is tea in the traditional tea glasses. Thus, Turkey leads the world in per capita consumption of tea.

Turkish tea is generally served with little sweetmeats, although the tea itself is also sweetened with sugar. In the eastern part of the country it is common to place a sugar cube under the tongue before sipping the tea from the glass, rather than adding the sugar to the liquid.

Turkish tea is served in cafés by a çaycı (tea-waiters). Serious tea-



drinking Turks often go to a tea house or Çay Bahçesi (tea garden) where they serve it with a samovar (Turkish: samever) or urn, and

patrons can refill their glasses themselves as much as they want.

Tea is an essential part of social events, particularly in rural areas.

Bridal showers would not be complete without samovars of tea, and wedding celebrations may be held in tea gardens.

# India

India is the second largest producer of tea in the world after China, including the famous Assam tea and Darjeeling tea. According to the ASSOCHAM report released in December, 2011, India, as the world's largest consumer of tea uses nearly 30% of the global output. Despite the consumption, India is also the largest exporter of tea after China.

Consumption of tea in India was first clearly documented in the Ramayana (750-500 BCE). For the next thousand years, documentation of tea in India was lost in history. Records re-emerge during the first century CE, with stories of the Buddhist monks Bodhidharma and Gan Lu, and their involvement with tea. Research shows that tea is indigenous to eastern and northern India, and was cultivated and consumed there for thousands of years. Commercial production of tea in India did not begin until the arrival of the British East India Company, at which point large tracts of land were converted for



mass tea production.

Today, India is one of the largest tea producers in the world, with over 70% of the tea being consumed within India itself. A number of renowned teas, such as Assam and Darjeeling, also grow exclusively in India. The Indian tea industry has grown to own many global tea brands and has evolved to one of the most technologically equipped tea industries in the world. Tea production, certification, exportation, and all other facets of the tea trade in India is controlled

by the Tea Board of India.

## East India Company

The tea cultivation begun in India in the nineteenth century by the British, however, has accelerated to the point that today India is listed as the world's leading producer, its 715, 000 tonnes well ahead of China's 540, 000 tonnes. The teas of Assam, Ceylon (from the island nation known as Sri Lanka), and Darjeeling are world famous. However, because Indians average half a cup daily on per capita basis, fully 70% of India's immense crop is consumed locally.

## Modern tea production in India

India was the top producer of tea for nearly a century, but recently China has overtaken India as the top tea producer due to increased land availability. Indian tea companies have acquired a number of iconic foreign tea enterprises including British brands Tetley and Typhoo. India is also the world's largest tea-drinking nation. However, the per capita consumption of tea in India remains a modest 750 grams per person every year due to the large population base and high poverty

	2006	2015	Imported from
UK	23 mkg	19.7 mkg	India
<b>Total</b>	<b>125.5 mkg</b>	<b>94.3 mkg</b>	
	2006	2015	
Iran	8 mkg	22 mkg	India
<b>Total</b>	<b>40 mkg</b>	<b>56 mkg</b>	
	2008	2016	
Pakistan	99 mkg	170 mkg	Kenya
<b>Total</b>		<b>137 mkg</b>	
	2007	2016	
Turkey	14.5 mkg	27 mkg	Sri Lanka



levels. According to an ASSOCHAM report, 90% of all Indian households are regular tea drinkers. The reasons, "tea is cheap, affordable, and addictive." And yet, the annual per capita tea consumption in India was only 0.52 kg per person in 2009.

### Consumption of tea in India

Tea is made both at home and outside. Outside the home, tea is most commonly found at the ubiquitous tea stalls that dot every street in India and has become a part of the urban landscape and a cultural institution, "Chai Wallah" is the Hindi title accorded to the man who runs the tea stall. The phrase *Chai-Pani* literally meaning, tea and water, is used to offer welcome drinks and facilitate guests in houses of India.

The taste for tea was developed in India through a dedicated push on the part of the producers of tea once tea production in India gained momentum. Initially, free samples of tea were offered from horse-drawn carts belonging to various companies. As early as 1907, Brooke Bond, an English tea company started experimenting with a fleet of horse-drawn vans for distributing teas. The British tradition of taking tea with a little milk and sugar was introduced along with the samples.

Typically, tea in India is consumed with both milk and sugar but the tea leaves are not prepared separately by being steeped. Instead, the tea leaves are boiled along with additions and then boiled again after the addition of milk and sugar. Sometimes the tea leaves themselves are used as flavouring. In many parts of the country, the most special tea is one where the tea leaves are boiled solely in milk.

There are many other popular variations depending on regional and cultural affiliations. By and large, tea drinkers in India drink milk tea. Popular tea brews in Assam are *Sah*, *Ronga Sah* (red tea without milk) and *Gakhir Sah* (milk tea). In West Bengal it is called *Cha*.

In Hindi speaking north India, popular tea brews are *Masala Chai*, *Kadak Chai* (typically a feature of the mountain community of north India, this is a very strongly brewed tea, almost to the point of bitterness), *Malai Mar Ke Chai* (where a generous dollop of full fat cream is spooned into the cup of tea) are some of the more popular variations.



### Consumption on rise in India

The growth of domestic tea consumption had increased between 3-3.3%, with the per head consumption around 730 gm per annum, according to a study by ORG India, initiated in May 2007.

The study was commissioned by Committee of Plantation Associations (CCPA) on advice of the Tea Board and the Union Commerce Ministry. The study was designed to cover, both national and state level tea consumption, in urban and rural sectors, along with quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Maharashtra emerged as the highest tea consuming state in 2007, according to a study commissioned by the Tea Board. According to the study, Maharashtra was closely followed by Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. But most of these states, including Maharashtra, UP and Rajasthan

slid in the pecking order, when it came to per capita consumption of tea where Chandigarh, Lakshadweep, Punjab, Gujarat and Goa ranked the highest. According to the study, Bengal and Assam ranked 9th and 14th in the share of total consumption. These states were among the lowest in per capita consumption, even below the coffee drinking states like

Karnataka and Kerala. The total tea consumed in India stood at 755.52 mkg, the per capita consumption of the beverage in India was at 706.1 grams, the study reveals. Commissioned by the Tea Board, the study was collated and researched by the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. Maharashtra's share was at 14.86 percent out of the total Indian tea consumption, followed by 10.35% in UP. Tea industry officials said that these markets had been strong markets, which have prompted formidable regional brands in Gujarat and Rajasthan and a host of strong national brands to compete the most in these markets. But going by the per capita consumption of tea, Chandigarh had moved up to the highest position. Gujarat had been consistent both on the consumption and per capita consumption levels, the study said.



# CUP of Good Hope

## Next stop Antarctic?

Those were my thoughts as I looked across the myriad shades of blue of the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean from the old lighthouse at Cape Point in South Africa.

We had travelled from the university town of Stellenbosch to the Table Mountain National Park – that includes the Cape Point and the Cape of Good Hope – that morning. A group of ostriches greeted us as we drove into the Cape Floristic Kingdom – the smallest but richest of the world's six floral kingdoms. We intended to criss-cross across the nature park and finally visit two of the three promontories standing 200 metres above sea level on the cliffs – Cape Point and Cape of Good Hope.

Traversing through fynbos (fine bush) terrain was such a pleasure for the eyes – miles and miles of amazing hues of vegetation – from reds to blues, mauves, yellows, whites, subtler shades and of course greens! That finally led us to the entrance of Table Mountain National Park. Tourists – local and from overseas – were already pouring in. We decided to trek up to the old lighthouse – built in 1859 – at the highest point instead of taking the funicular.

The winding pathway upwards, with thick vegetation on one side, offered the most

## MRITTIKA BOSE followed Vasco Da Gama's trail to find sand and surf and much more

spectacular views of the shoreline below. The jagged cliffs towering above the fury of the surf, the occasional baboon calls emanating from the green cover along the path, the unbelievably azure water, the hint of whales through binoculars, stunned us into silence. And then we were on the top at the old lighthouse nudging for space with other tourists for the best viewpoint.

My eyes swept across the jet black lizard basking in the sunlight on a ledge below us, the birds flying in V-formation where there was no demarcation between the blue of the sky and the ocean, to the fluffy white clouds dotting the sky and back to the cliffs gently descending to the water, almost like a whisper. It felt like I was standing right in the middle of a painting – a water colour. For a while, the constant flow of sightseers, the click of the selfies, awestruck exclamations, seemed to just fall away, leaving me alone gazing across the ocean that beckoned towards adventures.

We wound our way down the same path we had come up to take the diversion mid-way towards Cape of Good Hope. The cliffs on one side became craggier and the ocean came nearer and there we were at the



Cape Point lighthouse entry point to the 'The Most South-Western Point Of The African Continent'. The approach towards the water was rocky and we carefully made our way to where the waves lashed against the rocks in great fury. At the edge of the rock we were at least two hundred metres above sea level but the waves were breaking below with such great force that we got covered by the spray. Two men were even holding fishing rods in the hopes of catching fish that might be lifted up in the spray!

As I watched the kelp (marine plants found in the Antarctic)





floating in abundance at the base of the rocks, I felt like Vasco Da Gama, skirting his way along the African peninsular shoreline on his way to discovering new lands. Once again, the milling tourists seemed to melt away, the magnificence and remoteness of the place that has attracted explorers down the ages, enveloping me completely.

By the time we came out of Cape of Good Hope and drove down to a beach where we could wet our feet, it was past lunchtime. On our way out from the Table Mountain National Park, we halted at the Two Oceans Restaurant. I

was hungry and thirsty and thought of gulping down some soft food with a cup of hot tea. The

problem was that no food seemed soft enough for me. I had been having a toothache since morning – the rather late in the day wisdom tooth syndrome – and had decided to ignore it in case it hampered my visit to the Cape. The pain had steadily increased but I had not felt it so much in the excitement of following Vasco Da Gama's trail. But the very thought of munching pizzas and sandwiches frightened me. But only tea wouldn't do on an empty stomach. Luckily, there was hot chocolate on the menu and a big mug provided both nutrition and warmth for the time being.

Our visit to Boulder's Bay on our way back was another adventure. This bay is a natural habitat of African penguins –



Table Mountain National Park



View from Cape Point





popularly known as Jackass penguins. These rare birds reside here peacefully with a wide variety of other marine birds that include gulls, terns and shags, protected under the Table Mountain National Park Marine Protected Area. Waddling along the beach in their black and white coats, jumping into the water after a few tentative moments on reaching the edge and then



going for a merry swim, the parents building nests in the sand a little away from the waterfront, feeding the babies – they looked so like adorable little humans!

It was time to head back towards Stellenbosch. Despite a few paracetamol tablets, the toothache had returned with vengeance, now spreading towards the throat, making my head throb. Judy, our driver for the trip, a very kind South African lady, took a detour to reach me to a medicine shop that had an Indian chemist at the counter, who gave me the antibiotic I generally take for the problem, without a printed prescription. Seeing my predicament he took one look at my doctor's advice on my smartphone and handed me the medicine.

Armed with medicines and confidence, we reached



Penguins at Boulder's Bay

asked for a cup of Mandela tea – my favourite rooibos cuppa from South Africa. My cup of good hope brimmed







# Wagh Bakri enters Karnataka



leading international brand and its organic tea range.

## Expansion plans

The company, which claims to enjoy leading market presence in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi and Hyderabad, recently entered Chhattisgarh and Goa.

Asked when the company plans to launch its teas in Kerala and Tamil Nadu, Desai said, "Once we consolidate our sales and distribution in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, we will enter the other two southern states."

The company sources its tea from India, Sri Lanka and Africa; distributes 45 mkg of tea, of which five percent is exported; while the rest is for domestic consumption across 11 states.

## Second plant

Rasesh Desai, Managing Director, Wagh Bakri Tea Group said that the company is considering setting up a second tea blending plant in south India and is looking for land in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana for the same.

**W**agh Bakri, the flagship tea brand from Gujarat Tea Processors & Packers, has made inroads into Karnataka, along with two more brands of the company — Mili and Navchetan.

The brand, which has a rich heritage of over 100 years, has its market spread across 11 Indian states. "Wagh Bakri has gained great levels of acceptance in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. We believe that Karnataka also will be strong, as it has been a good tea market traditionally," said Parag Desai, Tea Sommelier and

Executive Director of the company. "Bengaluru will play a very important role in our strategy for south India" he added.

The company plans to achieve 10% market share in the state's tea market in the first year.

On the other two brands, he said, "Mili is more of a brand for the masses and *Navchet* generally finds its clients in small-time tea vendors."

Apart from these three brands, the Rs 1,000 crore-company markets two other lines — Good Morning Tea, the company's

## Climate change effect on Darjeeling tea – a study

**A** team from IIT Kharagpur and Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) is jointly conducting a study to find whether climate change is having any effect on the quality of Darjeeling tea and its production process. The Department of Architecture and Regional Planning of IIT-KGP and the Department of Geography and Regional Planning of IUP have come together to collaborate on the topic for the Summer Study Abroad Programme in India, 2017. "Through this study we are taking a look at what are the special factors responsible to give Darjeeling tea its uniqueness. From environmental perspectives, we would analyse what changes or climate change impacts have been affecting the tea industries," Principal Coordinator of the



programme for IIT-KGP Haimanti Banerji said.

*Courtesy : Financial Express*

HAPPENINGS



There's more that enthruses Argentinians besides football

# The Teas of ARGENTINA

Argentina, South America's second largest country, is among the top ten tea producing countries in the world. With its subtropical climate, Argentina has the ideal conditions for growing hybrid Indian and Assamica varietal tea bushes. Although only a relatively small portion of Argentina is suitable for growing tea, Argentina is nevertheless one of the most important producers of tea worldwide. Although its output was only about 1.6% of the total world output, Argentina continued to expand its export market over the years and today is the ninth largest in tea production in the world, producing 64,000 metric tonnes in 2005, and 76,000 metric tonnes in 2006.

In the 1920s, tea seeds were brought to Argentina from Russia, and the first non-native tea was grown. In 1924 the Argentinian government began urging farmers to try growing tea from seeds that had been imported from China and given to any farmers interested in experimenting with growing tea crops. Farmers from the provinces of Misiones, Corrientes, Formosa, Chaco and Tucumán tried cultivating the tea, along with immigrant farmers who also



experimented by planting the imported tea on their land. But low prices for tea on the world market caused most farmers to rethink growing it as a main crop. Tea that had been grown and processed was also considered to be inferior to that of other foreign grown teas,

all leading to small domestic production prior to 1951.

In 1951 the Argentinian government imposed an import ban on tea. Since it was such a popular beverage locally and in high demand by Argentinian citizens, cultivation of domestic tea increased dramatically. By 1952 new tea plantations were established in Misiones Province located in northeastern Argentina. The tea from these new plantations was also of better quality than that previously cultivated. The ever increasing demand for tea encouraged more farmers to begin growing it and by the late 1950s, the country began exporting tea to Chile.

The highland region of the Misiones and Corrientes provinces in northeastern Argentina has the largest concentration of tea estates. There the climate is hot and humid and the land relatively flat to allow for highly mechanised harvesting and production. Tea is harvested during Argentina's summer months of November to May. Argentina produces mainly black tea. Only one percent of its annual production is green tea. Argentina exports approximately 50,000 metric tonnes of tea annually with USA as the largest export market, as well as the United Kingdom and other European countries. Mainly CTC teas are produced and used primarily for blending and in the







Tea room in Buenos Aires

US where it's mainly used for iced tea.

In 2006 seventeen of Argentina's tea estates joined the Ethical Tea Partnership (ETP), which is a programme designed to protect the rights of workers and monitor working conditions on estates.

Argentina is also known for its mate which is a tisane or herbal tea made from the yerba mate plant, which is a species of holly. The vegetal tasting herbal drink is also becoming popular in the US and is Argentina's national drink. Although with the popularity of mate increasing in Argentina, less and less is available for export.

The tea is mostly grown in the northeastern part of the country, in Misiones and Corrientes; these areas have a warm subtropical climate with high rainfall, ideal for growing tea. The bordering Formosa province; in a strange connection, also grows tea. Formosa is very close to the geographic antipode of Taiwan (on opposite sides of the globe), which is also referred to as "Formosa" in the tea world.

The teas produced in Argentina are mostly mass-produced teas used in blending; single-origin artisan teas from the region are virtually unavailable on the



annually. Argentine tea is primarily used for blending. According to Tetley Tea, teas from this region tend to have a mild flavour and clear liquor, making them ideally suited to use in iced tea blends.

Western market. Tea exports from Argentina total about 50 mkg



## Tea-drinking customs and establishments A Welsh tea house in Gaiman

Many of Argentina's tea drinking customs and establishments have been shaped by the Welsh who immigrated there seeking cultural freedom in the 19th century. Several Welsh tea houses located in the southernmost region of Argentina in the towns of Gaiman and Patagonia have become popular with local tourists. Many of the Welsh tea customs are similar to those of Great Britain and Ireland, with afternoon tea being served at approximately 4:00 pm, with condiments of milk and sugar, and offered together with English biscuits, cakes, and pastries.

In some Buenos Aires establishments a combination of Argentinian cuisine and traditional British tea is served in the late afternoon with Earl Grey tea and scones, tarts, and finger sandwiches, along with a menu selection of Argentine dishes such as *asado de tira* (beef ribs). Young Argentinians are also becoming increasingly influenced by worldwide trends in tea beverages. Argentine consumers can purchase Moroccan mint tea or Chinese green tea as well as more traditional varieties.





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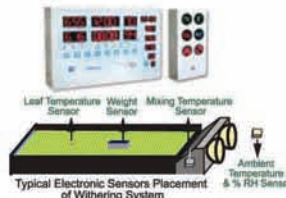
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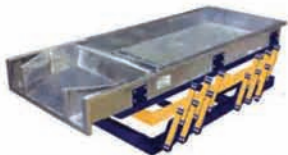
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## Highlights : Auction average

India : April to July ( in INR per Kg)

CTC + All Dust	ALL Sector			Organised			BLF		
	2017-18	2016-17	+/-	2017-18	2016-17	+/-	2017-18	2016-17	+/-
Assam	157.94	156.17	1.77	169.05	164.69	4.36	122.55	126.72	-4.17
Cachar	124.24	123.12	1.12						
Dooars	148.98	149.22	-0.24	167.31	163.49	3.82	109.96	117.89	-7.93
Terai	116.56	125.82	-9.26	133.55	140.09	-6.54	101.90	114.22	-12.32
N.India	146.64	148.52	-1.89						
S.India	94.33	102.14	-7.81						
Orthodox									
N.India	222.72	234.52	-11.80						
S.India	134.09	135.60	-1.52						

## World Average Tea Auction Prices

January to June (per Kg)

CENTRE	In Countrywise Currency			In INR (Approx)			In US \$ (Approx)			
	Currency	2017	2016	+/-	2017	2016	+/-	2017	2016	+/-
Chittagong	BDT	158.05	193.05	-35.00	129.18	165.34	-36.16	1.97	2.46	-0.49
Mombasa (Kenya)	US Cents	299.00	237.00	62.00	196.56	159.22	37.34	2.99	2.37	0.62
Limbe	US Cents	177.69	153.69	24.00	116.81	103.25	13.56	1.78	1.54	0.24
"Colombo (Mainly Orthodox)"	SL Rs	616.04	422.27	193.77	267.16	195.41	71.75	4.06	2.91	1.15

Exchange Rate:		India	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
January to June (Approximate)	US\$ 1=	2017	80.43	151.59
		2016	78.44	145.17

Source: ITA

## Estimated Production of Tea In India Upto June 2017

(in m

DISTRICT/STATE	D U R I N G				U P T O			
	2017	2016	+/-	%	2017	2016	+/-	%
ASSAM VALLEY	63.77	71.01	-7.24	-10	181.17	186.02	-4.85	-3
CACHAR	4.59	5.03	-0.44	-9	14.20	15.31	-1.11	-7
TOTAL ASSAM	68.36	76.04	-7.68	-10	195.37	201.33	-5.96	-3
DOOARS	25.09	23.78	1.31	6	66.72	64.97	1.75	3
TERAI	19.98	17.69	2.29	13	52.53	44.01	8.52	19
DARJEELING	0.14	1.33	-1.19	0	2.06	3.00	-0.94	0
TOTAL WEST BENGAL	45.21	42.80	2.41	6	121.31	111.98	9.33	8
OTHERS	2.83	3.30	-0.47	-14	8.63	8.93	-0.30	-3
TOTAL NORTH INDIA	116.40	122.14	-5.74	-5	325.31	322.24	3.07	1
TAMIL NADU	18.51	17.49	1.02	6	84.88	69.85	15.03	22
KERALA	7.45	6.79	0.66	10	30.13	29.14	0.99	3
KARNATAKA	0.66	0.73	-0.07	-10	2.53	2.81	-0.28	-10
TOTAL SOUTH INDIA	26.62	25.01	1.61	6	117.54	101.80	15.74	15
ALL INDIA	143.02	147.15	-4.13	-3	442.85	424.04	18.81	4

Source : Tea Board



## Crop Figures of Some Major Tea Producing Countries in Million Kgs.

2017	N. India	S. India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Kenya	Malawi	Uganda	Total
Jan	5.9	13.1	21.3	0.1	33.0	5.2		78.6
Feb	2.0	11.6	19.5	0.0	22.6	7.0		62.6
Mar	41.4	14.7	26.4	1.8	34.5	7.1		125.9
Apr	63.4	26.5	32.7	4.7	31.5	5.7		164.5
May	96.3	25.0	29.5	5.4	38.8	4.3		199.3
Jun	116.4	26.6	27.1		40.5	2.2		212.8
Jan to June	325.3	117.5	156.5	12.0	200.9	31.5	0.0	843.7

2016	N. India	S. India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Kenya	Malawi	Uganda	Total
Jan	3.4	14.6	25.2	0.1	50.3	5.6	5.6	104.8
Feb	2.3	14.8	22.9	0.0	44.0	5.8	2.9	92.7
Mar	55.3	15.4	22.5	2.5	45.3	7.7	2.8	151.5
Apr	51.6	17.0	27.0	5.1	37.6	5.9	5.4	149.6
May	87.5	15.0	31.0	6.4	36.6	3.4	5.8	185.7
Jun	122.1	25.0	25.7	11.2	35.9	1.5	5.4	226.9
July	131.2	19.3	21.5	11.4	29.3	0.9	4.0	217.6
Aug	140.5	18.2	23.0	11.2	29.5	1.8	3.5	227.7
Sep	169.7	20.3	19.8	12.7	36.8	2.8	3.9	266.0
Oct	132.9	18.3	18.6	10.9	41.3	1.4	5.0	228.4
Nov	109.7	19.2	27.3	9.0	39.9	0.8	5.5	211.4
Dec	48.2	15.8	27.1	4.5	46.9	1.8	4.9	149.2
Jan to June	322.2	101.8	154.3	25.4	249.6	29.9	27.9	911.1
Jan to Dec	1054.5	212.9	291.6	85.1	473.4	39.4	54.7	2211.5

Variance	N. India	S. India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Kenya	Malawi	Uganda	Total
Jan	2.5	-1.5	-3.9	0.1	-17.3	-0.4		-20.5
Feb	-0.3	-3.3	-3.4	0.0	-21.4	1.2		-27.2
Mar	-13.9	-0.7	3.9	-0.7	-10.8	-0.6		-22.8
Apr	11.7	9.5	5.7	-0.4	-6.1	-0.2		20.3
May	8.8	10.1	-1.5	-1.1	2.2	0.9		19.4
Jun	-5.7	1.6	1.4		4.6	0.7		
Jan to June	3.1	15.7	2.2	-2.2	-48.7	1.6	0.0	-30.9

## Indian Tea Exports Upto June 2017

2017 (Provisional)	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)
Jan	13.6	297.0	218.89	7.5	115.3	154.57	21.0	412.4	196.08
Feb	12.1	248.5	204.90	7.0	119.3	170.64	19.1	367.8	192.37
Mar	12.7	258.4	202.97	7.7	131.5	171.20	20.4	389.9	191.01
Apr	6.7	142.8	213.10	5.5	95.1	172.58	12.2	237.9	194.82
May	9.5	197.9	209.42	5.4	104.0	191.88	14.9	301.9	203.03
Jun	13.2	183.1	138.41	6.3	104.4	165.95	19.5	287.5	147.28
Jan to June	67.8	1327.8	195.81	39.4	669.5	170.15	107.2	1997.3	186.38

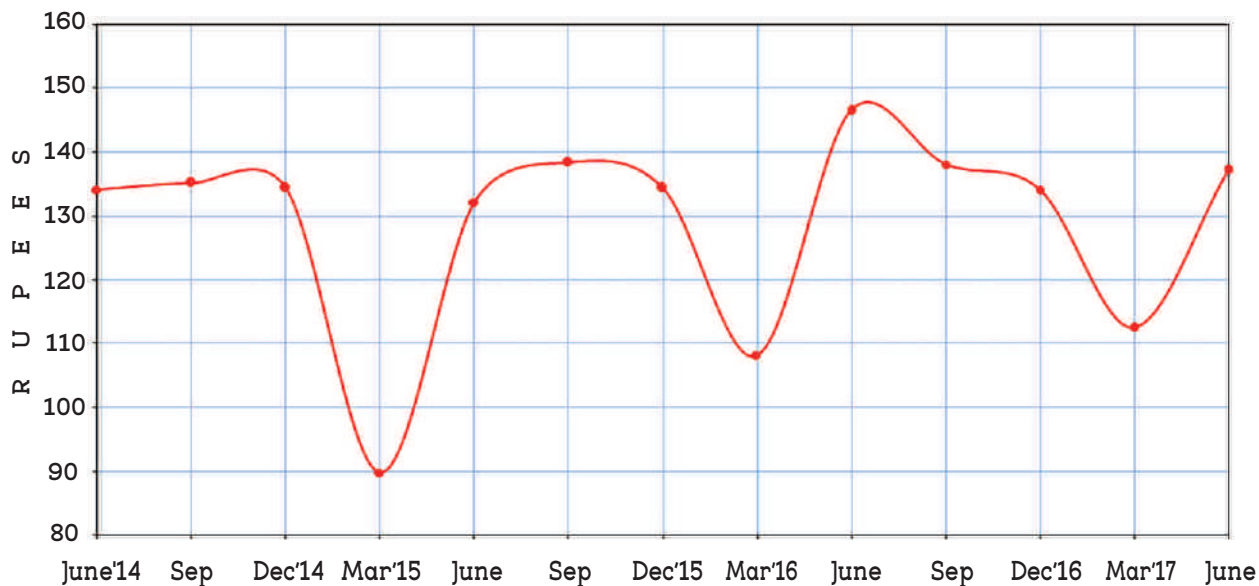
2016 (Provisional)	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)
Jan	12.9	283.8	219.96	7.5	103.1	138.07	20.4	386.9	189.93
Feb	10.0	204.7	205.71	7.4	104.7	141.26	17.4	309.4	178.20
Mar	9.7	193.2	198.94	7.9	116.2	146.39	17.7	309.4	175.30
Apr	6.7	151.9	227.68	6.8	103.2	152.44	13.4	255.1	189.78
May	8.7	197.5	228.00	6.0	102.2	170.33	14.7	299.7	204.40
Jun	8.0	207.1	257.60	7.8	134.4	172.54	15.8	341.5	215.74
July	8.8	220.2	249.65	7.7	138.0	179.23	16.5	358.2	216.83
Aug	13.9	326.7	235.06	8.0	126.7	157.99	21.9	453.4	206.86
Sep	14.0	331.5	236.80	7.4	114.1	154.66	21.4	445.7	208.45
Oct	12.0	278.0	232.62	6.9	116.0	167.69	18.9	394.0	208.81
Nov	14.5	337.6	233.65	7.9	125.4	158.58	22.4	463.1	207.10
Dec	14.6	332.3	228.36	7.5	119.6	158.59	22.1	451.9	204.55
Jan to June	55.9	1238.0	221.35	43.4	663.9	153.03	99.3	1901.9	191.51
Jan to Dec	133.6	3064.3	229.37	88.9	1403.8	157.99	222.5	4468.1	200.86

Variance	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs. Crs)	Average (Rs.)
Jan	0.7	13.3	-1.1	0.0	12.2	16.5	0.7	25.5	6.1
Feb	2.2	43.9	-0.8	-0.4	14.6	29.4	1.8	58.5	14.2
Mar	3.0	65.2	4.0	-0.3	15.3	24.8	2.8	80.5	15.7
Apr	0.0	-9.1	-14.6	-1.3	-8.1	20.1	-1.2	-17.2	5.0
May	0.8	0.5	-18.6	-0.6	1.8	21.5	0.2	2.3	-1.4
Jun	5.2	-24.0	-119.2	-1.5	-30.0	-6.6	3.7	-54.0	-68.5
Jan to June	11.9	89.7	-25.55	-4.0	5.7	17.12	7.9	95.4	-5.12
%	21.24			-9.29			7.90		

Source: Tea Board

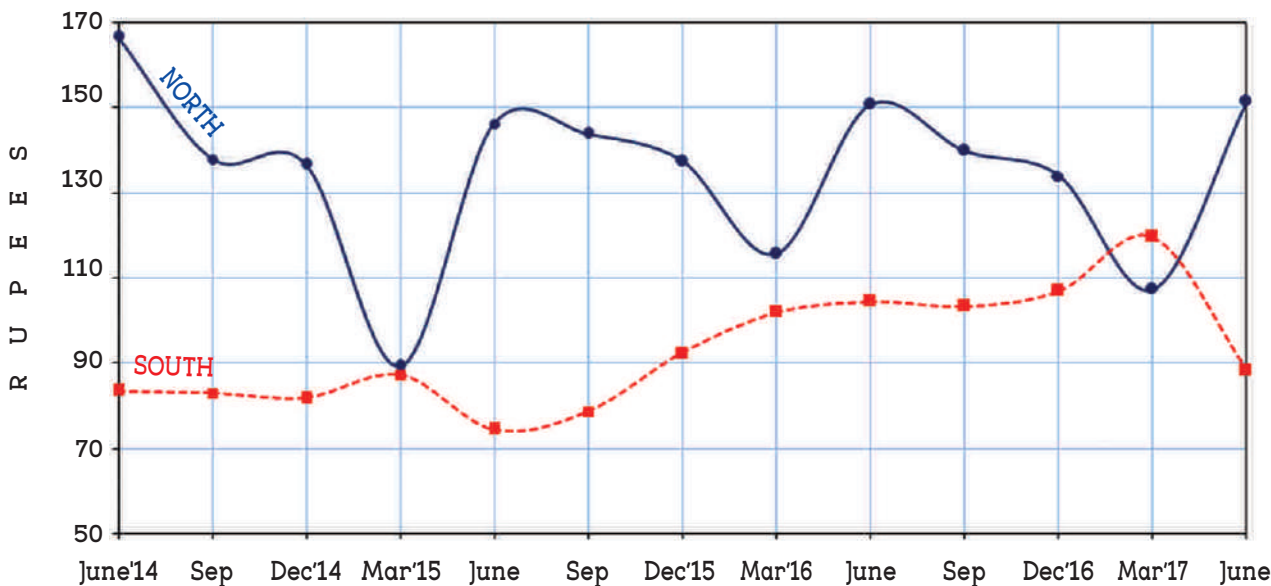


### THREE YEAR AUCTION AVERAGE – ALL TEAS – ALL INDIA



June'14	Sep	Dec'14	Mar'15	June	Sep	Dec'15	Mar'16	June	Sep	Dec'16	Mar'17	June
134.09	135.13	134.32	89.79	132.08	138.36	134.40	108.14	146.50	138.03	134.12	112.46	137.13

### THREE YEAR CTC & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGE – NORTH AND SOUTH INDIA

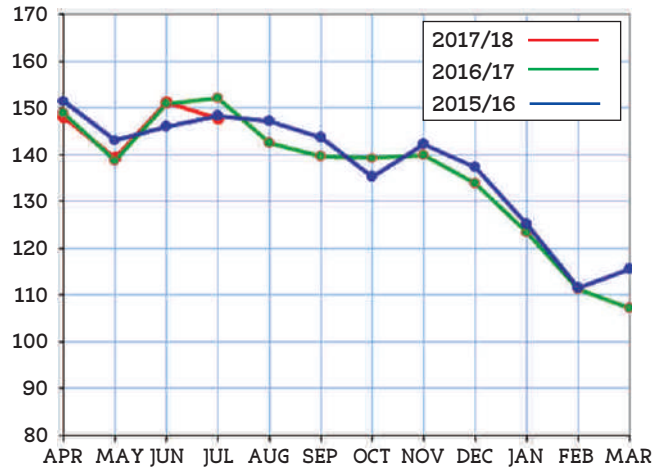


June'14	Sep	Dec'14	Mar'15	June	Sep	Dec'15	Mar'16	June	Sep	Dec'16	Mar'17	June
166.44	137.83	136.48	89.19	146.10	143.79	137.32	115.59	150.50	139.68	133.84	107.23	151.33
83.43	82.85	81.66	87.19	74.36	78.47	92.14	101.77	104.33	103.27	106.87	119.46	88.16



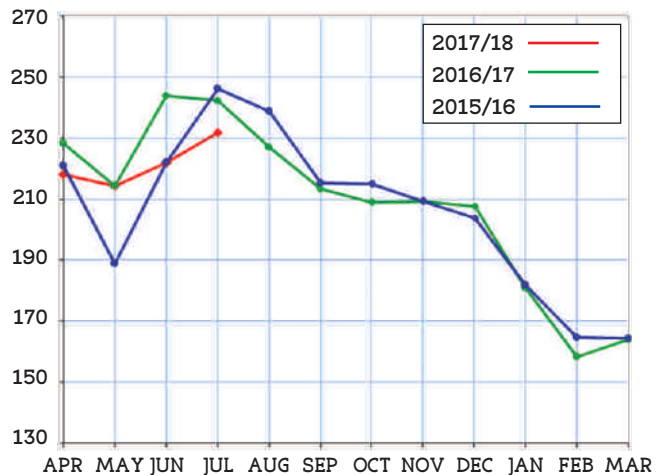
### NORTH INDIA - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	148.13	148.97	-0.84	151.67
MAY	139.42	138.97	0.45	143.27
JUN	151.33	150.95	0.38	146.10
JUL	147.95	152.19	-4.24	148.33
AUG		142.51		147.25
SEP		139.68		143.79
OCT		139.54		135.36
NOV		140.04		142.35
DEC		133.84		137.32
JAN		123.59		125.20
FEB		111.39		111.60
MAR		107.23		115.59
April to July	146.64	148.49	-1.85	147.05



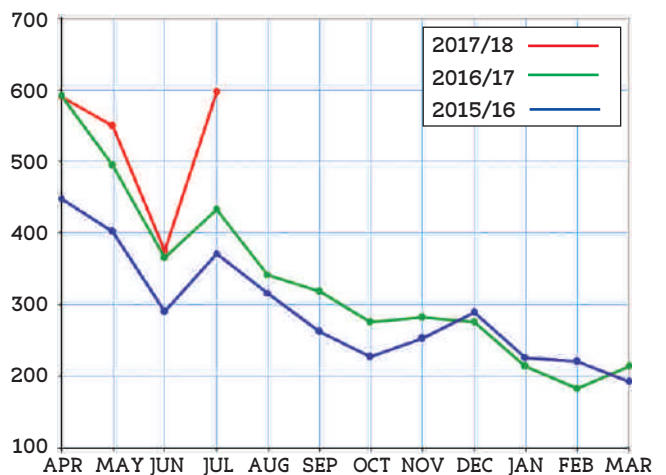
### NORTH INDIA - ORTHODOX LEAF AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	218.30	228.44	-10.14	221.02
MAY	214.46	214.30	0.16	188.85
JUN	222.09	244.11	-22.02	222.05
JUL	231.87	242.49	-10.62	246.26
AUG		227.28		238.89
SEP		213.57		215.42
OCT		208.88		214.98
NOV		209.18		209.21
DEC		207.88		204.01
JAN		180.89		181.89
FEB		158.28		164.81
MAR		164.26		164.47
April to July	222.72	234.52	-11.80	224.86



### DARJEELING LEAF AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	589.92	590.86	-0.94	448.21
MAY	549.70	494.77	54.93	402.07
JUN	375.05	365.94	9.11	290.77
JUL	595.97	433.05	162.92	371.67
AUG		342.15		316.55
SEP		318.20		262.13
OCT		275.47		227.05
NOV		282.43		252.67
DEC		275.30		289.31
JAN		214.02		226.83
FEB		183.92		220.92
MAR		214.14		192.58
April to July	482.86	440.59	42.27	358.03

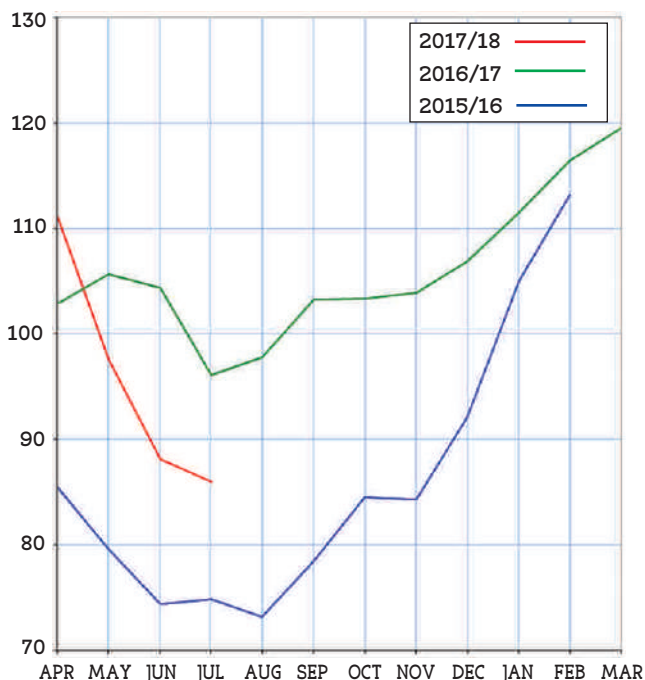




## SOUTH INDIA - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGE IN Rs.

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	111.06	102.89	8.17	85.40
MAY	97.56	105.61	-8.05	79.59
JUN	88.16	104.33	-16.17	74.36
JUL	85.96	96.07	-10.12	74.82
AUG		97.74		73.16
SEP		103.27		78.47
OCT		103.32		84.55
NOV		103.88		84.28
DEC		106.87		92.14
JAN		111.46		104.99
FEB		116.40		113.17
MAR		119.46		101.77
April/ July	94.33	102.14	-7.81	78.32

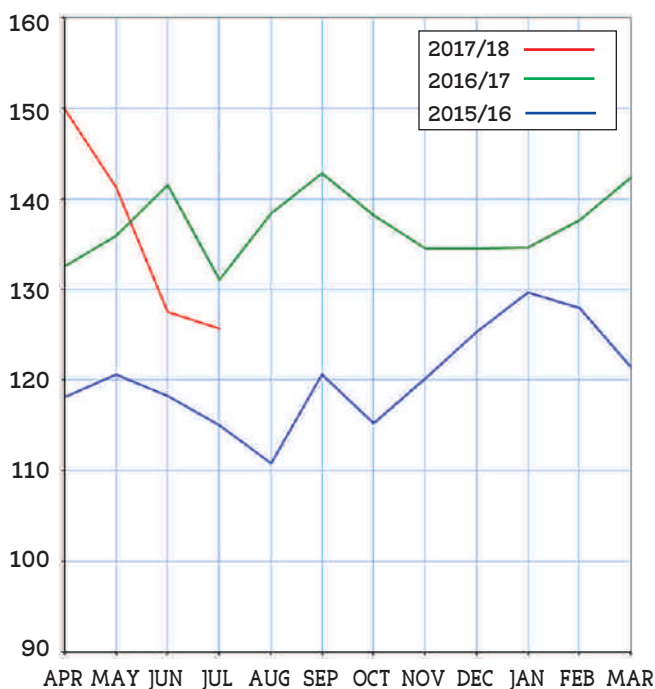
### CTC LEAF & ALL DUST S.I. AUCTION AVERAGE



## SOUTH INDIA - ORTHODOX LEAF AUCTION AVERAGE IN Rs.

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	149.91	132.67	17.24	118.18
MAY	141.32	136.00	5.32	120.68
JUN	127.50	141.53	-14.03	118.26
JUL	125.74	131.16	-5.42	115.01
AUG		138.48		110.87
SEP		142.84		120.67
OCT		138.25		115.28
NOV		134.53		120.26
DEC		134.57		125.37
JAN		134.68		129.68
FEB		137.66		127.97
MAR		142.41		121.41
April/ July	134.09	135.60	-1.52	117.70

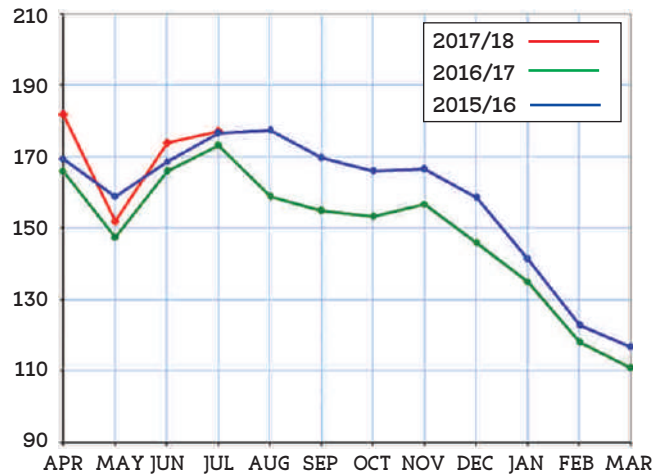
### ORTHODOX LEAF S.I. AUCTION AVERAGE



**NORTH INDIA - ASSAM VALLEY - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

**Organised Sector**

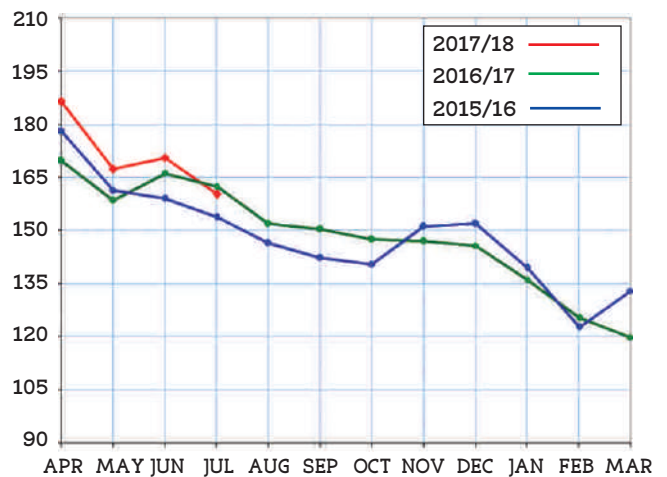
Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	181.97	166.08	15.89	169.55
MAY	152.07	147.59	4.48	158.74
JUN	173.92	166.00	7.92	168.72
JUL	177.08	173.09	3.98	176.64
AUG		158.89		177.33
SEP		154.79		169.74
OCT		153.33		166.02
NOV		156.81		166.47
DEC		145.75		158.53
JAN		135.07		141.30
FEB		117.97		122.77
MAR		110.89		116.77
April to July	169.05	164.69	4.36	170.74



**NORTH INDIA - DOOARS - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

**Organised Sector**

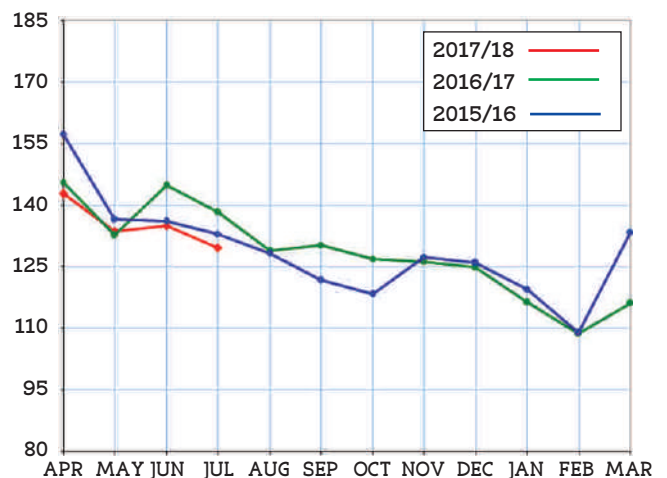
Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	186.32	169.59	16.73	177.97
MAY	167.36	158.45	8.91	161.40
JUN	170.54	165.95	4.59	158.89
JUL	160.21	162.51	-2.31	153.75
AUG		151.95		146.43
SEP		150.42		142.29
OCT		147.46		140.54
NOV		146.87		151.14
DEC		145.75		151.93
JAN		136.16		139.32
FEB		125.23		122.66
MAR		119.97		132.98
April to July	167.31	163.49	3.82	159.37



**NORTH INDIA - TERAI - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

**Organised Sector**

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	142.67	145.54	-2.87	157.09
MAY	133.54	132.70	0.84	136.50
JUN	134.92	144.75	-9.83	135.93
JUL	129.61	138.24	-8.63	133.00
AUG		128.79		128.21
SEP		130.25		121.64
OCT		126.87		118.26
NOV		126.20		127.32
DEC		124.77		125.96
JAN		116.30		119.53
FEB		108.76		108.90
MAR		116.00		133.40
April to July	133.55	140.09	-6.54	138.13



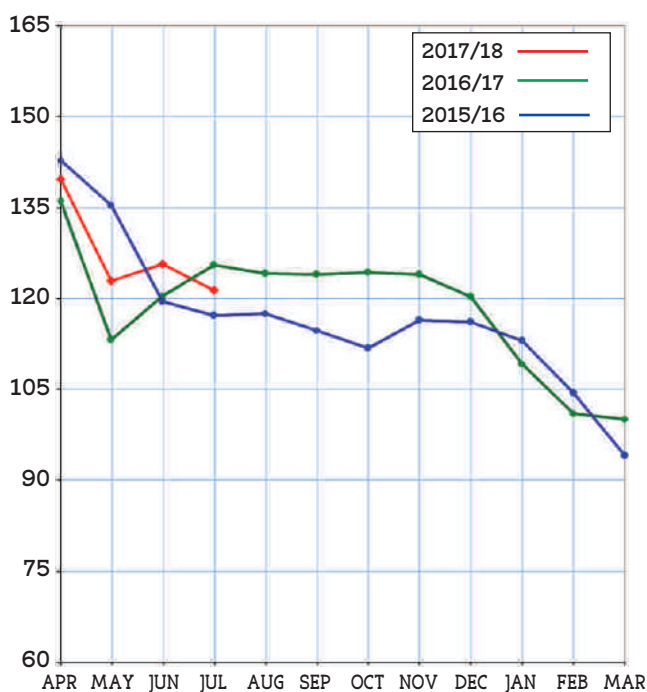


## NORTH INDIA - CACHAR – CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

### Organised Sector

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	139.71	135.95	3.76	142.79
MAY	122.94	113.14	9.80	135.41
JUN	125.72	120.46	5.26	119.42
JUL	121.34	125.50	-4.16	117.20
AUG		124.06		117.52
SEP		123.92		114.78
OCT		124.19		111.80
NOV		123.89		116.34
DEC		120.24		116.06
JAN		109.25		112.97
FEB		101.08		104.36
MAR		100.12		94.07
April to July	123.85	122.53	1.32	120.40

### CACHAR ORGANISED SECTOR CTC LEAF & ALL DUST

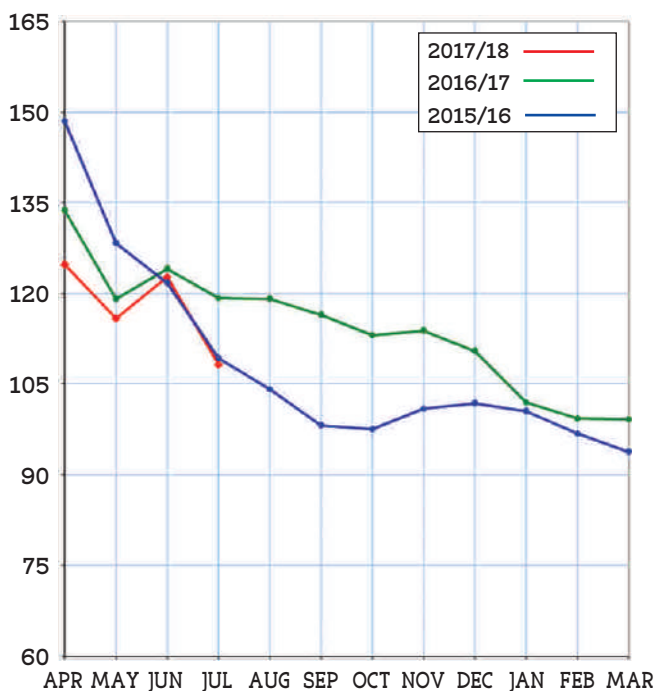


## NORTH INDIA - TRIPURA – CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

### Organised Sector

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	124.74	133.67	-8.93	148.51
MAY	115.90	119.05	-3.15	128.25
JUN	122.71	123.99	-1.28	121.65
JUL	108.27	119.28	-11.01	109.26
AUG		119.04		104.21
SEP		116.38		98.19
OCT		113.14		97.64
NOV		113.81		100.99
DEC		110.47		101.82
JAN		102.00		100.45
FEB		99.40		96.89
MAR		99.25		93.78
April to July	114.53	121.81	-7.28	116.21

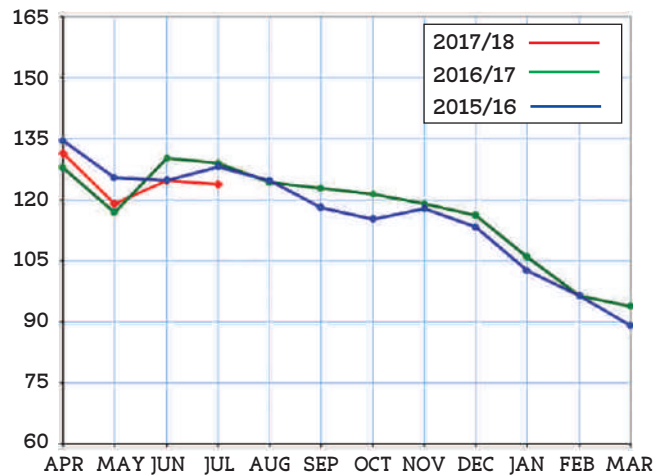
### TRIPURA ORGANISED SECTOR CTC LEAF & ALL DUST



**NORTH INDIA - ASSAM VALLEY - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

**BLF**

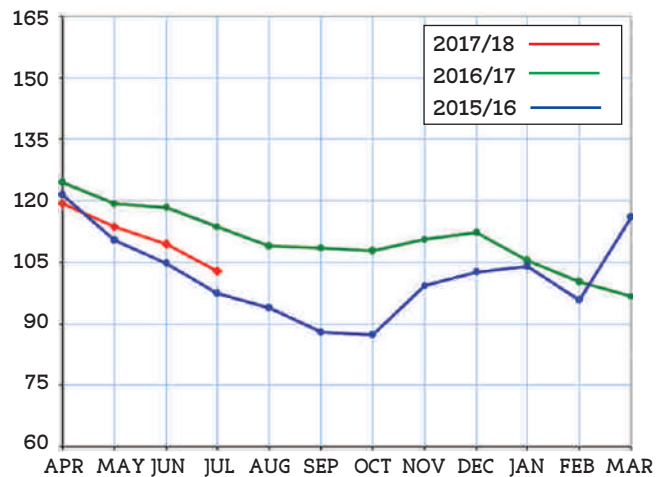
Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	131.53	127.82	3.71	134.61
MAY	119.05	116.91	2.14	125.58
JUN	124.83	130.33	-5.50	124.82
JUL	123.90	129.19	-5.29	128.14
AUG		124.41		124.85
SEP		122.98		118.03
OCT		121.52		115.30
NOV		119.15		117.92
DEC		116.22		113.46
JAN		105.97		102.75
FEB		96.50		96.46
MAR		93.81		89.04
April to July	122.55	126.72	-4.17	127.68



**NORTH INDIA - DOOARS - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

**BLF**

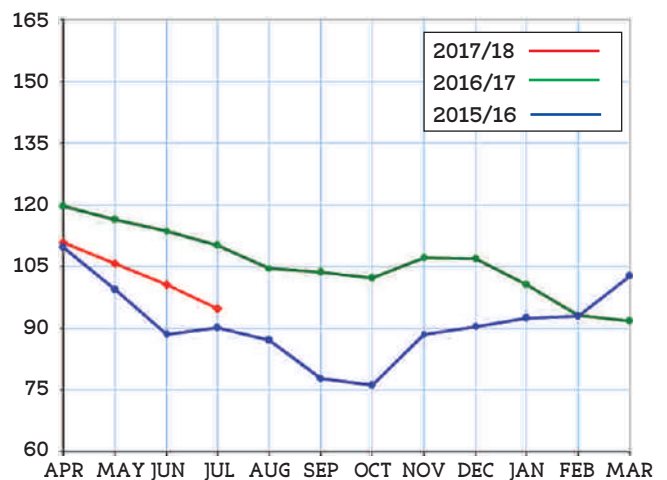
Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	119.43	124.59	-5.16	121.51
MAY	113.77	119.45	-5.68	110.36
JUN	109.41	118.43	-9.02	104.71
JUL	102.94	113.84	-10.90	97.45
AUG		108.91		93.98
SEP		108.61		88.13
OCT		107.83		87.38
NOV		110.77		99.44
DEC		112.28		102.61
JAN		105.50		104.05
FEB		100.27		95.86
MAR		96.84		116.11
April to July	109.96	117.89	-7.93	105.44



**NORTH INDIA - TERAI - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

**BLF**

Months	2017/18	2016/17	+/-	2015/16
APR	110.89	119.65	-8.76	109.71
MAY	105.78	116.34	-10.56	99.46
JUN	100.73	113.77	-13.04	88.57
JUL	94.95	110.15	-15.19	90.20
AUG		104.68		87.19
SEP		103.63		78.01
OCT		102.34		76.29
NOV		107.17		88.68
DEC		106.90		90.45
JAN		100.60		92.49
FEB		93.34		93.01
MAR		91.78		102.79
April to July	101.90	114.22	-12.32	97.70





**NI DISTRICT WISE AUCTION AVERAGE IN Rs.**  
**PERIOD: APRIL TO JULY (New Season)**

Sector: Organised (CTC + All Dust)

*(for new season teas only)*

DISTRICT	2017-18	2016-17	Difference
ARUNACHAL	148.29	156.53	-8.25
MEGHALAYA	122.01	123.05	-1.03
ASSAM	169.05	164.69	4.36
BARPETA	144.39	135.69	8.70
DARRANG	169.97	169.87	0.09
DIBRUGARH	157.28	154.27	3.01
GOLAGHAT	172.04	167.13	4.91
JORHAT	188.57	167.38	21.19
KAMRUP	173.38	166.76	6.62
KARBI-ANGLON	132.77	126.51	6.26
KOKRAJHAR	148.47	153.83	-5.36
LAKHIMPUR	215.59	195.46	20.13
NAGAON	173.30	168.90	4.40
NALBARI	223.71	201.71	22.00
SIBSAGAR	180.25	172.82	7.43
SONITPUR	172.93	170.44	2.50
TINSUKIA	150.56	153.71	-3.15
CACHAR	123.85	122.53	1.32
DOOARS & TERAJ	156.96	156.88	0.08
DOOARS	167.31	163.49	3.82
TERAI	133.55	140.09	-6.54
SIKKIM	227.00	208.89	18.11
TRIPURA	114.53	121.81	-7.28

Sector: Bought Leaf (CTC + All Dust)

*(for new season teas only)*

DISTRICT	2017-18	2016-17	Difference
ARUNACHAL	136.44	106.64	29.81
MEGHALAYA	131.70	119.51	12.19
BIHAR	90.06	104.27	-14.21
ASSAM	122.55	126.72	-4.17
DARRANG	125.82	137.21	-11.39
DIBRUGARH	122.30	130.31	-8.01
GOALPARA	115.47	129.96	-14.48
GOLAGHAT	128.97	135.19	-6.21
JORHAT	125.58	129.95	-4.36
KARBI-ANGLON	117.02	125.46	-8.44
NAGAON	129.07	133.85	-4.78
SIBSAGAR	128.25	130.05	-1.80
SONITPUR	129.34	122.93	6.42
TINSUKIA	116.61	119.76	-3.16
CACHAR	129.10	128.50	0.59
DOOARS & TERAJ	105.76	116.00	-10.24
DOOARS	109.96	117.89	-7.93
TERAI	101.90	114.22	-12.32



## Price Slab analysis [April 2017 to July 2017]

NI - Assam Organised sector: CTC+ Dust : Auction Sales in Lac Kgs									
Grade	Below Rs.140	Rs. 140-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. 171-180	Rs. 181-190	Rs. 191-200	Rs. Above 200	Total
Larger Brokens	10	7	5	4	4	3	2	8	44
Medium Brokens	8	3	3	2	2	2	2	10	32
Smaller Brokens	13	11	7	7	6	5	4	21	75
Fannings	14	11	6	5	5	4	3	11	59
Dust	18	13	9	12	11	9	9	36	118
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>328</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	34	6	5	4	2	1	1	1	55
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>% (2017)</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2016)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100</b>

NI - Doars & Terai Organised sector: CTC+ Dust:Auction Sales									
Grade	Below Rs.140	Rs. 140-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. 171-180	Rs. 181-190	Rs. 191-200	Rs. Above 200	Total
Larger Brokens	6	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	13
Medium Brokens	12	3	3	3	6	4	2	2	35
Smaller Brokens	20	6	6	7	8	15	10	19	91
Fannings	12	3	3	4	7	7	4	6	45
Dust	9	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	26
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>210</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	22	3	3	3	2	1	1	0	36
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>246</b>
<b>% (2017)</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2016)</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100</b>

NI - Assam BLF sector: CTC+ Dust :Auction Sales									
Grade	Below Rs.110	Rs. 110-120	Rs. 121-130	Rs. 131-140	Rs. 141-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. Above 170	Total
Larger Brokens	5	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	13
Medium Brokens	5	4	4	3	2	2	1	1	22
Smaller Brokens	7	6	4	4	3	2	1	1	29
Fannings	4	4	3	3	2	1	0	0	16
Dust	4	6	6	4	3	1	1	1	27
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>107</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	10	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	14
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>% (2017)</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2016)</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>

NI - Doars & Terai BLF sector: CTC+ Dust :Auction Sales									
Grade	Below Rs.110	Rs. 110-120	Rs. 121-130	Rs. 131-140	Rs. 141-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. Above 170	Total
Larger Brokens	7	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Medium Brokens	23	6	1	1	0	0	0	0	32
Smaller Brokens	43	14	5	2	1	1	1	2	69
Fannings	16	8	3	1	1	0	0	1	30
Dust	7	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	12
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	14	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	16
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>167</b>
<b>% (2017)</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2016)</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>



Compiled by Soumen Bagchi



# TATA GLOBAL BEVERAGES brewing local blends to garner higher market share



Ajoy Misra, MD, Tata Global Beverages

In a bid to garner higher market share in states such as Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat, Tata Global Beverages (TGB) plans to create local blends for each of these markets.

While TGB is the overall market leader in teas with a 25 percent share, it lacks adequate share in these states. It has single digit market share in Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Gujarat and hopes

that seeding the market with local blends will help ramp up its share.

"We are in the process of entering 'wide spaces' where the market is large but TGB is not strong. While we are market leaders, there are states where our market share is in single digit. We are taking one state at a time and creating specific blends for each," said Ajoy Misra, Managing Director, Tata Global Beverages.

For instance, in Maharashtra it recently launched a special blend and pack under Tata Tea Gold Maharashtra.

"Even with the same brands we created subtle blend variations for regions over the years. There is no one kind of tea taste that pervades India. There is three to five percent growth in the tea category and we

expect branded tea to pick up," he added.

Apart from filling the "wide spaces" in regional markets, TGB is adding to its portfolio new ayurvedic variants under Tata Tea Teaveda.

Stepping up innovation and product launches has been the strategy for the tea company in the past year where it has tried to cater to every possible need gap in the market. "There have been five new launches in the year gone by and we hope to sustain the momentum," he added.

Entering new categories like Ready to Drink (RTD) has also been a big step taken where there is a pilot currently in north India. A new brand under Fraski has been created with green tea as a base along with different fruit based flavours.

*Courtesy : Business Line*

## Andrew Yule to focus on tea

Andrew Yule plans to focus more on its tea business. "Our standalone net sales were the highest at Rs 398.54 crore in 2016-'17, of which 55 percent comprised tea. In 2017-'18, we are targeting over Rs 450 crore and 60 percent of it is expected to come from tea," Sunil Munshi, Chairman and Managing Director of Andrew Yule, said.

The standalone net profit of the company for the fiscal ended March 2017 rose to Rs 27.38 crore against Rs 8.35 crore in 2015-'16. Tea output stood at 11.5 mkg for the fiscal ended March 2017, up 4.54 percent, from 11 mkg a year ago. The tea entity owns eleven gardens across Dooars, Assam and Darjeeling.

"For the last seven to eight years we have done intensive uprooting and replanting of bushes in all our

gardens and hence we are expecting the production to go up steadily," the CMD said.

Andrew Yule is setting up a bought leaf factory on five acres of land in Sivasagar district of Assam at an investment of around Rs 15 crore. The plant will be operational by early next year.

The factory is expected to manufacture 1.5 mkg per annum of CTC and Orthodox tea.

Andrew Yule is also trying to get into a partnership with some small tea growers in Assam to source green leaves. "We will set the quality parameters for the small growers and our own team will check the quality before buying from them," he said. A similar project will be started in West Bengal next year.

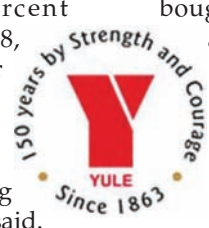
Last year, the company had set



Sunil Munshi, Chairman and Managing Director, Andrew Yule

up a green leaf factory at Mim that manufactured 5,000 kg last fiscal and another at Dooars that manufactured 31,000 kg. "This year we plan to step up the production to 10,000 kg in Darjeeling (Mim) and one lakh kg in Dooars," Sunil Munshi said.

*Courtesy : The Telegraph*



## A portal to the past opens for Zahra Amiruddin between conversations on tea and history

Waking up on a tea estate in the middle of northeastern India can only mean that you'll be welcomed by the sight of rolling hills, a slight drizzle, a nip in the air, and the chatter of prancing monkeys on the roof.

It's 7am and my next stop in Assam has brought me to the state border with Arunachal Pradesh. I am at the Koilamari tea estate, residing in an ancient room in an ancient colonial bungalow. There are wrought iron tables, wooden chests, crystal lampshades and I'm careful not to disturb them. There's a dance of light and shadows across the wooden flooring as I step out to the courtyard. In the distance, a swing hangs lightly. Khyati Shah, whose father owns Koilamari and who's with me for this leg of the trip, has organised a lavish breakfast spread. It's an English breakfast, of course, with a cup of Orthodox black tea from the plantation.

"The name 'Koilamari,' is from a local word 'koyla' for coal," explains Khyati. The land, apparently, was abundant with coal

gardens. Koilamari's teas make their way to Russia, Iran, Dubai, Germany and the UK and I am curious to see where it all comes from.

"Earlier we used to specialise in manufacturing both CTC and Orthodox varieties, but at present we're sticking to Orthodox only," says Khyati. But I'm only just discovering the finer qualities of the whole leaf tea, and cannot fully appreciate this distinction. I'm also distracted by the changing scenery around me, and trying to capture all that I see.

Koilamari lies between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Some paths lead right into the forests of Arunachal, home to elephants, snakes, and spiders – a number of them can be spotted on almost every shade tree.

En route to the estate, we pass by Harmoti town, where on one side, the addresses read Assam and on the other, it says Arunachal Pradesh. Interestingly, the local hooch is sold on the Arunachal side. "Taxes," says Khyati, cryptically, when I ask her.

As we drive along the plantation pathways, we stop to admire a rocky stream that also



Manufacturing Orthodox tea is time consuming and that's also because of the attention given to extract the flavours from every leaf

serves as a natural bridge towards the factory. Koilamari's factory has a workforce of 2276 people including pluckers, tea tasters, and factory specialists.

Being an avid history buff, I find there are stories everywhere. On the drive back, we are on National Highway 52. Mr Chaliyah, a former estate manager who's in the car with us, points to an old building that's now a police station. I ask about it and am offered another story, of a young and tremendously courageous girl, Kanaklata Barua. In 1930, during the civil disobedience movement against the British, that called for the freedom of India, 16-year-old Kanaklata chose to hoist the Indian flag on the roof of this building. She was fatally shot. Her statue now stands in the nearby town of Lakhimpur.

Conversations about tea and history take over most of our car ride. And, while a visit to the estate itself is a step into a verdant paradise, it also opened up a portal to the past.







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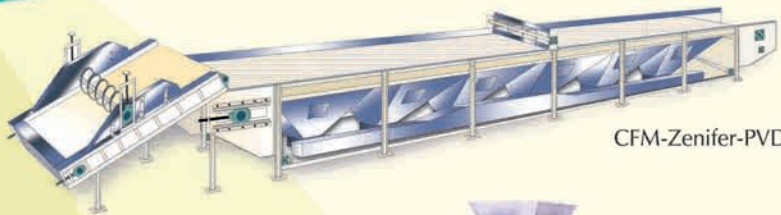
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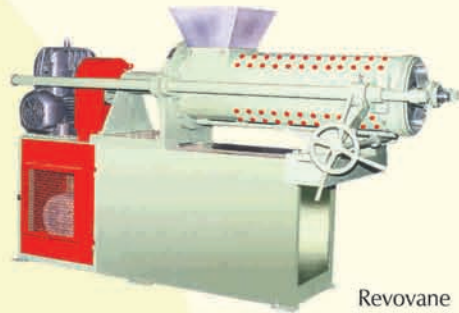
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