

CONTEMPORARY

# TEA TIME

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Errol O' Brien

# TEA QUIZZY

## QUESTIONS

- 1) Shaped by hand into bundles or rosettes of flowers and when steeped in water it slowly blossoms into a bouquet of breathtaking shapes and flavours. How is this tea contemporarily described?
- 2) Besides selling speciality teas and conducting online sales, what connects these tea companies – Teabox, Teamonk, Valdham Teas and Teameteas?
- 3) Which experimental produce has been bottled and labelled as Kargil Sepoy in India and found interest from buyers in Mozambique?
- 4) Name this rare and expensive Indian tea, produced from unopened buds that are handpicked and rolled, withered and dried in the sun with fruity aromas and long lasting flavour?
- 5) Which tea estate started in the late 1890s, was a Scottish Missionary Plantation?
- 6) Why did the German tabloid "BILD" hilariously create this Headline: 'We'll introduce a Tea Break'? It was aimed at the Britons.
- 7) The time between plucking and processing tea has been reduced to 25 minutes in the case of Green Quick Tea produced by an experimental tea garden. Name it.
- 8) In what way are thrips and shot hole borers subversive to tea?
- 9) How is a bright tea, which is Creamy in character, described by a tea taster?
- 10) Give the local word to describe a sterile green tea leaf.

## Answers

- 1) Craft Tea • 2) They sell single origin teas from the tea gardens of Darjeeling and the Nilgiris • 3) Tea Wine, a new brew. It is tea combined with fruits and berries, an experiment by the scientists in Himachal Pradesh • 4) White Tea • 5) Mission Hill Tea Estate in Darjeeling • 6) For Brits to reject the BREXIT and hinting that they would introduce the British habit of a tea break to their staff if they voted to remain in the EU • 7) IIT Kharagpur at their experimental farm Gopali • 8) Tea pests • 9) Croppy • 10) Banji





FROM THE PUBLISHER

# Race to be Weather Proof



The weather can be quite temperamental. And this past year, both Africa and Sri Lanka have reeled against her anger. Producers are suffering from adverse conditions that have taken a toll on their crop. We too have faced inclement weather patterns across India, especially in the South, with crops facing a steady decline. Now, flooding in Cachar and widespread hail damage in the Dooars will further affect supplies. Besides this, Assam has had a very poor March, and April has only been marginally better.

There's also been some fluctuation in demand for the drink. The cup's often looked half-empty. But all is not lost. To promote tea consumption, the ITA held roads shows recently in western India and central India. They advocated novel ways to brew and flavour the beverage.

In Kolkata, at the behest of the ITA, the Forum for the Future conducted the Tea 2030 workshop, a global collaborative platform that aims to bring together organisations to recreate a sustainable future for tea. They are working on a collaborative platform that envisages market mechanisms engaging consumers, and a Tea 2030 road map. The Chairman of ITA Azam Monem spoke about possibilities of developing a futures market for tea as a hedge against price and supply fluctuations.

And, as always, the young blood in the tea industry are creative, innovative and optimistic. We asked them what they thought about the future of the industry.

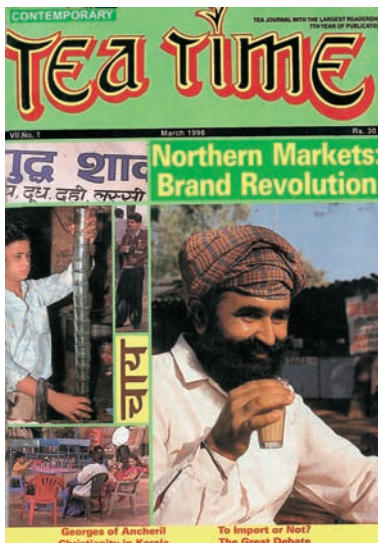
And read The Telegraph and The Statesman's take on Prafull Goradia's book *Fly Me To the Moon*, which chronicles his journey through the industry.

Wishing you a happy cup of goodness..until next time.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Nandkeolyar'.

A Nandkeolyar





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Dr Rajiv Srivastava (*extreme right*) releasing GTD 2016 and Mohamed Iqbal (*extreme left*) receiving the first copy in the presence of (*left to right*) Rakesh Kumar Jagenia, Rakesh Gupta, Rajesh Gupta and H P Gupta



P S Sundar



Maha Kumbabishekam in progress at Sri Gopalakrishnaswamy Temple in Chamraj

# Focus on the South

## CSR for Lasting Changes

Progressive-bent tea companies in the South have embarked on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities to create lasting changes in the society and double up as promotion endeavour for tea consumption.

A telling example of corporate social responsibility by a tea plantation company involving the community around is Sri Gopalakrishnaswamy Temple at Chamraj, 22 km from Coonoor. The temple, which has been in existence for over four decades, is managed under the corporate social responsibility of the United Nilgiri Tea Estates Co Ltd. (UNITEA), a division of Chennai-based Amalgamations group. Hundreds of families in different parts of the Nilgiris regularly visit the temple and take part in its daily *poojas*. In effect, while this is a temple by a tea company, the beneficiaries belong to different segments, not just the tea industry. "We have now done much-needed improvements for better worshipping experience for the devotees. We are conducting Maha Kumbabishekam to mark the completion of this process and to invoke celestial blessings to all",

UNITEA Chairman Mallika Srinivasan told me. Nilgiris Collector Dr P Sankar and officials of various departments of Governments – state and central – were among the thousands who attended the Maha Kumbabishekam on February 1. *Purohits* who had come from Udupi performed the Kumbabishekam. Communal harmony marked the Kumbabishekam with members of Christian and Muslim communities also participating in it. Over 2,000 persons took part in the mega Annadanam laid out for the



Ashok Sundaresan

occasion. This also marked the opening of the newly erected Anjaneyar and Nagar Sannidanams for worship. Directors D Hegde (who is also Tea Board member) and T G B Pinto led the team of executives and staff in helping the public enjoy Kumbabishekam festivities. "We conducted Mandala Pooja for 48 days as part of Kumbabishekam ceremonies for the benefit of the community", Temple Manager R Chandrasekaran said.

Another significant CSR activity happened when Tamil Nadu Government's Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Tea Plantation Corporation (TANTEA) Dr Rajeev Srivastava dedicated the 'Global Tea Digest 2016' to tea industry and trade. "I have not come across elsewhere such a comprehensive publication which is a storehouse of statistical data and a micro-encyclopedia on the tea industry. This will be of use to the tea industry, trade, exporters, academicians and researchers", Dr Srivastava told me. "As the only



authentic publication on tea statistics, Global Tea Digest (GTD) is used by policymakers in the industry and Government for taking decisions on vital matters”, acknowledged Mohamed Iqbal, Chairman Nilgiris Planters’ Association, who received the first copy. “This is the sixth annual edition and we have incorporated several charts and diagrams to make this more user-friendly”, said H P Gupta, Chairman, Global Tea Brokers (GTB), who published the GTD. “The 164-page GTD has over 120 statistical tables on global tea industry. It has also updated international tea grades, tea codes, tea timeline, tea tasting terminology and tea glossary”, GTD compiler Rajesh Gupta said. “GTD is distributed free of cost to representatives of the tea industry and trade besides academicians as an activity of our corporate social responsibility”, GTB Director Rakesh Gupta added.

TANTEA General Manager Rakesh Kumar Jagenia was present on the occasion. “Some facts about tea are fascinating. We have recorded many lesser-known facts about tea production and drinking round the world”, Rajesh Gupta said.

The accent on Digital India is also kindling the responsibility of the tea industry. The Union Government is considering necessary reforms to the tea industry and in this context, S Ashok Sundaresan, State President, Industries and Profession Cell of Tamil Nadu BJP, has undertaken an extensive study on the tea industry in the Nilgiris.

“I have had meetings with the different stakeholders – Tea Board, manufacturers, growers, auctioneers, traders, workers and consumers. I will submit my recommendations to Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister for Commerce and Industry”, Sundaresan, who is a Chartered Accountant, told me. “Our deliberations have underlined the need to reform Tea Board as an institution to promote, rather than

control the tea industry, with a member of the industry or trade becoming Chairman supported by IAS officer as chief executive functionary”, he said. “It has been stressed that Tea Board should step up its promotional activity with the goal to make everyone drink one extra cup daily based on the health benefits of tea drinking. This will wipe out all marketing concerns as the entire production will be absorbed domestically”, he said.

“A massive replantation subsidy scheme to replace old tea bushes with high yielding new clones, subsidised supply of inputs, strengthening the contribution of small grower groups, formation of mini and micro tea factories, incentives for exports and production of value-added teas, tax benefits for digital marketing and revival of Krishi Vigyan Kendra are among the proposals under consideration”, Sundaresan disclosed. He will recommend to Finance Minister Arun Jaitley the abolishing of personal income tax and substituting it with a transaction tax.

“In other words, our recommendation will be to make personal income tax an indirect tax to rid senior citizens and housewives from the ordeal of filing returns. There will not be much sacrifice for the government in its revenue because a transaction tax can build up revenue”, he reasoned.

“Besides, this will be in line with the election promise BJP had given and will usher in *achche-din* (happy days) for the *aam admi* (common man) who will be participating in the tax generation for the country without tears and fears”, he noted.

“Even if there is to be any delay in abolishing the personal income tax, the exemption ceiling should be Rs 10 lakh from the present Rs 2.5 lakh to create ‘feel good’ factors with the middle income group that co-operated with the Government’s demonetisation action. Now, people with less than



K G Veeraraghavan (left) and E N R Vejayashekara tasting Avataa speciality teas at Billimalai Estate

Rs 10 lakh income are rightly given LPG subsidy but those with Rs 2.5 lakh income are taxed”, Ashok explained.

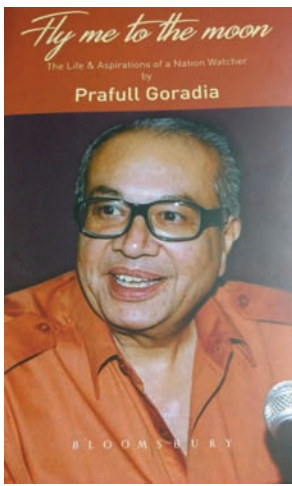
“Arising from the scope to go for digital marketing, Avataa Beverages, which excels in speciality teas, has announced online trading facility in its website. Henceforth, online trading is the norm in international business”, said Avataa Director G Udayakumar.

“We are supporting such online ventures in the UAE”, said K G Veeraraghavan, Managing Director, Marias General Trading FZC, UAE, after tasting the Avataa speciality teas with Production Executive ENR Vejayashekara at Billimalai Estate in the Nilgiris.

He also mentioned about the niche in UAE for high-quality CTC teas from Darmona Tea Industries, Aravenu. “We have created history with some of our teas fetching higher price than even corporate Orthodox teas at auctions after the recent upgradation of our machinery”, Darmona Managing Partner Dinesh Raju said.

Photos : Author





# Life Beyond TEA

In his book *Fly Me to the Moon*, Prafull Goradia talks about his plunge from corporate to political life

**W**e migrated to Delhi in the March of 1982, where I had already managed to acquire a house in Defence Colony. Our older daughter Brinda had got admitted to class X at Loreto Convent in Delhi and the younger, Madhavi, to Modern School on Barakhamba Road. My children were shaken by the change; for my wife, the new life in Delhi was nothing less than a culture shock. Yet, they bore it all for my sake. It was the deep commitment to public life that prompted the wild plunge we took.

Looking back to my professional career in Calcutta, I had been extremely well paid and had an unlimited authority over a then Rs 100 crore turnover company with 25,000 employees. Then with the setting up of my company – Contemporary (described in an earlier chapter) – I had acquired an economic base of my own in Calcutta with branches in Guwahati, Siliguri and Cochin, which could develop into a full-grown business. I also had a beautiful home and enjoyed a reasonable status in society. In Delhi – or Gujarat – to which I was now venturing, I had neither a political base nor a godfather who could steer me forward. I was forty-five years old. I had, besides my wife and two daughters, my parents to look after. When I look back I shudder to think about my headlong dive into Delhi. It was truly a leap in the dark!

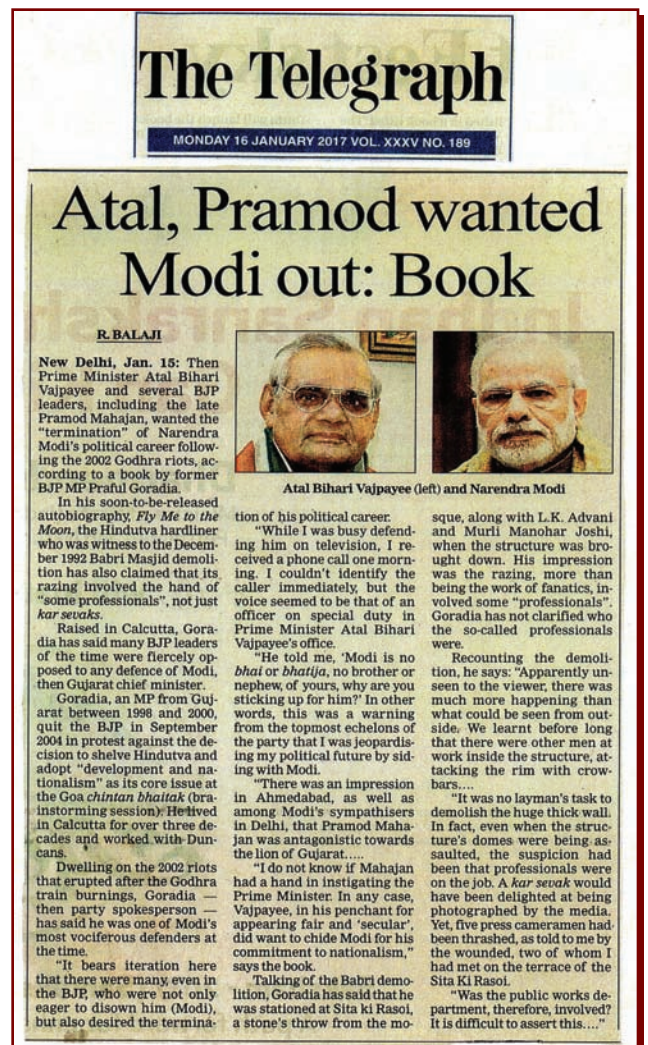
Duncans, my employers, had lived up to their promise and in 1976 I had been able to start my own tea-broking firm. This had been in exchange or 'insurance' for

the risk involved in trying to revive the National Tobacco Company. My plan to join a family-run business group, offer to do something special, if not also to perform a mini-miracle and acquire a business as a result utopian construct – appeared to have succeeded. My new firm bore the self-explanatory name of Contemporary.

The political scenario, both in the Capital, and indeed the country, was changing. Sanjay Gandhi, Indira Gandhi's younger son and all-but-declared successor, perished in a tragic – and mysterious – plane crash in June 1980. Sanjay Gandhi's untimely demise – he was only thirty three years of age when he met with his death – affected Mrs Gandhi profoundly. It was as if something had died within her.

By the time I came to Delhi, Indira Gandhi's elder son Rajiv was already a Member of Parliament. Youthful and handsome, he carried a look of innocence, bringing hope for better days to come. Work for the forthcoming Asian Games was in full swing, supervised by Rajiv and his coterie from his Doon School and Cambridge University days.

In February 1983, elections were declared in Assam and Meghalaya. Much controversy had surrounded them and I decided to make the trip to Assam. Besides, I had my tea interests in Assam and the terrain was familiar to me. Accompanied by a political associate, a Professor Asim Datta, I proceeded to Guwahati. The All Assam Students Union (AASU) had declared a five-day strike demanding the extradition of all Bangladeshi migrants who had settled in Assam illegally, and





# The rarefied world of Calcutta's sahib logs

## SPOTLIGHT

**Fly Me to the Moon: The Life and Aspirations of a Nation Watcher**  
By Prafull Goradia  
Bloomsbury

**This book is a poignant story of a struggle to climb what British Prime Minister Disraeli called 'the greasy pole' of public life. Written with wit and élan, the fascinating story is so told that many others thus inclined may know better how to negotiate the choppy waters of public life... A review by aswini k ray**

I GOT to know the author when I was doing a post-graduate course in political science in Calcutta University. He was also studying with me but I could see his heart was not in it. Apparently, he had been keen to go to Oxford to do a tripos in modern history and to try to become a barrister — all in pursuit of a youthful ideal which was to join public life. The aim was to return to India as a barrister and teach in a college while trying to build up an advocacy practice, both professions permitting this participation.

To me all this seemed like a pipedream which many young men and women, carried away by the impassioned zeal of the leaders of our freedom struggle, go through at this stage in life. Before long, it often fizzles out.

Unfortunately, for Prafull, his father had added a dampener in retrospect, a blessing in disguise. He had told him that the family finances could not be stretched to cover a foreign education. Deeply disappointed, Prafull left college thereafter, to look for a job without taking a post-graduate degree. In the late 50s his prospects were not very bright. An ordinary graduate only could hope to aspire for Rs 250 a month.

But, as I later heard, a chance introduction had catapulted him to a fancy job in a prestigious British company, one of the oldest and largest tea-broking firms in the world where the pay and perks were probably the highest in India. I felt happy for him and believed that from now on he would be lost in the rarefied world of Calcutta's sahib logs.

But, *Fly Me to the Moon* has proved me wrong. I am not complaining though. It is a story of a continuous and a dogged pursuit of a youthful dream. The first move was leaving the British firm after 13 glorious years to join an Indian family-owned agency in quest of financial independence. He believed such a company was more likely to award a business oppor-

unity to an able employee for exceptional service — unlike a British agency which had its fixed rules and hierarchies. It was remarkable foresight for a young man of his age.

Those well-wishers who had seen him grow up in the company had looked askance at this unprovoked move from the blue-blooded British company in 1971 to a family dominated concern, however large and influential believing him to be jeopardising his future. Such was the unspoken snobbery of the times!

But opportunity came when his new employers were faced with the problem of reviving a sick cigarette company in the backdrop of Naxal violence. When the turnaround was achieved, the new employees lived up to their promise of the "insurance" that he had asked for when taking up his assignment, namely, that they enable him to establish his own tea-broking company. Thus, "Contemporary Tea" was established, with top-class professionals, and he felt it was time he could leave it to proxy management and comfortably relocate to Delhi and later Gujarat where the political opportunities lay.

The author's preoccupation with financial security probably stemmed from the family stories of the problems suffered by his paternal grandfather. I understand, he was a nationalist to the core, at an open session of the Congress Party in Ahmedabad in 1915, who along with Sardar Patel had been a joint Secretary. But it seems, because of family responsibilities, he had been compelled to take up the post of a Dewan to the Maharaja of Morbi which vicariously meant serving British rules, something that was anathema to him.

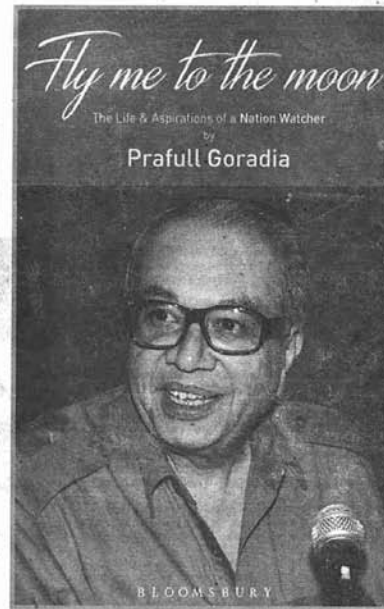
Securing financial independence was one thing, but sustaining it was a different proposition. Management by proxy, he was discovering, does not

always turn out the way it is intended to. "My troubles with my new company seemed to be never ending," he lamented. But when, finally a conspiracy in the Cochin branch erupts, with all senior executives simultaneously submitting their resignations with an idea of derailing the company, he shows that he can act fast and ruthlessly.

I understand that Narendra Modi had once said of Goradia that while he was very valuable for his "thinking outputs", he may not be particularly effective in politics. Possibly Modi meant that he felt Goradia lacked the instinctive cut and thrust of dealing with enemies in politics. But in Contemporary Tea when the battle lines were drawn, Goradia demonstrated that he was able to make short shrift of his detractors.

The shift to Delhi, at age 45, was a leap in the dark, at least so I thought: there was no political base and no godfather either in Delhi or his home state Gujarat to steer him through. The political world had looked askance at this outsider. The only politicians he knew were those he had met when they visited Calcutta and his only experience in the line was social service in drought relief camps in Gujarat. It must have been a traumatic experience for his family. His daughters in mid-school, as also his writer wife, were quite shaken by the move. Sixteen years later he was in Parliament.

The tale in this book travels from princely India of Morbi Maharaja in Gujarat to post World War II Calcutta where American GIs roamed the streets and the author as a seven-year-old gazed in wonder "at these great big hulking soldiers, never having seen so many black and white men together before", moving on to 10 August 1947 and Independence which along with the macabre spectre of Partition, raising questions about "What was there to celebrate when my country was being partitioned?"



you could not live like a babu?"

The tale moves to the political bedlam of Delhi and Gujarat of the 80s and beyond. The assassination of Mrs Indira Gandhi and the Silk riots of Delhi dwell on the change in political firmament of Gujarat. Narendra Modi's star was in ascendance and the author had many opportunities for close interaction. In post-poll Gujarat, he rose to become Modi's chief defender in the electronic media.

What also makes the book exceptionally interesting is the new question the author is raising as to who actually demolished the Babri Masjid. He was present in Ayodhya on that 6 December 1992 and was witness to the fall of the domes and the almost instant dismissal of the BJP government of UP. But sixty hours later, all traces of the Babri edifice had been cleared. In place

was a makeshift temple to Ram Lalla. The question must remain: What happened to the massive walls of the masjid and the debris? A question nobody seems to ask!

The book is a poignant story of a struggle to climb what British Prime Minister Disraeli called "the greasy pole" of public life. Written with wit and élan, the fascinating story is so told that many others thus inclined may know better how to negotiate the choppy waters of public life.

The reviewer is former professor of political science, Jawaharlal Nehru University

Guwahati was as quiet as a graveyard. Not a single shop was open.

The only sound to be heard was the chirping of birds. Occasionally, a convoy of six to eight cars would zoom by carrying officers on election duty. Posters in lurid red letters proclaiming 'Bangla Muslims Quit Assam' drew attention on both sides of the road. We travelled across the state to Nowgong, driving past Nellie, which was to witness one of the worst massacres in Assam.

I decided to take this opportunity to visit Shillong where my old friend Prakash Mehrotra was then the Governor of Assam. While we were having tea, Indira Gandhi arrived having just addressed a public meeting. She narrated to the Governor how on the advice of Chief Minister Hiteswar Saikia, she was bypassing the Assam valley. I was somewhat

taken aback to find there was none of the authoritarianism generally associated with her persona in the press. She spoke softly and gently, like an urbane, refined housewife. I came away with the impression that her political acumen lay not in a calculating mind but in her gut instinct. Later I was introduced to her by the Governor and she asked me about the prospects of the tea industry. My reply was that the next two years looked good for tea prices. She seemed relieved to hear that political troubles had not affected this agro-based industry.

The politicians I came in contact with at that time were mostly through introductions from Calcutta. For political circles in Gujarat, I was a rank outsider. I was a Gujarati, but that was just about it. I had neither been born in their state nor had I lived there for any considerable length of time in

my life. I was a Calcuttan who had landed in the Capital, hardly the currency that could be encashed in the political system that prevailed in Gujarat. I was becoming palpably aware of the complicated maze that was public life. Gujarat was experiencing a severe drought and I found opportunities of doing quite a deal of work in relief camps of Kathiawar.

I often spent several weeks at a time at these relief camps, returning home to Delhi only after my assignment was completed. Life could be tough for a city-dweller like me, living out in these often rustic settings with no assured supply of safe drinking water. I was to contract a somewhat rare stomach ailment called sprue, which has plagued me from time to time ever since. At this stage there seemed to be no light at the end of the tunnel.







**Monjur Hossain**

## Bangladesh Tea Expo 2017

**B**angladesh Tea Expo, a three day event, was recently held at the International Convention City Bashundhara (ICCB) in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The concept of Bangladesh Tea Expo is to create a national platform to exhibit and uphold the tea industry of Bangladesh amongst the tea connoisseurs of the country and beyond, promote diversification of tea and tea products, explore the culture of tea gardens, arrange for meeting between blenders and

# Tidings from **BANGLADESH**







stakeholders and promote eco-tourism.

The chief guest was AMA Muhith, Finance Minister and guest of honour were Tofail Ahmed, Minister of Commerce and M A Mannan, State Minister of Finance and

Planning.

The Commerce Minister in his speech said that the production of Bangladesh tea in 1971 was only 5.7 million kg. This had been raised to 40 million kg in 1980, however in 2016, Bangladesh made an all time record of 85 million kg of tea. The Minister said, "We have fixed a target to achieve a production of 140 million kg of tea within 2025 by implementing a road map of development for the tea industry".

Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB) prepared this ambitious plan which was approved in the ministerial meeting and would be implemented in three phases: short term, medium term and long term. The main objectives of the plan are to extend tea areas, addition of tea machinery in the factories, increase of irrigation facilities, welfare of tea workers, institutional strengthening and other necessary development as needed. A Tea Board spokesman said, earlier BTB had chalked out a strategic plan in the name of Vision 2021, but for many reasons it had not been successful. However, the current road map is the improved version of the previous plan and BTB is determined to achieve the target of this road map.

Tea Expo organisers informed that, there was a footfall of 20,000



visitors in this three day event. Visitors enjoyed good times through cultural programmes and workshops while exploring the tea industry of Bangladesh. They also had the opportunity to buy quality tea and tea-related products from the Expo.

Bangladesh Tea Board organised the Expo and the esteemed partners of the Expo were – Bangladesh Tea Association, City Group, Duncan Brothers (Bangladesh) Limited, Finlay Tea, HRC, Ispahani and Seylon Tea. The media partners of the expo were The Daily Star, GTV, Radio Foorti and Bangla Tribune.

The writer is Managing Director of PMTC (Bangladesh) Limited

INTERNATIONAL





# TEA in 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 conversations and late into the evening meals, sustaining talk of politics, gossip and news well into the night



The history of tea culture in Iran started at the end of the 15th century. With a major tea producing country, China, located on a nearby trading path, "The Silk Road", the shipping of tea was much easier. This was a major reason for tea becoming popular in Iran. As a result, the demand for tea grew and more tea needed to be imported to match Iran's consumption.

Iran failed in its first attempt to cultivate tea in its own country in 1882 with seeds from India. In 1899 Prince Mohammad Mirza known

secrets of tea production, as it was their biggest business in India at the time. So being fluent in French, the prince pretended to be a French labourer and started to work in the tea plantations and factories to learn how to produce tea. Ultimately his plan was to take back some samples of this tea to Iran to cultivate. He was successful in this endeavour only because of his diplomatic immunity which stopped the British from searching his secretly stashed sample. At the time, Kashef brought 3000 saplings into his country from the northern

of "Iran's National Tea Museum".

In 1934 the first modern style tea factory was built. Now there are up to 107 tea factories and a total of 32,000 hectare of tea farms.

Most of the farms are located on the hillsides of Iran like the farms on Darjeeling. These farms produce an Orthodox style of black tea. The colour of Iranian tea is red and the taste is fairly light and it is delicious without milk or sugar. The total production of black tea in 2009 was approximately 60,000 tonne.

## TRENDS

One of the recent key trends 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



as "Kashef Al Saltaneh" who was born in Lahijan, imported Indian tea and started its cultivation in Lahijan. Kashef, who was the first mayor of Tehran and an Iranian ambassador to India under British rule, knew that the British would not allow him to learn about the

part of India, Kangra. He started the cultivation in the region of Gilan, south of the Caspian Sea. The climate there was well suited for tea cultivation and the tea industry quickly expanded in Gilan and Mazandaran region. Kashef's mausoleum in Lahijan is now part



long history of 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

Tea houses, or *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 unless otherwise indicated by the drinker. The stronger the tea, the higher the concentration of tannin and caffeine. 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



## INDO-IRAN TEA TRADE

India and Iran have a thriving tea trade relation. Delegations from both countries regularly visit each other for the promotion of export of Indian tea to Iran. Facilitated by the Indian Tea Association, these Delegations include Tea Board Chairmen from both countries and other industry stalwarts. The key issues highlighted at the interactive meetings between the delegates and industry members include:

- ❖ India has remained a committed trade partner of Iran through good times and difficult times.
- ❖ Tea exports from India to Iran have been steadily improving.
- ❖ Indian tea exporters have enhanced the level of Orthodox tea production to cater to the demands of the Iranian industry.
- ❖ Indian tea exporters were committed to servicing the Iranian market with due attention to quality of tea as well as servicing of exports. Quality is maintained at all levels - fine plucking standards, delivery of leaf to the factory, vigilant controls at the processing end, best practices of factory management and hygiene that accompany GMP Certification. Tea Board has also put in place inspection and monitoring procedures to ensure that exports conform to prescribed quality standards.

end with it.

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.

*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.

The Azari Tea House in Tehran is one of the most famous *chaikhanehs* known to tourists and locals, with its detailed architecture and traditional decoration. In existence since the 14th century, this *chaikhaneh* on Vali Asr street contains one of the more interesting embellishments to emerge from tea house culture – teahouse painting.

A continuation of the royal paintings from the Qajar era, tea house paintings illustrate religious and mythical themes, with Hakim Abu'l Qasim Firdowsi's poetic epic, *Shahnameh*, often the focus of many such illustrations.





# Apeejay Literary Festival 2017

Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF), the much awaited annual event, took place in the City of Joy from January 15 to 18, 2017. At the inaugural session, Michael Dwyer from UK, who is publishing Dr. Shashi Tharoor's new book in the UK later this year, dialogued with the author on what has become a controversial subject between the two countries and their people. Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival is India's first major literary initiative of the year, India's only literary festival created by a bookstore – by the nearly 100 year old Oxford Bookstore. AKLF's eighth edition from Jan 15-18, 2017, was woven around conversations to make the world a more inclusive place.

AKLF paid tribute to Nobel Laureate Bob Dylan through poetry and contemporary music at Poetry Café and Plug in, hosted at the festival's main venue – St. Paul's Cathedral grounds. Other conversations held here during the sessions included The Lives of Others: Fiction and History - Issues and challenges of fictionalising the past with Kiran Nagarkar, Nayantara Sahgal and Selina Sen.

The session Media Matters: Changing the Narrative - How does the media shape today's world was held with Rachel Dwyer, Anubha Bhosle, Sandip Roy, and Anshul Tewari.

Remembering Mahasweta Devi – A tribute to the late writer and activist was held at the Presidency

University with leading author Nabaneeta Dev Sen, literary critic and academic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and publisher Naveen Kishore. This was followed by screening of the documentary Talking Writing: Four Conversations with Mahasweta Devi directed by Pushan Kripalani.

Other interesting sessions included Us and Them: Of Identity and Belonging: with authors Marcos G Torrente, Jael Silliman, Kiran Nagarkar and Sadaf Saaz; Modernity and Beyond: Culture and the Urban Space in the 21st Century: With architect Jon Lang, photographer Ram Rahman, and author Amit Chaudhuri; A Space for Us: The Last Girl in Literature: With Anita Nair, Baby Halder, Ruchira Gupta. Moderated by Urvashi Butalia; Lest We Forget: Rescuing Lost Histories: Challenges and rewards of revisiting silenced histories: With Ritu Menon, Kama Maclean, Shrabani Basu; Post-Truth - a threat to liberal democracy? Are we living in a time where fact is being ignored for emotional rhetoric? With Ananya Vajpeyi and Ram Rahman; Of Stardust and Tinseltown: Writing Bollywood: With Shobhaa De, Rachel Dwyer, Jerry Pinto.

Poetry Café introduced by Ashoke Viswanathan with Italian poet Alessandro Lutman and readings by city poets, Anjana Basu, Avik Chanda, Ananya Chatterjee and Debashish Lahiri



was an added attraction.

For the first time, Oxford Bookstores hosted Oxford Junior Literary Festival (OJLF), a two-day festival held on January 15 and 16, 2017, for young readers. Renowned children's authors, publishers of children's books, storytelling and creativity formed part of OJLF. This year, AKLF tied up with UNICEF@70 to conduct its global short stories campaign titled "Tiny Stories" at OJLF.

The festival's closing event was hosted at St John's Church, built in 1787. The Festival conversations were also hosted at Royal Calcutta Turf Club, Tollygunge Club, the campus of iLead, Daga Nikunj and the Harrington Street Arts Centre.

HAPPENINGS



## Calcutta Memory Lane

Tea time it was, but with a different flavour. Sights and sounds of old Calcutta – now Kolkata – spiced up the spring afternoon at Hindustan Park. A game of *Kumir Danga*, a peep into the roving Bioscope box, trying one's hand at hitting glass marbles, on the spot painting on a white canvas and finally steaming tea in earthen *bhans* accompanied by Bengali snacks – visitors were transported back to yesteryears of the city at the Calcutta Memory Lane carnival, organised by the Future Media Shool as part of its the Future of the Past programme.



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# A Whodunit in Tea Land



Kalyan Sircar

The tea garden Simla was situated outside the village of Baladhan in Silchar subdivision of district Cachar, Assam. In 1893 one Mr. Cockburn was manager of the estate. The area where the plantation was situated was described as a remote and inaccessible corner of the district. It was 24 miles from Silchar, the district headquarters. In the rainy season the place was often cut off from the rest of the district. At the time of the incident of 1893, 'floods were unusually extensive.'

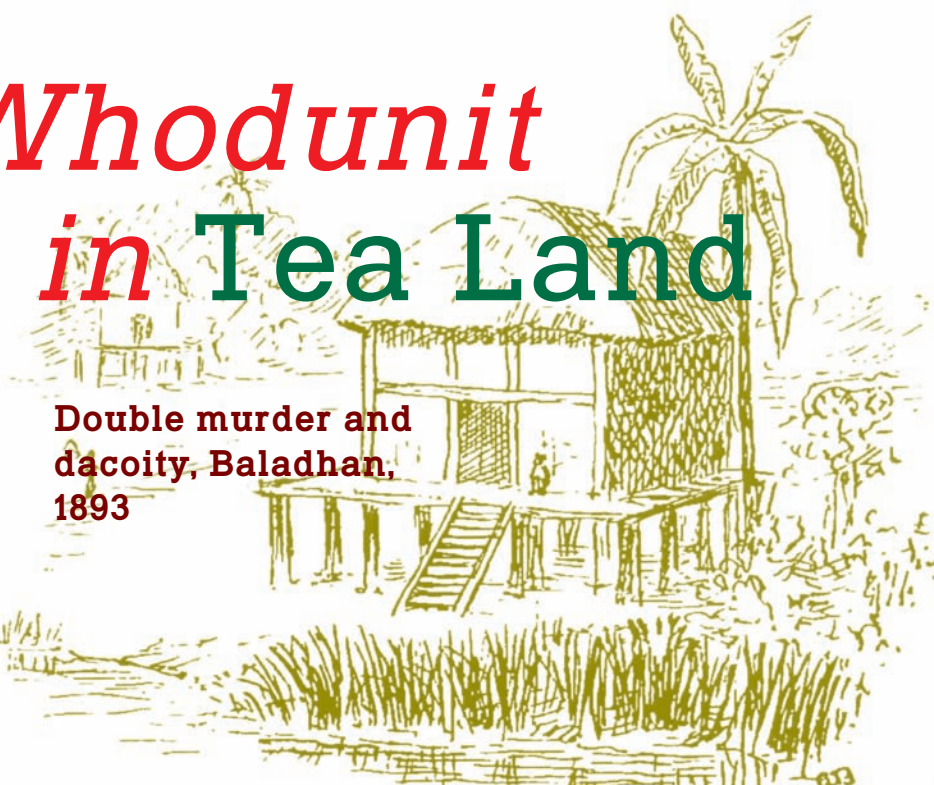
Mr. Cockburn's bungalow was attacked on the eve of *Chaitra Sankranti* night of the Bengali year 1299, corresponding to the Christian calendar date of April 11, 1893. On this occasion it is customary for Hindus to keep vigil all night. Many play *pasha*, a game of dice, to pass the time enjoyably. The chain of events – breaking into the manager's residence , the

## Double murder and dacoity, Baladhan, 1893

murder of Mr. Cockburn and his *chowkidar*, theft of money, gun and some articles of clothing, took place at about 11 at night. Although the garden factory was close by and was open that night and people were working there, the crime was not detected until the next morning. Around five or six in the morning, Mr. Cockburn's bearer Madhab Baori arrived for work and 'found the body of the master lying at the entrance of the house from the western verandah.' A milk man had also arrived by then. Utterly shocked and frightened, Madhab ran towards the coolie

line, and met on the way Bipin Behari Baory, the garden clerk and Chandra Kumar Som, the 'native' garden doctor, who were coming towards Mr. Cockburn's bungalow, because it had been arranged that the coolies were to be paid that morning, but he had not arrived. They all came to the bungalow and saw Mr. Cockburn's dead body. They also found the *chowkidar*'s body covered in a blanket, in another corner of the verandah. Soon a third body, seriously injured, was found in a jungle, a little distance from the bungalow. It was Sadi, the manager's Bengali Muslim mistress who was

with him in bed that night. She was brought to the cookhouse and comported. R Dundee, the British doctor of the estate was informed. He came, and with his assistant Dr. Som, examined the deceased and the injured. The attack on the manager was savage and brutal, as described later by an accused under examination: 'The Sahib came almost immediately; opened the half-door, and put one foot out and looked...he may have seen us... he turned to back away and then five





men rushed on the Sahib with *daos* and he fell.'

The nearest police station, Lakhipur, was two hours horse ride from the garden where the news of the murder and dacoity reached around 9 am. Abhay Charan Sen, the sub-inspector, arrived promptly, at about 11, and examined the two bodies. He also saw Sadi, now transferred to the garden hospital, in a state of coma. Although the only witness to the event of the previous night, she was unable to respond to any police questioning. On examining the bungalow, Sen discovered that the dacoits had stolen Rs. 778 from the safe kept in the bedroom. The money in the safe was kept in bags that were then put in boxes – the practice at that time. The boxes had been thrown down on the floor and the bags were taken. Mr. Cockburn's pistol was also missing. Among other missing articles were one shirt with gold stud and two shirts used by the woman.

The news of the murders and dacoity soon spread to the neighbouring gardens and a number of planters quickly arrived in Baladhan. The local police sent two telegrams to John L Herald, the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, informing him of the murders, and suggesting that the 'deed was probably a raid by Cachari or other hill tribes.' The telegram reached him at 1 pm the same day. He sent Mr. Howell, an Assistant Magistrate, to the garden for further investigations and particularly for interrogating Sadi. Mr. Howell arrived at 10.30 that evening. The last to arrive early morning on the following day was Mr. Shattleworth, District Superintendent of Police (DSP). For this 'slothness' he was much criticized by the local planters.

The sole witness could not be examined immediately who, according to the two doctors, was 'in a state of semi-consciousness and more or less delirious.' In such a state of health she gave birth to a dead child. After three days, an

impatient Mr. Howell, who had concluded that Sadi was 'sufficiently rational to make a statement, interrogated her. However, her account of the event was far from clear or consistent. She said: 'There were Musalmans who attacked the bungalow – Bengalis and Cabuli. They all had coats and *dhotis* of sorts, while the Cabuli – fair, with beard and moustache and not old, wore a black coat and baggy trousers. The time was eleven o'clock at night. The Cabuli came out from the dark and stood on the verandah.

He had a lamp in his hand. The *chowkidar*, who was outside the bedroom, was first cut with a *dao*. He made no noise as he fell to his death. Four men lifted up the curtain of the bedroom from the verandah. Hearing his dog bark, the Sahib came out of the

bedroom and called out the name of the *chowkidar* Chatri, but got no reply. They then attacked the Sahib. He cried out, 'Pugli, call the Doctor Babu.' As they struck again, he tried to come back into the bedroom. Sadi came out of the bedroom and was standing quite close to him when he was struck to death. She ran out of the verandah, then turned and ran down the *tilla*. The men ran after her, struck her down, beat her mercilessly, and left her on the ground believing her to be dead.

When she was further questioned, Sadi gave a slightly different version of the event. She

said that several men, after striking Mr. Cockburn, came into the bedroom and threatened her that they would cut her if she did not hand over the keys at once. Now she included some Cacharis among the 12 or 13 men that she saw that night. 'I don't know the names of any, whether they worked here or not... there was a light burning in the bedroom... four men entered. It was a Bengali and a Cabuli who



asked for the keys... there were no Manipuris, Kukis or Nagas among them that I could see, nor any garden coolies.' Her contradictory statements failed to establish whether the dacoits killed the *chowkidar* who was on duty outside the bedroom first, and then entered the bedroom and murdered the planter; or, whether the attack on the *chowkidar* disturbed the dog (who was inside the bedroom) and it barked and made Mr. Cockburn come out calling for the *chowkidar* when the miscreants fell on him. At one stage Sadi said, 'I did not see him cut down.'

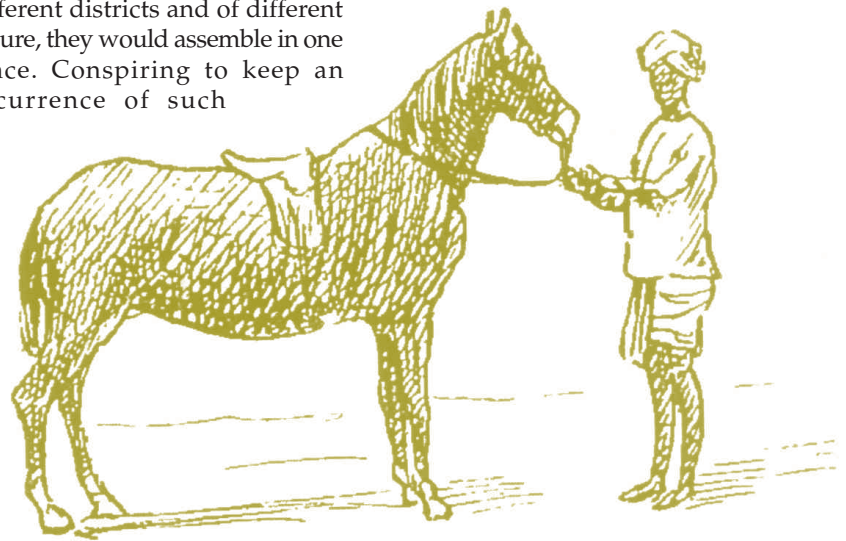


This formal interview by a British magistrate was preceded by more informal questioning by sub-inspector Abhay Charan Sen, in presumably, a language familiar to both. The Inspector's suspicion of Cacharis and other hill tribes being responsible for the crime was further boosted by other evidence to support their guilt. While talking to garden coolies Sen was informed that an employee of the estate had recently threatened Mr. Cockburn for non-payment of due wages. Also, it was general knowledge that the Manager, having taken a fancy to Sadi, had expelled her husband from the garden. Since then Sadi had become the Sahib's mistress and was living in his bungalow. This possibly had aroused strong feelings of resentment among the garden workers against their Manager. Finally, it transpired that before she was interviewed by Mr. Howell, Sadi had confessed to bearer Madhav that the wrongdoers were Cacharis (or Manipuris) as they spoke some such language.

The search for the murderers began in earnest. The authorities employed a number of strategies; informal and formal interviews of possible suspects; keeping all ears to the garden to pick up any bazaar gossip; engaging spies for secret information; threats; punitive village tax as well as reward for information. The search among the Cacharis proved unproductive apart from the allegation by some of them against the Manager. He habitually mistreated his Cachari workers and their wages often remained in arrears. There was local rumour about an imminent uprising by these discontented people. The Cabuli mentioned by Sadi, was soon rounded up – there being only one such in the village. Shamsher Khan was interviewed, and when he was able to fully account for his movements on that night, was released. The net of search and enquiry soon extended, and the usual 'undesirables', and 'bad characters' among the Nagas, Kukis and Doms of the area came

under police investigation. All this, however, proved to be unfruitful.

A reward of Rs. 200 (subsequently raised to Rs. 2,000) with added incentive of a free pardon to anyone who was not an actual murderer produced no result. Within a few days, the idea of Cacharis as culprits was dropped for lack of evidence. The Cacharis had always been regarded as incapable of such crimes. They were always quarrelling amongst themselves. Being people from different districts and of different nature, they would assemble in one place. Conspiring to keep an occurrence of such



proportions concealed was unlikely as far as they were concerned. Again, the temptation of reward was very great, which could not have been resisted by coolies.

On April 17, Abhay Charan Sen was replaced by a more senior Sadr sub-inspector Sibgati Kar. Now the Manipuris became the prime suspect. Some of these people were temporarily engaged by Mr. Cockburn for work at his bungalow and garden. After the night of the 11th many of these employees had disappeared. Kar formed an opinion that the Manipuris who had been working there were the probable culprits. However, the official enquiries among other 'races' did not cease entirely. Repeated enquiries were conducted among the Nagas 'who were daring characters'. On April 24, 'open enquiry was suspended and spies engaged to report on

Cacharis'. On April 27, some Doms of Jaipur 'of bad character were enquired into'.

Manipuris from the native state now became the prime target. There were many reasons why the Manipuris were suspected, the obvious one being that excepting one, the rest who were employed by Mr. Cockburn had disappeared after the murders. The one who remained was Chowba Singh, *daffadar* of the garden. He was questioned and

constables and spies were engaged to trace his movements and find out where these people were on the night of the murders and thereafter. In Baladhan and surrounding villages there were rumours that a Manipuri prince had recently arrived in Cachar and was going from place to place where he was joined by other Manipuris of 'bad repute.' The prince was engaged in inciting his people against the British for the latter's dark deeds in their country. This was confirmed by Labai, government's most trusted secret spy. The Manipuris who worked for the Manager were angry because of non-payment of due wages and their mistreatment by Mr. Cockburn. It was soon discovered that the discontented workers had left the garden and were 'eking out a precarious living in the neighbouring Jaipur villages.'



The police now began a systematic search among the Manipuris of the area, and those who were hiding in Manipur. By then more than three weeks had passed and the local police were unable to make much headway. The provincial government was being severely criticized by the local planters and their organisation, the Indian Tea Association. Equally severe were other European associations and the powerful British press in Calcutta. The embarrassed local administration withdrew the investigation from the local police and the case was put in the hands of Joy Chandra Bhadra, the Inspector of Police, Sylhet, who had been described as 'experienced and trustworthy.'

The authority's method of continuous interrogation, close questioning, indiscriminate pressure on villagers and threat as well as promise of monetary reward proved ineffective to overcome the Manipuris' solidarity. In official document this behaviour was explained as : 'their well-known social (and religious) prejudices.' A long sought after break came on June 20, when one Tanu Sarma offered his service for a reward of Rs.500. Tanu knew where Sagal was hiding. Sagal was found and arrested. On promise of pardon ('for he played a minor part in the event') by Inspector Bhadra, he provided a list that included all those who were already under police custody, and a few others yet to be found and arrested.

The last arrests were made on July 6. But prosecution of these people proved difficult. Their evidence, under examination, were contradictory, sometimes deliberately so, and misleading. Some withdrew their former statements. Further investigations followed:, neighbouring villagers were continuously interrogated, punitive taxes were imposed and government spies roamed the area to pick up any information. By the beginning of August the authorities were sufficiently convinced to sent

prisoners for trial to the Sessions Court. On September 29 the Sessions Judge gave his verdict. He sentenced Sagal Semba Sajow and three others to death. Two other men were given the sentence of transportation for life. The Baladhan Murder Case, however, did not end here.

Two defending pleaders of Silchar, one being the well-known Kamini Kumar Chanda, lodged an appeal against the sentence to the High Court in Calcutta. In Queen-Empress Versus Sagal Semba Singh



and others an impressive array of prominent barristers and lawyers were engaged. The Appeal Case was opened on November 23 and the Judgement was delivered on December 11. The Judges found a nuber of serious irregularities in the proceedings in every stage, from the police investigation to the Judgement of the lower court. Their verdict: 'All the prisoners are accordingly acquitted and conviction quashed.'

The planters, Europeans in Assam and elsewhere, their press and organisations were angry, and this was expressed in meetings, submissions to authorities, and appeal to British Parliament in London. William Sproston Caine a Progressive Liberal MP took the side of tea workers and Indian people. His repeated questioning

in the House led to thorough investigation of officials in Assam and Calcutta. These debates and other official Papers were collated in the form of Papers relating to the Baladhan Murder Case in Assam, British Parliamentary Paper (c. 7456, Vol. LV111, 1894): an important document on the politics of law administration in British India.

And finally, the Baladhan Murders Case was extensively reported in the Bengali press of Assam and Bengal. The young

lawyer Kamini Kumar Chanda's bold defence of the accused in the Silchar Court became a matter of Bengali pride and joy. Srihatta Vasi (a paper published from the neighbouring district of Cachar) published a poem on the case. In part it read:

*Welcome thou, O! true and noble,  
Kindhearted, Chand, sincere!  
After all, thou hast been able  
To save thy clients dear;  
Kept thy promise to the letter;  
I will get you released;  
From the High Court, this Court's better  
Get you innocent proved.  
Good Kamini, O! noble soul!  
Thou glory of the land,  
Come - come here son, we one and all  
Do long kiss thy hand.  
The writer is an academic based in London*





# The Darjeeling Planter's Club

**ERROL O'BRIEN** takes us down memory lane at the Darjeeling Planter's Club

**S**ituated on a ridge overlooking the snowcapped peaks of the eastern Himalayas, the Darjeeling Planters Club lies in an exclusive part of the town well blended in architectural design and ambience.

The club is about to be revamped. Modern facilities will soon be added to the old world charm.

The two storeyed building will be heightened by one floor with the addition of a lift and extension from twenty one rooms to fifty two. But the new rooms will not have the glow of fireplaces against wintry feelings!

The club was established way back in 1868 through the efforts of British officers, army personnel and tea planters. It was a resort for the Raj and their wives and a retreat for tea people to relax for their weekend break, free of tensions.

The lingering view of Kanchenjunga, the intrepid romances, rips roaring jokes at the bar and exchange of grumbles by the planters against the exhaustive demands by the head office occurred here.

There was a time when planters came on horseback, dismounted at the lower slopes of the club, walked in and changed for the day.

The land was donated by the Maharajah of Cooch



Behar. He was the only person whose rickshaw in the old days was permitted to be parked in the main porch of the club. No one else had the sanctified privilege.

Next to the reception area is the Quantum Deck giving a view of the Darjeeling landscape but it was a gender based sitting and relaxing area



There are treasures within the Planter's Club. Colonel Younghusband presented the club with a World War 1 Gatling Canon before he set out to impose British supremacy in Tibet.

Two other relics take up place – oxygen cylinders presented by mountaineers Irvine and Mallory before their expedition to Everest. The billiard room has historical photographs of the second Everest expedition. We do not know whether they were the first on the peak.

George Mallory's body was found many years later on the North Face at 8,155 metres, intact in the ice. Many artifacts were around the body but no camera nor the photograph of his wife, Ruth. He had promised to place the photo on the summit of Everest.

Geoffrey Archer's book, *Paths of Glory* pays him the ultimate tribute. Mallory was last seen at 800 ft below the summit.

Priceless water colour paintings by the artist Charles Snaffles Johnson Payne adorn the club walls. Visitors have offered fantastic purchase values but quite naturally the club which treasures these works gave a point blank refusal.

A particular painting depicts a tusked boar rushing through tall grass pursued by a lancer on horseback. His subject matter was military hunters and equestrian



Charles Snaffles' painting in the club



(Left) Oxygen cylinders presented by mountaineers Irvine and Mallory before their expedition to Everest  
(right) A World War 1 Gatling Canon



scenes. His captions "Oh to be in England now that April's here" marked the end of the spring hunting season. His painting termed *The Informer* has been priced at 1900 Sterling Pounds at the London Berkley studio.

Tonic water added to gin was a creation of the Planters Club, part of which was once a nursing home for ailing planters who were given doses of quinine for malaria. The

mixture was detested and often left undrunk.

It was a matter of concern to the Civil Surgeon who tried to persuade the afflicted planters to drink their doses. Then a pleasant accident occurred.

The club bearer brought in a glass of water containing quinine to the shivering planter who told him to bring him a peg of gin instead. Mistaking the instructions, the bearer mixed the quinine with a peg of gin.

He then returned to the bedside of the planter who swigged it down and asked for another. Whilst the bearer was filling the order it caught the eye of the Civil Surgeon who asked him what he was doing.

"Simply fulfilling the *sahib's* order," was the reply.

The Civil Surgeon had a brainwave. He began the practice of putting in quinine into a peg of gin for malaria patients

Indian Tonic Water was born!





# Low Temperature Withering of Black Orthodox Tea



Tapan Das

**TAPAN DAS** gives a step by step account of the unique method

**I**n planters' language, withering makes or mars the tea. Withering becomes a menace during the Second Flush and monsoon – a problem the planters have been living with for a century. This is especially significant in the high altitude gardens of Darjeeling, Nilgiris and Munnar where the moisture is a greater threat when compared to the plains of Assam. To combat this, planters usually rely on hot air blowing through axial flow fans. The procedure followed is to draw the dissipated heat from the tea dryer – which is generally housed underneath the bulking rooms – either by opening the hatches on the floor of the bulking room from the tea dryer or through chutes or through dedicated hot air ducting.

As air has more moisture holding capacity at elevated temperature, moisture in the green leaves come out while the hot air passes through the tea bed on the trough. This approach works very well till such time ambient air remains favourable but not when it is full of moisture as during Second Flush and monsoon. The reason is that though this approach reduces the relative humidity percentage (RH) of the air, it practically has no effect on the reduction of actual moisture content of the air (in grams of moisture per kg of air).

The above approach is good enough to extract the surface moisture but not the core moisture from inside the green leaves. This essentially means that by only heating ambient air, practically no removal of moisture from the ambient air takes place though the relative humidity of the air is reduced. As a result during the wet season, to cope with the severe moisture, factory personnel increase the air temperature in the trough to more than 85°F (often 90°F) to extract core moisture from the green leaves but in vain because the air passing through the trough also contains high moisture. On the other hand, raising the air temperature to 90°F actually serves no purpose but only deteriorates tea quality causing loss of nutrient contents, VFCs as well as loss of flaccidity, culminating in reddening of tea and loss of price. This problem persists equally in Orthodox tea manufacturing in Assam.

Quality of withering primarily depends on quality of atmospheric air rather than its moisture content, which is sucked in by the axial flow fans. The moisture content of the air in turn depends on the prevalent weather which is beyond one's control. The problem tends to increase exponentially during the time of Second Flush and monsoon.

Planters have been seeking solutions to this problem for a long time. In early 2014, Ashok Kumar Lohia consulted me for an effective solution; owing to my two decades of exposure to the tea industry especially in preserving the tea quality during storage, either in rooms in Darjeeling or in tea bins in Assam. I took this



as a challenge to study the problem in depth and explore a possible solution. Meticulous studies of TRA's Tea Manufacturing Manual, Withering in particular, followed.

I visited the tea gardens in Darjeeling, consulted many Advisors, Visiting Agents, Superintendents/General Managers, Managers, Assistant Managers/Factory Assistants as well as the Operators on field. Inputs from Mr. Lohia and the tips on Even Withering by Late Ranjit Chowdhury (Tea Consultant) during my early years in tea were also of significant help. Within a span of few months, two crystal clear criteria of Even Withering emerged :

- 1) To wither at near to ambient temperature without use of heat.
- 2) To maintain Hygrometric Differential (HD) at 4<sup>o</sup> - 6<sup>o</sup>F.

**The Approach:** Since heating was out of question, I took the routes of Refrigeration and also Compression to reduce the moisture of the air but to my dismay, found that while the first one needed huge energy the second one needed large capital investment and energy too. After a rather stilted progress in those two approaches, I finally embarked upon my own approach i.e. dehumidification, which had been at the back of my mind since day one. Lots of data poured in from Chamong Tea Estate and after three revisions, the final design and proposal was accepted by the client. The whole process took about a year, during which time I had the opportunity of meeting, TRA's UK based Consultant, Nigel Melican, who reviewed and endorsed my design.

**Uniqueness of Design:** Based on the various parameters received from the garden, the system is uniquely designed in a manner where a specifically designed and calculated quantum of bone dry air is mixed with the axial flow fan's large air quantity to arrive at the designed mixed air condition inside the trough, which is not more than 5<sup>o</sup>F above the ambient

temperature throughout the tea withering season. The design is also such that mixed air must have a hygrometric differential of 4<sup>o</sup> to 6<sup>o</sup>F under any ambient condition. Since the design is based on the peak monsoon ambient, it holds good for every other season comfortably. While a Dehumidifier produces the dry air on continuous basis, an Electronic On-Line Hygrometric Differential Sensor-cum-Controller maintains the desired range of 4<sup>o</sup> to 6<sup>o</sup>F throughout the process.

**Benefits:** Listed are few of the



many benefits of the Low Temperature Withering Process:

1. Does not interfere with Chemical Withering as Withering Period designed is never less than 12 hours
2. No change in existing air distribution arrangement of axial flow fan and ducting inside the trough
3. Slow extraction of core moisture from green leaves through its capillaries
4. Even Withering throughout the year independent of outside weather
5. Improved Flaccidity in absence of heat
6. Better Maceration (less pressure required at rolling table) resulting in improved Leaf Grade
7. No loss of VFC's which generate different Aroma Compounds during withering (and Rolling)
8. No Reddening of withered leaves
9. No coal related contamination or hazard, means cleaner factory

environment

10. Saves labour cost towards coal handling
11. Reduced withering period
12. Online monitoring of Hygrometric Differential
13. Differential Hygrometric Sensor-cum-Controller reduces energy requirement of Dehumidifier
14. Attractive Return On Investment
15. Eco-friendly System
16. Saving of electrical energy due to reduced run time of axial flow fan

17. Runs on Grid/ Hydel/ LPG/ Natural Gas/ Pressured Hot Water

**Prospective Beneficiaries:**

1. Premium tea producers
2. Exporters
3. Management willing to invest for a long-term gain
4. Management who feel that there is always a room for improvement in quality of the produced tea.

**Installations:** Two such Innovative Withering Systems have been installed in Darjeeling at Chamong Tea Estate and Jay Shree Tea's Sungma Tea Estate

**Acknowledgements:** Joydeep Phukan, Secretary, Tea Research Association and Dr. B Radhakrishnan, Director, UPASI - TRF for their support and encouragement by advocating Low Temperature Withering, in north and south India respectively. Ashok Kumar Lohia for providing the insight into tea manufacturing. D P Maheshwari for encouragement and guidance on south Indian tea industry.





# Tea 2030 Workshop

## A Contemporary Tea Time Report

The ITA and The Forum for the Future conducted a half day workshop with - TEA 2030 - with industry leaders on building a sustainable future for the Indian tea industry. The thrust was on how to take forward collaborative action with ITA members and other stake holders. The topic of focus was "Challenges to creating value for tea producer in the tea chain". Four groups were then formed and what emerged was that there was a demand and supply mismatch, and that a consumer study was necessary of the domestic markets. Tea Board was requested to institute on appropriate study. Exporters' incentives should be increased so that excess tea available in the domestic markets



would find a home. The final take away concluded by the attending members was that we should know the markets, and that we

should educate consumers.

The journey of Tea 2030 began in 2013. Having identified the significant social, economic and environmental trends facing the industry, The Forum for the Future produced a report outlining four possible futures for tea and the challenges we need to overcome, to ensure the best possible future for the global tea industry.

Currently, the Forum is working on the following collaboration platforms to drive forward progress : Sustainable landscapes - helping growers focus on the most relevant environmental and social issues to deliver tangible benefits to local communities.

**Market Mechanisms** - ensuring value creation for all those involved in the industry.

**Engaging Consumers** - building awareness of the need for sustainable tea amongst those with the purchase power.

The members of The Forum for the Future include Tata Global Beverages; Unilever; Taylors of Harrogates; Camellia; Finlays; S&D Coffee; Starbucks; IDH; Ethical Tea Partnership; Rainforest Alliance; and Fairtrade.



EST 1886



FAIRTRADE



Unilever



HAPPENINGS





# A Page From History

## Thackers Directory 1936

On March 16, 2017, the newspapers showed the world, pictures of a charred bungalow. That was the remnant of the heritage Makaibari Bungalow razed to the ground due to a fault in a modern gadget. A friend received the news over a phone call from the UK, before he had had a chance to see the papers.

The Thackers Directory of 1936 records the estate belonged to KURSEONG and DARJEELING TEA CO LTD, with a capital of Rs 1,49,200 in 2,984 shares of Rs 50 each. The Estate Makaibari had a gross acreage of 1510 at an elevation of 3,800 feet. The Manager was H W O Graham and the Managing Agents Jardines Skinner & Co, at 4, Clive Row Calcutta.

### DARJEELING

**HOPETOWN TEA CO, LD**—Garden—Hopetown. Cultivated acreage, 260. Total acreage, 416. Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Sonada, D-H Ry. Elevation, 3,200 to 5,000 ft

**JALPAIGURI DUARS TEA CO, LD**—P O, Khoribati; Tel Office, Nuxalbari and Ry Stn, Batasi (D-H Ry). Garden—Thanjhora T E. Acreage under cultivation 504. Total acreage 957. Elevation 1,000 ft. *Dir*s N R Ghose M A, B L, P C Roy B L, A C Sen B L, S N Hoare B L, S Sanyal B L and T Banerjee B L. *Secy* N Mitra. *Asst secy* B Ganguly. *Mangr* B Bose. *Assts* S C Bhattacharya, K N De, H Bose, J Roy and B Bhoumik. *Engr* S N Dutt B sc. *Medl offr*, S N Sinha, B M S (Late), L M F, H M B

**JUNGANA TEA ESTATE (LOWER MAJHUA)**—Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Mahanadi. Garden—Jungana Tea Estate. Acreage 194. Area of grant, 224 acres. Elevation, 4,000 ft. *Ptrs*, Mrs A M Lennox and G W O'Brien. *Mangr*, J V Butler. *Agts*, Duncan Bros & Co, Ld, 101, Clive st and Walter Duncan & Co, London

**KHARIBARI TEA CO, LD**—REGD OFFICE—Darjeeling. AUTHORIZED CAPITAL—Rs 3,00,000, in 30,000 Shares of Rs 10 each. ISSUED CAPITAL—Rs 1,50,000. P O, Kharibari, Darjeeling; Tel Office and Ry Stn, Adhikari, D-H Ry. Acreage under cultivation, 302. Total gross acreage, 1,062

**KURSEONG AND DARJEELING TEA CO, LD**—CAPITAL—Rs 1,49,200 in 2,984 Shares of Rs 50 each. Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Kurseong. Garden—Makaibari. Acreage 430. Total gross acreage 1,510. Elevation 3,800 ft. *Mangr* H W O Graham. *Mangr agts* Jardine, Skinner & Co, 4, Clive Row, Calcutta

**LEBONG TEA CO, LD (Incorporated in England)**—CAPITAL—80,000 Shares of £1 each, in hands of Co 65,656. *Dir*s, A H Gordon-Duff (chrmn), McCulloch Christison, W J Thompson and F T Partridge. *Secy*, James F Playfair. REGD OFFICE—93, Cannon st, London, E C 4. *Cal agts*, Balmer Lawrie & Co, Ld, 103, Clive st

**BADAMTAM DIVN**—Gardens—Badamtam and Lamas. Acreage under tea cultivation 771. Post and Tel Office, Leborg; Ry Stn, Darjeeling, D-H Ry. *Mangr*, P A McNaught. *Asst mangr*, E W Maude. *Asst*, E J Dewey (engr)

**TUKVAR DIVN**—Acreage under tea cultivation, 494. Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Darjeeling, D-H Ry. *Mangr*, A McD Murison. *Assts*, E W Maude and T J Hardingham

**BARNESBO DIVN**—Acreage under tea, 279. Post and Tel Office and Ry Stn, Darjeeling, D-H Ry. *Supdt*, A McD Murison. *Mangr*, R Browne

**LINGIA TEA CO, LD (Incorporated in India)**—CAPITAL—Rs 7,00,000, divided into 70,000 Shares of Rs 10 each. *Mangr dir*, F Page Wernicke. *Dir*s, E L Watts K B Millar and F M B Lutyens. *Secs*, Williamson, Magor & Co, 4, Mangoe lane, Calcutta. Gardens—Lingia, Glenburn and Pandam. Post and Tel Office, Darjeeling; Garden—Lingia. P O Marybong. Tel Office, Ghum, Ry Stn, Ghoom. Acreage under cultivation, Glenburn, 662; Lingia, 358; Pandam, 282.23. Total 1,371.23. Elevation, Lingia, 4,000 ft; Glenburn, 3,000 ft and Pandam, 6,000 ft. *Mangrs*, Glenburn, E Sampson-Way; Lingia, C W Emmett; and Pandam, F Page Wernicke. *Assts*, Glenburn C J T Wrenick, Lingia, S J Emmett

GLENBURN TEA ESTATES  
19 W 32  
DARJEELING,  
Lingia Tea Estate  
A F S  
DARJEELING  
Pandam Tea Estate  
A F S  
DARJEELING

**LONGVIEW TEA CO, LD (Incorporated in India)**—CAPITAL—Rs 3,44,000 in 3,440 Shares of Rs 100 each. Post and Tel Office, Pankhabari, Darjeeling; Ry Stn, Siliguri, E B Ry. Gardens—Longview, Kelabari, Doorbeen, Pankhabari and Falodhi. Acreage 659. Total

gross acreage 3,468. Elevation 1,400. Wyndham. *Assts*, A Wyndham and *agts*, Planters' Stores and Agency, Calcutta

**LOPCHU TEA CO, LD**—Post and Ry Stn, Giellekholo. D-H Ry, D Lopchu. Acreage, 260. Total gross acreage, 4,300 ft. *Mangr*, B L L Hewitt. *Travelg reptve* P C Kingham Hardy, 1, Auckland Villa, Darje

**MAHALDERAM TEA ESTATE**—P Ry Stn, Kurseong, D-H Ry. Acreage, 207. Total gross acreage 5,162 ft. *Proprs*, Hurdeodass Co, Dikshit

**MARGARET'S HOPE TEA CO**—Rs 3,00,000, in 3,000 Shares of Rs 100 each. *Dir*s, B C Studd, H A Antrobus, J S Ker. *Mangr agts*, Beggs, Dunlop & Co, Calcutta. Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Darjeeling. Garden—Margaret's Hope. Acreage, 541.10. Total gross acreage 3,000 to 5,500 ft. *Mangr*, L Ham

**MARYBONG AND KYEL TEA EST**—(Incorporated in England)—P O, Marybong. Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Ghum, D Marybong. Acreage, 670. Total gross acreage, 3,500 to 5,500 ft. *Mangr*, G R Kerr. *Secs*, Duncan Bros & Co, Calcutta

**MIM TEA CO, LD**—CAPITAL—Rs 1,60,000 in 1,600 Shares of Rs 100 each. Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Kurseong, D-H Ry. Garden—Mim. Acreage, 995. Elevation, 6,000 ft. *Mangr agts*, Andrew Yule & Co, Ld, 8, Clive st

**MOHURGONG AND MEETABARI**—Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Suku Darjeeling. Garden—Mohurgong. Acreage, 597.70 and M. Total gross acreage, Mohurgong 2,058. Elevation 500 ft. *Propr* A Palchik Banerji. *Assts* N G Banerji, D I Bhattacharjee, S K Chatterjee and N S Chatterjee. *Agts* M M M

**MOTIBAGAN TEA ESTATE**—P O N Siliguri; Ry Stn, Matigara, D-H Ry. Acreage under cultivation, 555. Elevation, 500 ft. *Mangr*, Srilal. *Agts* in India, J Thom

**MULLOOTAR TEA CO, LD**—Post, Tel Office and Ry Stn, Mahanadi. Gardens—Mullootar. Acreage under cultivation, 383. Total gross acreage, 383. *Mangr* H F Dempster. *Mangr agts*, 14, Old Court House st, Calcutta

NAGRI FARM TEA CO, LD (Incorporated in India)—CAPITAL—Rs 3,00,000 in 3,000 Shares of Rs 100 each. Post and Tel Office, Darjeeling; Ry Stn, Ghoom. Garden—Nagri. Acreage under cultivation 647. Elevation 1,410.01. *Proprs*, The Corporation, Calcutta. *Asst*, E W Maude. *Mangr*, Birch. *Asst*, E W Maude. *Mangr agts*, Williamson & Co, Mangoe lane, Calcutta

NAGRI FARM TEA Co LD DARJEELING

**NEW DARJEELING UNION TEA CO**—Darjeeling. P O Hatighisha; Ry Stn, Hatighisha, D-H Ry; Dist., Deomoni and Kristapur. Acreage 444. Total gross acreage, 854. *Dir*s of directors, The Secy, New Darjeeling, Darjeeling. *Mangr*, M L G Sanivay, S N Mukherjee, M N Ray, Dass (Dr)

LOOKING BACK





# HIGH *on* TEA

'I am so high I swear I can fly' felt **MRITTIKA BOSE** on her trip to tea land in Tinchuley

**A**fternoons in the mountains are short-lived. Especially in early October, when rain clouds still hide in nooks and corners - behind a peak, around a bend - suddenly playing their vanishing trick, engulfing the surrounding landscape. So the proposal for a walk in the last caress of sunlight for the day, was lapped up by all of us. The road meandered downhill, passing small tea gardens chequered with light and shade; sleepy cottages hiding adults inside them while the kids playing hopscotch outside waved at us merrily. A row of fluttering white prayer flags stood silhouetted against sunbeams

fanning out from behind a cluster of grey clouds. Mohini led us to a view point with a shed and seats that offered a panoramic view of the valley and the ranges, the latter shrouded by a thick veil of white clouds. We sat there lazily savouring nature's beauty when she casually said "There it is." "What, where?"

"That is Kanchandzongha."

We were jolted out of our soporific states and squinted at the direction her finger pointed. There, rising above the layers of white clouds, was a tiny set of snowy edges - almost indiscernible to untrained eyes like ours - the much sought after mighty peak! A

glimpse on the very first afternoon of our trip! I crossed my fingers.

We had arrived at Tinchuley - a small hill station in Darjeeling district, tucked away in between tea gardens and forests - that morning. From a sleepy hamlet with just a couple of rooms for tourists in the home belonging to the local Gurung family, a few years back, Tinchuley now boasts of a handful of lodges and homestays but is yet to get overcrowded. We were booked at the Tinchuley Homestay run by Nagen Singh and Sumitra Gurung, at the highest point in the locality at the edge of the forest that formed its rear boundary. The approach lane to the homestay was as yet unpaved, keeping it nicely secluded from the main road.

We were greeted with the traditional red *tika* on our foreheads and fresh rhododendron and passion fruit juice on our arrival. Our room was cosy and comfortable - with wooden walls and floor, a TV and geyser in the attached toilet adding the modern touch, and a gorgeous view. But how does





one stay indoors when sunbeams dancing on tea slopes beckon? And thus happened our afternoon stroll and first brush with Kanchandzongha.

Next morning we were off to the Rungli Rungliot tea estate via Takdah. Busy and crowded, Takdah hardly seemed to be the misty tea hamlet of the *koi hai* days I had read about. A halt at the Orchid Garden was however refreshing. The flowers were in full bloom and the greenery, balm for tired eyes. Soon, the road left the bustle and din behind and entered lush tea land. It was past noon and there was a lull in the garden activities. A few of the workers were still engaged in plucking while others huddled together over lunch and chit chat. As the road snaked upwards, a hush seemed to descend around us. Not a soul in sight, only acres and acres of undulating tea slopes – Rungli Rungliot – thus far and no further!

Conjuring up Rumer Godden's memories of the estate was not difficult. With no tar roads back then, walking up or going on horseback were the only options. I could almost feel the thrill of negotiating the precipices overlooking the pristine valleys as



we wound our way further up. The perfect place for creative pursuits!

As the sun begun to tilt westwards we found our way up to Durpin Dara offering a majestic view of the Teesta valley with the mighty river and its tributary Rangeet, glistening in the afternoon sun. A mist was rising, obliterating sequentially the way we had come up, our vehicle parked on a bend below, the trees around us and finally we were three insignificant veiled creatures looking in wonder at the sun drenched valley below! The first few raindrops pushed us towards the shelter of our car. We sat for a while till visibility improved, watching the birds sitting under the cover of leaves, quietly waiting for the rain to stop. Two little school kids happily danced in the rain on their way back home.

The next two days passed like a dream. We visited a quaint old monastery, picturesque and tranquil. And the juicy fruit garden

that offered a guided tour of fruit laden trees and also a showroom selling fresh fruit products – too tempting not to buy. The trek through the forest behind our bungalow where we had seen barking deer was delightful as was the evening jeep ride through Peshoke Tea Estate – now abandoned and overgrown. The evening card playing sessions at the homestay were livened up by animated conversations on sundry topics. And every meal was very special. Prepared with love and care with local and organically produced ingredients under the supervision of Mrs Gurung and served by her lovely daughter Mohini, each course was a culinary delight.

Tinchulay is renowned for the







hand rolled tea produced by the local small tea garden owners. The Gurungs follow the same tradition. After tasting their subtle smoky tea, I requested them to pack me some that I wished to carry back for gifting. On the last evening I sat on the bed carefully packing foil pouches (kindly provided by Mrs Gurung) with the tea I had bought. Mr. Gurung entered the room and with his familiar sunny smile said, "Tomorrow morning before you leave we shall go for sunrise. I have to show you

Kachandzongha." Here I must mention that every morning during our stay he would wake us up before daybreak and personally drive us to the sunrise point. Unfortunately, till then the mission had not been successful.

On our last morning we accompanied him more to savour the sights and sounds of the still-to-wake-up mountains than for anything more spectacular. Standing at the viewpoint I felt myself shivering in the cold darkness and zipped up my

windcheater. A night bird screeched somewhere. Then slowly the darkness started thinning. The stars seemed to fade away and the contours of the ranges started to get clear. Then, through the sea of clouds the mighty Kanchandzongha emerged like a silver grey iceberg. As we watched reverentially, the first rays of the rising sun kissed the peak. And then it was pure magic! Peak after peak turned from sombre silver to glowing gold and the range looked like a majestic bejewelled ship rising out of an ocean of clouds. The ecstatic smile on Mr. Gurung's face matched the brilliance of the sunrise.

We were ready to leave after our refreshing holiday. As we began the goodbyes, Mrs Gurung handed me an extra large foil pack. Before I could protest she said, "You have taken our tea for all your loved ones. Here is some I have hand rolled myself, especially for you. We shall miss you."

Back in Kolkata, I took my first sip of Mrs Gurung's tea in the morning. Subtle, slightly smoky and exotic – just like we had tasted at Tinchulay. But there seemed to be something more – the flavour of love and care.

*Photos: Author*





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We Help Make Better Tea ©



Cover Story

# The Next





# Gen in TEA



**T**EA has always been associated with tradition, legacy and age old customs and courtesies. A whiff of the Raj has lingered on in this industry - slightly laid back, without too much of a sense of urgency.

However, technological advancement has not left the tea industry untouched. Besides upgradation of techniques and machinery in the plantations and factories, the Internet has brought the Indian tea industry in the global ambit.

Young entrepreneurs are today at the helm of affairs in the industry. They have blended the wealth of experience of their predecessors with their own ideas and modern day knowledge perfectly. And today the industry is once again poised towards a path of growth.

**Contemporary Tea Time** spoke with some of the young leaders in tea for their views on the industry today.



# ‘The new industry leaders are adapting to technological advancements changing industry dynamics’ – SHIVAM KANOI of Binaguri Tea Co. Pvt. Ltd.

**W**hat evoked your interest in the business of tea? Was it only your family legacy?

Tea is our family-owned business, so naturally my interest.

**Who is your business role model and why?**

My grandfather Late Radheysham Kanoi and my father Sri Chandra Prakash Kanoi are my role models because they believe in adopting a futuristic outlook as well as maintaining a continuous existence. Their basic focus is to imbibe professionalism in order to achieve the desired goals.

**What are your aspirations for your company?**

My long-term outlook is to identify the key strengths of our tea business and move towards stability.

To improve productivity and outputs to ensure achievement of long term production goals. To improve research and mapping of tea growing areas likely to be affected by climate change. To improve the living conditions of the workers and use the



resources, carefully keeping in mind the environmental hazards.

**4. What are the opportunities for the industry?**

Favourable export conditions and domestic market promotion can benefit the industry.

Diversification of tea products can open up new avenues.

The industry can prove to be a boon for our country, as it generates both employment and economy, if timely steps are taken by the government and Tea Board to give proper boost to the industry in the right direction.

**What do you perceive as**

**threats to the industry?**

It is a labour intensive industry, so there have been agitations for better pay and working conditions.

Low technology implementation and ageing tea bushes are also worrisome issues.

It has been alleged that due to excessive use of pesticides various compounds have been found to be present in tea leaves.

Over dependence on monsoon.

**What do you see as opportunities for your company?**

The global consumer trend towards health and wellness, where tea is an important natural beverage, is strongly aligned to this trend. So it is likely to benefit our company, now and in the future.

**In general, do you see an interest among young entrepreneurs in tea?**

Yes. The profession of tea planting has been taken up by the common man as a good business venture at present.

**What are your hobbies, interests and passions?**

My hobbies include driving cars and cricket.

Among my interests is to know the various terminologies about cars.

I have a passion for automobile, specifically cars.

**Who has been your greatest teacher?**

My parents.

**Which are the new avenues that have opened up for the new generation in the tea industry in India?**

The diverse agro-climatic conditions prevailing in the tea growing areas of India lend themselves to the production of wide range of CTC, Orthodox, green tea and organic teas.

There is availability of





modernised and upgraded manufacturing facilities, labour welfare laws protecting workmen.

Moreover, steady investments in technology development, irrigation infrastructure, emphasis on modern agricultural practices and provisions of agricultural

credit and subsidies are the major factors that can help the new generation to contribute to the growth of the Indian tea industry.

**How would you compare the new leaders in tea as compared to the previous ones?**

The new leaders in tea are not

really different, it is just that one has different experiences at different ages. However, the new leaders are adapting to technological advancements that are redefining business models, strategies and the changing industry dynamics.

**‘The previous generation have set the foundation and now we need to innovate**

**SONAM KASERA** of Kamrup Tea Co

**What evoked your interest in the business of tea? Was it only your family legacy?**

It started with family legacy but the more I got involved I started enjoying it and found it very interesting. Each day it's a new learning experience with so much variation. It is not stereotypical, it is fun because Nature dictates it. Each batch of tea is different with plenty of variance. It is challenging at all times. And working with international partners makes it more exciting and challenging.

**Who is your business role model and why?**

Steve Jobs. Once you deliver a good quality and an innovative product, the world comes to you – you don't need to go to the world.

**What are your aspirations for your Company?**

Our aim is to be a global producer of consistent quality and supplier for all origins of teas.



Wherever tea is, we are there. We want to make ours a global tea brand.

**What are the opportunities for the industry?**

To promote tea as a health beverage. Innovating with tea.

To campaign for organic tea and biodiversity in teas to make the world healthy.

**What do you perceive as threats to the industry?**

Labour related concerns are the major threats. Natural threats like global warming are also there.

**What do you see as opportunities**

**for your Company?**

To be a quality producer and global supplier.

**In general, do you see an interest among young entrepreneurs in tea?**

Not really – may be they still perceive it as only a traditional business.

**What are your hobbies, interests and passions?**

Travelling, international trade and teaching.

**Who has been your greatest teacher?**

My mother and my boss and tea itself!

**Which are the new avenues that have opened up for the new generation in the tea industry in India?**

Tea Cafes and e-commerce.

**How would you compare the new leaders in tea as compared to the previous ones?**

I would still consider the previous generation to be the leaders. They are the pillars of the industry and now it is up to the new generation to keep it growing. The previous generation have set the foundation and now we need to innovate.

A famous quote by Paul Crichtlow would sum up –

"If you can put Boomers and Millennials together in the same place and with the right setting and conditions, it's amazing how they spark each other".



# ‘Old leaders are legends who have paved the path for the new ones’

## ABHISHEK AGARWAL of R. K. Tea Corporation

**W**hat evoked your interest in the business of tea? Was it only your family legacy?

I feel that tea is in my genes! I have had my freedom to choose the career path of my desire but I always clung to the tea business because of my immense liking for it. I have grown to become extremely passionate and trained in this industry. Being a second-generation tea-entrepreneur, I definitely owe it to my father's legacy, alongside the joy and satisfaction to see the smiling, happy faces of the ultimate tea drinkers.

**Who is your business role model and why?**

My father is my business role model. He has been the inspiration, support and the pillar of my strength. I have always looked up to him for his working style, ethics, strategizing and business skills and continuously strive to be like him. He is a self-made man and has achieved great success personally and professionally, hence I follow his footsteps, just like many others



from the tea industry.

**What are your aspirations for your Company?**

In my six year long journey in the industry. I have always tried to make a difference. In my company, I aspire to innovate and bring more uniqueness into this industry.

**What are the opportunities for the industry?**

Tea industry, more than ever, is packed with immense opportunities and a plethora of fields to choose from depending on one's interest, expertise and potential. I see a massively growing market for tea, especially

contributed by the youth – the future of our country.

**What do you perceive as threats to the industry?**

I honestly do not see coffee to be a substitute to tea and hence there are no direct threats in terms of competition from coffee or other beverages. However, the industry is surely threatened by the extensive adulteration being done across the country, to maximise profits. There is widespread use of artificial flavours, colours and several other illegal and inedible substances in tea retail and packeting. Such ill practices threaten the industry in a big way.

**What do you see as opportunities for your company?**

As mentioned earlier, the flourishing tea market, along with the mushrooming interest of the youth and the increasing awareness about the health benefits of tea, is sure to boost sales and hence also benefiting my company. I recently started exporting and see a very good potential in the international market for the native Indian teas and also the new age teas. Also, as India is gearing up to increase its exports, it is amending and also launching new schemes and altering its policies and trade







agreements in favour of the exporters.

However, in a more inherent sense, I see my father's experience, his assistance and teachings creating greater opportunities for my company.

**In general, do you see an interest among young entrepreneurs in tea?**

Absolutely! Of late, youngsters from all over the country, from within the tea fraternity and otherwise are showing great

interest in this field.

**What are your hobbies, interests and passions?**

I am as simple as I can be complicated; this is the native characteristic I get from tea. So tea is my passion and I spend most of my free time either travelling and marketing my tea across the globe or pondering upon developing new products. Alongside, I am a graphic designer and love to cook and party.

**Who has been your greatest**

**teacher?**

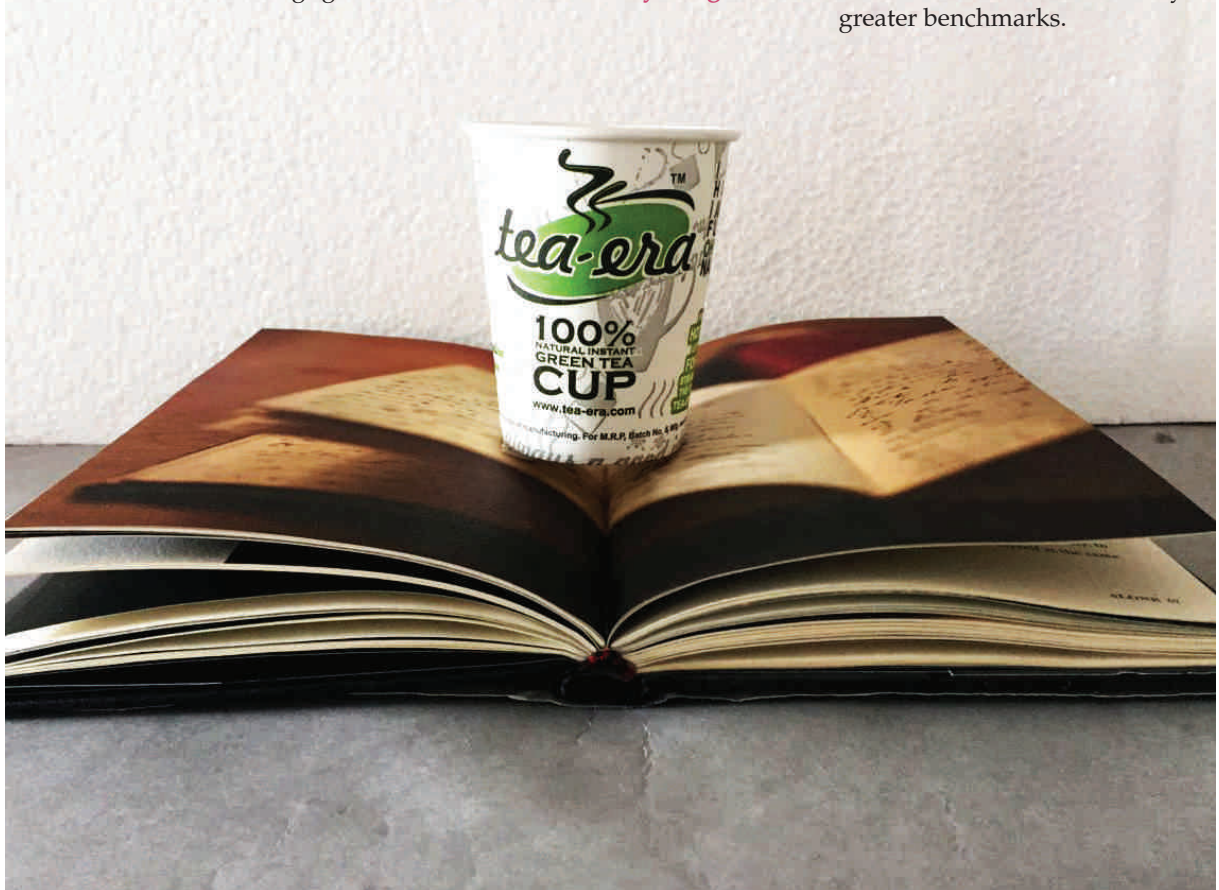
Myself

**Which are the new avenues that have opened up for the new generation in the tea industry in India?**

This decade has been the most dynamic for tea because several new avenues have opened up and many old ones have come forth, bearing new facades. Tea tasting, being a tea sommelier, tea cafes, tea-flavoured products, exotically flavoured teas, innovative and inexpensive tea stalls, etc are attracting the new generation and huge investments. I am not going to spill the beans on more avenues and create more competition for myself.

**How would you compare the new leaders in tea as compared to the previous ones?**

Old leaders are legends who have paved the path for the new ones. The tea industry has become widely diverse and I do not really see grounds for comparison. Nevertheless, the new leaders will drive the Indian tea industry to greater benchmarks.



# ‘The culture of gourmet tea will boost consumption of quality tea’

**PUNIT PODDAR** of Udyan Tea

**W**hat evoked your interest in the business of tea? Was it only your family legacy?

It was certainly my family legacy. But initially I did not have interest in the tea business specially since it was being carried on in a traditional manner.

**Who is your business role model and why?**

My business role model is Mukesh Ambani. I have always admired his approach towards business. He has laid stress on youth and technology and he has ventured into business with a problem solving attitude. He has followed the principle of the great Dhirubhai Ambani who always said money is a by-product and chasing money alone would never make anybody a successful businessman.

**What are your aspirations for your company?**

To build a Buying House which



Soveet Gupta

would provide all sorts of solutions related to procurement of tea.

**What are the opportunities for the industry?**

With technology becoming an integral part of tea business now, I see a lot of opportunity for the industry. Some time back when I was young I had seen how CCD and Barista had captured the minds of the youth in India, making coffee a popular and stylish beverage.

India being the second largest producer of tea in the world and tea being the most popular beverage here, it is yet to get the panache it deserves. Even today most of the tea consumed in India is in the rural areas, in the villages or smaller towns. I see a rapid growth in consumption of tea across India, especially in the urban areas, as the tea cafés are increasing in number and the tea drinking culture is picking up. With people now turning more conscious towards quality and the culture of gourmet products increasing, a boost in consumption of quality tea is only going to increase. Hence the growth of the industry is inevitable.

**What do you perceive as threats to the industry?**

Non quality teas, resistance to change and acceptance and implementation of technology.

**What are the new avenues that have opened up for the new generation in the tea industry?**

E-Commerce

**What do you see as opportunities for your Company?**

Since I joined business early, I have had the opportunity of being associated with many experienced people in the industry and had the opportunity to learn from them. This has helped me immensely at my work, Our industry had been



Punit Poddar

lacking the presence of youth but now an evolution is taking place where younger people are starting to take interest in the industry, I feel I am placed a little ahead of them in terms of experience, which I plan to utilise wisely in my work.

I have always believed in technology and adapting oneself to the changing atmosphere, hence I along with two of my friends, Pravee Gupta and Soveet Gupta, have put together our expertise for our start-up called Udyan tea. Udyan tea is an E-commerce website which aims to popularise Indian Tea across the globe. We started it four years back and have learned a lot in the process. <https://www.udyantea.com/about>

**In general, do you see an interest among the young entrepreneurs in tea?**



Yes, I do see – the upcoming tea cafes are proof of this. Within three years tea cafes like Chaayos and Chai Points have expanded aggressively and many other young entrepreneurs are trying to change the mode of operation of traditional tea business.

**What are your hobbies, interests and passion?**

Playing guitar, listening to music and travelling.

**Who has been your greatest teacher?**

My mother has been my greatest teacher because she has taught me the most important lesson of life – to be able to change



and how to accept change.

**How do you compare the new leaders in tea as compared to the previous ones?**

The new entrepreneurs in the tea industry have a wider vision with the expertise received from earlier generation and the newer generation is more aggressive in their approach.

*Interview: Angshuman De*

◀ Praveez Gupta

## ‘The new leaders are more attuned to market needs’ - **KANISHKA SETHIA** of Western Conglomerate Ltd.

**What evoked your interest in the business of tea? Was it only your family legacy?**

I have no family legacy in tea. My own interest in this business grew as I was working on the logistics side and got the opportunity during the last down turn to acquire Beech Tea Estate on my own initiative.

**Who is your business role model and why?**

Elon Musk – for vision and

ultimate hard work and multitasking abilities.

**What are your aspirations for your Company?**

To be a top producer of quality tea and have an own crop of five mkg spread over West Bengal and Assam.

**What are the opportunities for the industry?**

Quality tea is wanted all over the world and also domestic customers are getting quality oriented.

**What do you perceive as threats to the Industry?**

Uncontrolled wage and spiralling cost and depressed prices.

**What do you see as opportunities for your Company?**

Demand for good quality Dooars tea – the demand is growing and we can ride the wave.

**In general, do you see an interest among young entrepreneurs in tea?**

Regrettably not as much as is desired.



**What are your hobbies, interests and passions?**

Golf and travelling.

**Who has been your greatest teacher?**

My father. And my various failures in business.

**Which are the new avenues that have opened up for the new generation in the tea industry in India?**

Alternative farming, tourism.

**How would you compare the new leaders in tea as compared to the previous ones?**

The new leaders are more attuned to market needs and are trying to reach global size and scale.





## 139th AGM of DBITA

The 139th Annual General Meeting of the Dooars Branch Indian Tea Association (DBITA), was held on March 10, 2017, at Central Dooars Club, Binnaguri. Dignitaries from all across the tea fraternity, Government officials and planters from Dooars and Terai graced the mega event.

Sanjay Kumar Ghai, Chairman, DBITA, in his address emphasized upon the various issues plaguing the industry.

He outlined the challenges faced by the tea industry with regard to price realisation, cost of production, land acquisition, NFSA 2013, flood and lastly, demonetisation, that left the whole country in jeopardy.

Nayantara Pal Choudhuri, Additional Vice-Chairperson, ITA and Chairperson, West Bengal

Regional Committee, ITA, in her address, contoured the expostulations experienced by the



(L to R) Pashupati Ghosh, Addl. Labour Commissioner; S. Guha Thakurta, Secretary, DBITA; Nayantara Palchoudhuri, Addl. Vice-Chairperson, ITA; D. Chakrabarti, Addl. Secretary, ITA; A. Banerjee, Vice-Chairman, DBITA and S.K. Ghai, Chairman, DBITA

industry in relation to escalating cost of production, average price realisation, essence of sustainability and exports. She apprised the house of the report published by the Tea Board of India, which has been done after analysing the

overall aspects of all the estates in India and in which out of 14 top gardens six are from north Bengal. She also mentioned the Association's drive for generic promotion of tea through the 'Chai ho jai' the campaign specially targeting the youth in order to boost consumption.

Pasupati Ghosh, Additional Labour Commissioner, Government of West Bengal, in his address stated that the tea industry occupies an important position in the eyes of the Government of West Bengal and the Government is very much sincere about the sustainability, growth and expansion of the industry. For that, the Government has created a Tea Directorate which is now operational in north Bengal.

## West Jalinga world's highest organic tea producer

Of the 101 tea gardens in Barak Valley, West Jalinga has eked out a distinctive place for itself for its organic tea plantation. It is the largest tea garden producing organic tea in India and its product is sold directly in the international market. Along with that, there are two more estates, Kumbhirgram and Boobright, in this valley that

quality and for that these three tea estates are also examples of remarkable turnaround in their history of success.

Sushanta Karmakar, development officer and in-charge of regional office, Tea Board of India, here, said, "It is indeed a positive development in respect of West Jalinga and two other tea estates since the beverage consumers now prefer organic tea. If all the other tea estates of the valley follow the example of West Jalinga, it will bring about a revolutionary phase in the more than 200 years of history of Barak



Valley tea." According to informed sources, Jalinga accounts for over 30% of the entire organic tea manufactured in India outpacing

organic Darjeeling tea production.

Not long ago, West Jalinga was in obscurity. Its success has brought it on the world map of tea, making it the largest organic plantation in the world. West Jalinga produces around one mkg annually and is spread over 466 hectare of land.

What makes West Jalinga tea exportable is its quality and healthy brand and has earned a unique reputation in the international market. The 133 year old garden changed hands. It was facing a good number of problems. The per hectare production was too low. Pest-menace motivated the management to go organic, shifting from chemicals. Sushanta Karmakar said the success story of West Jalinga will one day – which is not far off – prompt the tea gardens to go organic, replacing fertilisers and pesticides.

Courtesy : Sentinel Guwahati 28/03/17





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# Wagh Bakri launches Ice Tea



India's third largest packaged tea company Wagh Bakri, launched its range of refreshing Ice Tea in four splendid flavours of Lemon, Orange, Peach and Khus and Saunf. It comes in packaging of 25g (makes two glasses of ice tea), 250 g priced at Rs 75/- (makes 20 glasses of ice tea) and 500 g priced at Rs 150/- (makes 40 glasses of ice tea). The Wagh Bakri Ice Tea offers one Glass Free on purchase of one pack of 250g priced at Rs 75/-.



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A Nandkeolyar

Publisher



# New Norms on IRON FILINGS

## Food Safety Standards of tea vis-a-vis revised regulation

**F**ood Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has recently revised its regulation on 'iron filings' in tea. In the revised regulation, the permitted level of iron filings in black tea is raised from 150 mg per kg (ppm) to 250 mg per kg. The revision is based on the report of National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad, on the possible health hazard of iron filings in tea to human beings. This revision is a great relief to the tea industry.

The revision of the standard was made possible on the intervention of Tea Board, UPASI, TRA and various units of tea traders' associations.

### Limit of iron filings

Unlike other metal contaminants, iron is present in tea in two forms; primarily as inherent iron and as iron filings. The former is plant nutrient in nature and the latter is extraneous matter. Since tea is not consumed directly and iron filings will not dissolve in hot water, iron filings is relatively harmless compared to food stuff which are directly consumed. However, various countries have fixed various levels of iron filings in tea. Accordingly, for some of the developed countries it is as low as 120 mg/kg and is as high as 500 mg/kg for some under developed countries. As per Egyptian standard, the limit is 150mg/kg, while it is 250 mg/kg in Indian Standard (IS 3633: 2003). Certain countries have specification for iron as 'total iron' which represent inherent iron (nonmagnetic) as well as iron filings present in the sample. Accordingly, it is 150 mg/kg for Iran, 300 mg/kg for Libya and 500 mg/kg for Sri Lanka. On the contrary, many countries do not have limits for iron filings in tea.

### Essence of the specification for Black Tea

Bureau of Indian Standards published the specifications for tea (IS 3633) in 1966 which was revised in 1972. This revision was made to incorporate the requirements of metallic contaminants, iron filings and pesticide residues and to delete the provisions of green tea. Subsequently, the standard underwent two amendments; one in October 1995 and the other in March 1997. The standard is revised again (second



Dr Baby U I

revision) in 2003 (IS 3633: 2003).

The chemical requirements are covered in sub clause 'a' to 'f' of Clause 2.10.1 of FSSAI Act. The limit for iron filings as per IS 3633: 2003 is 250 mg/kg (Clause 4.3) and the revised FSS limit of 250 mg/kg is included as an additional sub clause 'g' under Clause 2.10.1.

### Chemical requirements:

(a) Total ash (m/m): Not less than 4.0 percent and not more than 8.0 percent (b) Water Soluble Ash: Not less than 45.0 percent of total ash (c) Alkalinity of water soluble ash expressed as KOH (m/m): Not less than 1.0 percent and more than 3.0 percent (d) Acid insoluble ash (m/m): Not more than 1.0 percent (e) Water extract: Not less than 32.0 percent (f) Crude fibre (m/m): Not more than 16.5 percent (g) Iron filings: Not more than 250 mg/kg

### Bottleneck in the estimation of iron filings

Factors affecting the accuracy of the results on the estimation of iron filings are described by the author in the previous article (*Contemporary Tea Time Volume:XXV (1 & 2): Pages 44 - 45*). Among these the most important ones are the methodology of analysing iron filings (described in IS 3633: 2003 and in DGHS manual: 2005) and the power and shape of the magnet. In Tea Board's direction (1997) the usage of magnet having 3" long, 1" wide and 0.5" thick or of any convenient size easy to operate, is suggested. Here too the gauss power of the magnet is not specified and laboratories are using magnets of different gauss power. Since the recovery of iron filings has a direct correlation with the gauss power of the magnet, more the power, more will be the recovery, resulting in disparity in the laboratory readings. There are laboratories which are using even 'horse shoe' magnet, wherein the recovery will be very low, as the magnetic area is too little and is restricted only to the tips of the 'horse shoe.' Bureau of Indian Standards is on the process of revising the methodology; but revision of the procedure of estimation alone is not sufficient, the gauss power and shape of the magnet also need to be specified in the standard.



# TEA *with a* MISSION

**Young Mountain Tea, Fulbrighter Adhiraj Vable's start-up in Oregon, works to create sustainable livelihoods for rural communities in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand**

**A**dhiraj Vable started Young Mountain Tea in 2013 to take the idea of tea beyond the cup. The company, based in Oregon, partnered with farmers in the Kumaon region in the foothills of the Himalayas to develop a new tea region. It buys teas from the Kumaon producers, exports them to the United States and then sells the products to local customers. Vable and his partner, Jeff Aspinall, whom he met at the University of Michigan as a freshman, and four other people make up the team.

"I was an electrical engineering major at the University of Michigan when I got interested in renewable energy," says Vable. During a visit to his mother's village, north of Bengaluru, Vable started working on a renewable energy project. "We managed to power a school with solar," he says. This led to more solar projects.

When Vable travelled to Uttarakhand, he wanted to continue working with rural communities, but not in the area of renewable energy. "I have always been an avid tea drinker," he says. "These mountain communities were traditionally



Adhiraj Vable tastes the six new teas that Young Mountain Tea showcased at the World Tea Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, in June 2016

agriculturists. So, I wondered if tea could be an option to explore in terms of sustainable livelihoods."

## Laying new ground

Vable's work with the Uttarakhand-based nonprofit organisation Avani, which creates

livelihoods for rural communities in Kumaon, helped lay the foundation of Young Mountain Tea. In 2013, when he returned to Uttarakhand on a Fulbright-Nehru fellowship, Vable struck a deal with Avani. If Avani would work with the communities in and around



Kumaon to grow tea, he would set up a company in the United States to sell it.

“The area has a very rich history of tea growth,” says Vable, adding that the villagers were already growing different types of low-quality tea that were exported to Russia. These teas weren’t pushed for high-quality processing. “All the caffeinated teas like green, white and black are part of the same plant, just grown and processed differently,” he says. Tea, as a crop, isn’t land-intensive. It’s also a fairly low-volume, high-profit margin investment, which makes it a sustainable option for the communities involved. “Also, it’s not something the monkeys will eat,” laughs Vable. “That’s a huge issue in the area.”

Convincing the local partners to produce high-quality tea could have been difficult, but “unlike others who did one internship or volunteer experience and never came back, I kept going back,” says Vable. “I worked with them for seven years. So, when we spoke about tea, we already had a long-standing relation of trust.”

Tea takes about three years to reach the stage when it can be harvested. “We wrote to a non-profit organisation for a small grant and set the ground for cultivation,” says Vable. “We reached out to pioneers in the tea industry in India to be our mentors.” Young



Mountain Tea sold the mentors’ teas in the United States as its own tea was being grown. “We learn from our mentors, adopt new ways and hope to bring an alternative method of tea production to India,” he says.

Besides outstanding quality, Young Mountain Tea says its teas are grown ethically.

Through his start-up, Vable also works to create dignified livelihoods for the remote mountain communities in the Kumaon region. The company helps make the mountain ecosystems stronger by supporting organic permaculture that intercropped tea with other mountain crops to restore biodiversity, strengthen native soils and prevent landslides.

## Fostering cultural ties

“We named our company after the rising Himalayas, a mountain range that is still going up as the Indian subcontinent pushes into Asia,” says Vable. “The mission of our organisation is to foster cross-cultural exchange, connecting remote communities in India to the US.”

Young Mountain Tea brings people interested in learning more about these villages of India to live and work in the Kumaon area, “We stay with local families, try and understand their daily routines and work in the fields with them,” he says.

## New production models

Vable is confident of creating a niche in the crowded tea space in the United States. “Tea [quality] depends on how and where it’s grown,” he says. “Most tea companies go into tea gardens and buy what they have to offer. We have a relation with those who grow our tea. For us, improving the taste and quality of tea is an ongoing process. In that sense, no one can replicate our teas.”



Young Mountain Tea fosters cultural exchange by bringing people from different countries to remote Kumaon villages

Courtesy : SPAN





The India Tea Trade Dinner (ITTD) since its inception in the year 2008, has been facilitating an opportunity to all connected with tea trade in India and overseas to gather on the onset of the tea production season and explore ways of working with each other to further the interest of the tea trade as a whole and prepare for the challenges ahead.

The Indian Tea Association facilitates this event, which is organised under the aegis of the India Tea Trade Dinner Committee, comprising members drawn from the key segments of tea trade.

ITTD 2017, the 10th edition of this event, was held on April 6, 2017, at Taj Bengal, Kolkata. This much awaited event on the tea calendar saw representatives across the industry engage in networking and bonhomie to deepen and strengthen bonds.

Tea is not a one off business. As a seasonal crop it requires careful and diligent nursing on a sustained basis to ensure growth and productivity and through it,

## India Tea Trade Dinner 2017



competitiveness. Equally important is a robust tea trade that engages the consumers and strives to secure sustainability of the business of tea. ITA has consistently championed the need for mutual cooperation in the larger interest of promotion of Indian tea and by pioneering and

facilitating this Annual Event continues to sustain this spirit.

This year the Guest of Honour was Bruce Bucknell, British High Commissioner, British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata. Other eminent persons like Jurgen Thomas Schord, Deputy Consul General of Germany, Mr. Siddharth, IAS, Advisor, West Bengal Industrial Development Corporation Limited, Representatives from Tea Board of India, etc were also present.

## India Tea Road Show by ITA

Indian Tea Association (ITA) embarked on B2B Road Show under the banner "India Tea Road Show" in two phases in March 2017. The first phase covered Rajasthan and Gujarat over March 6 - 9, 2017 and the second phase covered Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra over March 20 - 23, 2017.

The first phase of the Road Show commenced from Jaipur and then to Udaipur, Ahmedabad and Vadodara. It was led by Azam Monem, Chairman, ITA.

After successful completion of the Road Show Phase - I, ITA carried out the Phase - II of India Tea Road Show at Indore, Bhopal and Nagpur. Around 25 participants from producers and auctioneers and a large number of traders / packeters participated in each location.

Road Shows covered buyer-seller interactions over lunch or dinner hosted by ITA. The Association presented some of the problematic issues being faced by the producers to the trade for their

understanding. A presentation was showcased covering industry issues, crop scenario, prices, cost, sustainability, etc.

In the past ITA had organised B2B, B2C and B2Y (Youth) Road Shows at around 20 metros / towns, promoting tea as a healthy and contemporary drink and emphasising the need for a rise in price for the survival of the industry, given unsustainable cost and supply/demand mismatch. ITA also advocated "Trustea" code for the benefit of consumers and a suitable price premium which could be shared in the entire value chain. ITA has requested traders/packeters to target the youth in the age group of 17 to 24 with different forms of tea – cold and flavoured and shared its B2Y experience and recipes from its "Chai Ho Jaye" campaign in over 12 colleges in 2015 and 2016.





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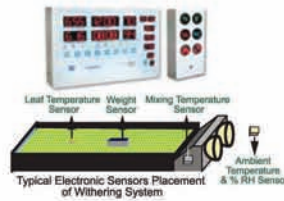
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# Makaibari Heritage Bungalow gutted

A devastating fire broke out at the Makaibari Tea Estate on March 16, 2017, which razed the heritage Director's Bungalow. The tea estate located on the Pankhabari Road near the Kurseong town boasts of the oldest tea factory in the world.

wife of the Chairman of the garden. All five were quickly evacuated with no reports of any injury or loss of life.

Two fire engines from Kurseong managed to douse the fire. At around 5.30 pm, the fire was brought under control. "Engines

destroyed in the fire," stated Kumar Rai, Assistant Manager.

Swaraj Kumar Banerjee, popular as Rajah Banerjee, the Chairman of the Makaibari Tea and Trade Company, had left for Kolkata that morning. The tea estate website states: "For more than a century-and-half, Makaibari has been tended by four generations of the Banerjee family; the only estate in Darjeeling to never have been owned by components of the Raj. Makaibari, was the first tea factory in the world, built by the pioneering G C Banerjee, the founding father of Makaibari Tea Estates, in 1859."



At around 2.30 pm residents noticed smoke billowing out of the bungalow. "We were in the kitchen when we smelt smoke. When we rushed to the adjoining room, the ceiling had already caught fire," said one of the employees.

There were five persons present in the bungalow at the time of the fire including, Srirupa Banerjee,

were also called in from Siliguri.

The semi-concrete (concrete and wood) Director's Bungalow was razed to the ground.

"It is a great loss. Four generations of the Banerjee family have lived in this bungalow. A part of the history has been lost with many rare documents, books, photographs and trophies

Makaibari was the first garden to be certified as organic in 1988. On November 15, 2015, during his meeting with Queen Elizabeth in the Buckingham Palace, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had gifted her Makabari tea.

Located in Kurseong subdivision, in Darjeeling District, Makaibari sustains seven villages and 1,587 people. In June 2014, around 90 percent stake of the company was sold to Luxmi Tea. However Rajah Banerjee continues to function as the Chairman.

## The Tea Trekkers

The Tea Trekkers, consisting of six members, departed from India on February 18, 2017, to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest mountain in Africa. Their mission was to promote the lovely cup of *chai* and do so in a way that leaves an impact. They carried with them some lovely Assam CTC tea which provided them the fuel and energy after a long day of trekking. Finally, after six days of hardship, they proudly raised the 'Chai Ho Jaye' flag at 19,341 feet at Uhuru peak, the highest point in Africa. They say "It was indeed a proud moment to see our Indian Flag and Tea Flag fluttering high at the top of the world." The love for tea knows no limits.







## Contemporary TEA TRENDS

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### Highlights : Auction average

India : April to March (in INR per Kg)

	ALL Sector			Organised			BLF		
	2016-17	2015-16	+/-	2016-17	2015-16	+/-	2016-17	2015-16	+/-
<b>CTC + All Dust</b>									
Assam	143.12	151.53	-8.41	149.42	162.69	-13.27	118.35	116.61	1.74
Cachar	117.21	113.30	3.91	117.74	114.83	2.91	113.20	111.67	1.52
Dooars	136.80	132.40	4.40	148.61	148.30	0.31	109.95	99.20	10.75
Terai	115.84	107.45	8.39	126.76	126.99	-0.23	103.99	88.86	15.13
N.India	136.47	139.10	-2.63						
S.India	103.53	86.01	17.52						
<b>Orthodox</b>									
N.India	211.37	216.72	-5.34						
S.India	136.86	120.18	16.68						

### World Average Tea Auction Prices

January to December (per Kg)

CENTER	In Countrywise Currency				In INR (Approx)			In US \$ (Approx)		
	Currency	2016	2015	+/-	2016	2015	+/-	2016	2015	+/-
Chittagong	BDT	200.02	187.41	12.61	171.07	154.73	16.34	2.55	2.42	0.13
Jakarta	US Cents	163.70	153.30	10.40	109.97	98.14	11.83	1.64	1.53	0.11
Mombasa (Kenya)	US Cents	241.00	295.00	-54.00	161.90	188.86	-26.96	2.41	2.95	-0.54
Limbe	US Cents	155.28	156.09	-0.81	104.32	99.93	4.39	1.55	1.56	-0.01
"Colombo (Mainly Orthodox)"	SL Rs	467.23	402.14	65.09	214.99	189.68	25.31	3.20	2.96	0.24

Exchange Rate:		India	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
January to December (Approximate)	US\$ 1=	2016	78.55	146.00
		2015	77.54	135.00

Source: ITA



## Estimated Production of Tea In India

### Estate & Bought Leaf Tea Factories

#### Upto **February** 2017

2017	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Estate	BLF	Total	Estate	BLF	Total	Estate	BLF	Total
Jan	1.8	4.1	5.9	8.4	4.8	13.1	10.1	8.9	19.0
Feb	1.1	0.9	2.0	7.0	4.6	11.6	8.1	5.5	13.5
Jan to Feb	2.8	5.0	7.9	15.3	9.4	24.7	18.2	14.4	32.5
2016	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Estate	BLF	Total	Estate	BLF	Total	Estate	BLF	Total
Jan	1.3	2.1	3.4	9.8	4.8	14.6	11.0	6.9	18.0
Feb	1.5	0.8	2.3	9.5	5.3	14.8	11.0	6.2	17.1
Mar	34.1	21.2	55.3	9.7	5.7	15.4	43.8	26.9	70.7
Apr	32.8	17.4	50.2	12.0	5.0	17.0	44.8	22.4	67.2
May	56.2	28.6	84.7	9.9	4.9	14.8	66.1	33.5	99.6
Jun	80.5	38.3	118.8	15.3	10.0	25.3	95.8	48.3	144.1
July	86.5	40.2	126.7	9.8	9.3	19.2	96.3	49.5	145.9
Aug	93.8	42.9	136.7	10.7	7.2	17.9	104.5	50.1	154.6
Sep	112.2	52.2	164.4	12.1	8.0	20.2	124.3	60.3	184.6
Oct	87.5	41.9	129.4	11.1	7.1	18.2	98.6	49.0	147.6
Nov	70.2	37.7	107.9	13.5	5.6	19.2	83.7	43.4	127.1
Dec	26.2	20.9	47.1	10.5	5.2	15.6	36.7	26.1	62.7
Jan to Feb	2.7	3.0	5.7	19.3	10.1	29.4	22.0	13.1	35.1
Jan to Dec	682.8	344.2	1026.9	133.9	78.3	212.2	816.7	422.5	1239.2
Variance	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Estate	BLF	Total	Estate	BLF	Total	Estate	BLF	Total
Jan	0.5	2.0	2.5	-1.4	0.0	-1.5	-0.9	2.0	1.0
Feb	-0.4	0.1	-0.3	-2.6	-0.7	-3.3	-2.9	-0.7	-3.6
Jan to Feb	0.1	2.1	2.2	-4.0	-0.8	-4.7	-3.9	1.3	-2.6

Source : Tea Board





## Crop Figures of Some Major Tea Producing Countries in Million Kg

2017	N. India	S. India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Kenya	Malawi	Uganda	Total
Jan	5.9	13.1	21.2	0.1	33.0	5.2		78.5
Feb	2.0	11.6	18.4		22.6	7.0		61.6
<b>Jan to Feb</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>55.6</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>140.1</b>
2016	N. India	S. India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Kenya	Malawi	Uganda	Total
Jan	3.3	14.6	25.1	0.1	50.3	5.6	5.6	104.6
Feb	2.3	14.8	22.9	0.0	44.0	5.8	2.9	92.6
Mar	55.3	15.3	22.5	3.0	45.3	7.7	2.8	151.9
Apr	50.2	17.0	27.0	4.7	37.6	5.9	5.4	147.8
May	84.7	14.8	31.0	5.9	36.6	3.4	5.8	182.3
Jun	118.8	25.3	25.5	8.9	35.6	1.7	5.4	221.2
July	126.7	19.2	21.5	10.7	29.3	0.9	4.0	212.2
Aug	136.7	17.9	23.0	11.6	29.5	1.8	3.5	224.0
Sep	164.4	20.2	19.8	13.4	36.8	2.8	3.9	261.3
Oct	129.4	18.2	18.6	10.4	41.3	1.4	5.0	224.4
Nov	107.9	19.2	27.3	8.8	39.9	0.8	5.5	209.4
Dec	47.1	15.6	27.1	4.4	46.9	1.8	4.9	147.8
<b>Jan to Feb</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>29.3</b>	<b>48.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>94.3</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>197.2</b>
<b>Jan to Dec</b>	<b>1026.8</b>	<b>212.0</b>	<b>291.3</b>	<b>82.0</b>	<b>473.1</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>54.7</b>	<b>2179.4</b>
Variance	N. India	S. India	Sri Lanka	Bangladesh	Kenya	Malawi	Uganda	Total
Jan	2.6	-1.5	-3.9	0.0	-17.3	-0.4		-20.5
Feb	-0.3	-3.2	-4.5		-21.4	1.2		-28.1
<b>Jan to Feb</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>-4.6</b>	<b>-8.4</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-38.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>-48.6</b>



## Indian Tea Exports Upto February 2017

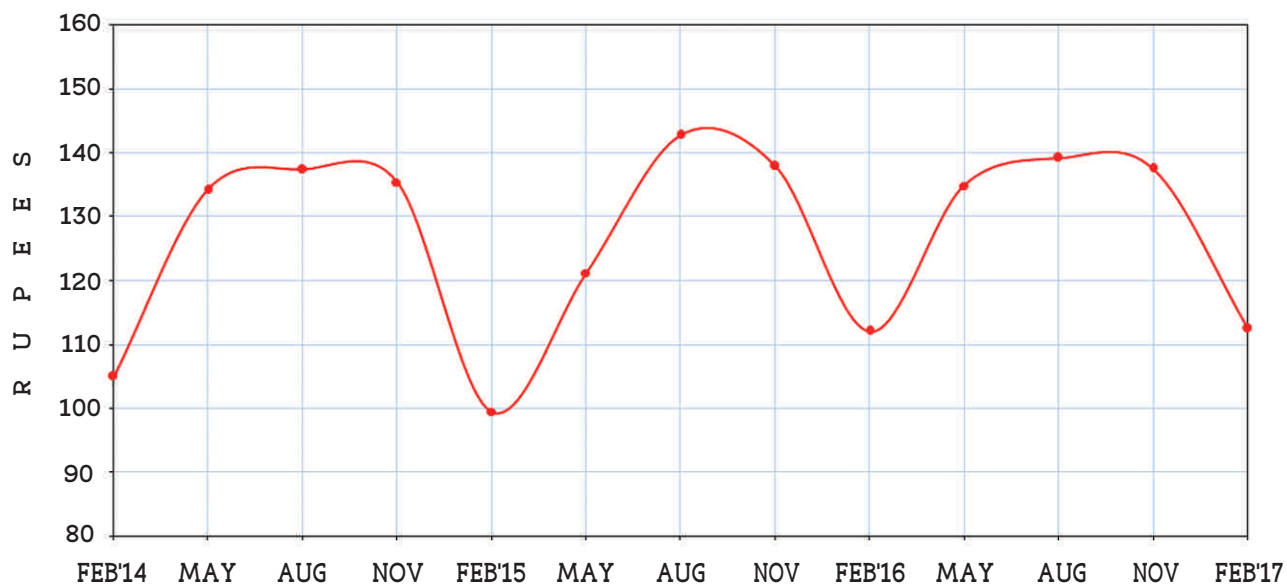
2017	N. India			S. India			All India		
	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs.Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs.Crs)	Average (Rs.)	Qty (M.Kgs)	Value (Rs.Crs)	Average (Rs.)
Jan	11.9	263.9	221.06	7.1	106.9	151.02	19.0	370.9	194.98
Feb	13.7	278.2	203.53	7.2	125.2	172.86	20.9	403.4	192.91
Jan to Feb	25.6	542.2	211.70	14.3	232.1	162.06	39.9	774.2	193.90
2016	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	5.6	124.4	222.16	6.2	91.4	147.44	11.8	215.8	182.90
May	9.1	211.4	232.56	5.6	97.7	173.53	14.7	309.1	209.99
Jun	8.1	203.4	251.40	7.5	128.3	172.17	15.5	331.7	213.42
July	9.2	225.6	246.23	8.5	150.1	175.91	17.7	375.6	212.32
Aug	12.5	287.1	229.84	8.0	128.4	161.56	20.4	415.5	203.28
Sep	13.7	324.3	237.23	7.2	112.1	156.11	20.9	436.4	209.29
Oct	11.2	264.2	236.71	6.8	110.4	161.64	18.0	374.6	208.21
Nov	15.2	336.9	222.40	7.5	115.8	155.38	22.6	452.7	200.31
Dec	13.1	296.2	226.79	6.7	113.9	169.46	19.8	410.1	207.32
Jan to Feb	22.9	488.4	213.75	14.9	207.8	139.66	37.7	696.2	184.53
Jan to Dec	130.0	2955.0	227.26	86.8	1372.0	158.14	216.8	4327.0	199.60
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	-1.0	-19.8	1.10	-0.4	3.8	12.95	-1.4	-16.0	5.05
Feb	3.7	73.5	-2.18	-0.2	20.5	31.60	3.6	94.0	14.71
Jan to Feb	2.8	53.7	-2.06	-0.6	24.3	22.40	2.2	78.0	9.36

Source: Tea Board



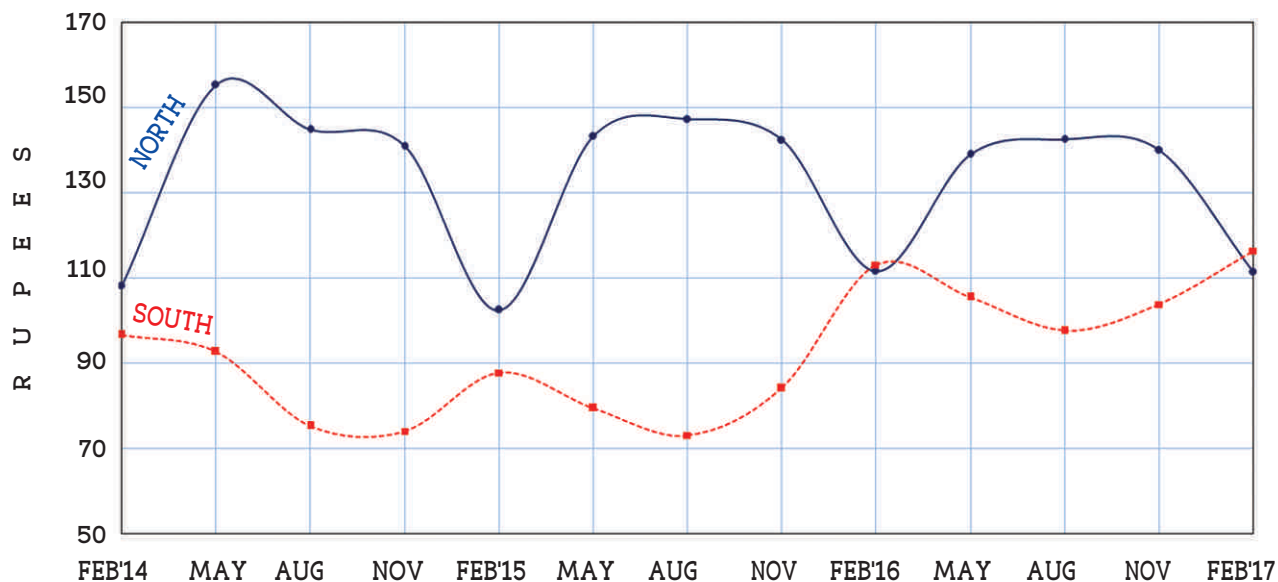


### THREE YEAR AUCTION AVERAGE – ALL TEAS – ALL INDIA



Feb'14	May	Aug	Nov	Feb'15	May	Aug	Nov	Feb'16	May	Aug	Nov	Feb'17
104.94	134.18	137.37	135.34	99.47	121.17	142.76	137.84	112.04	134.80	139.14	137.54	112.47

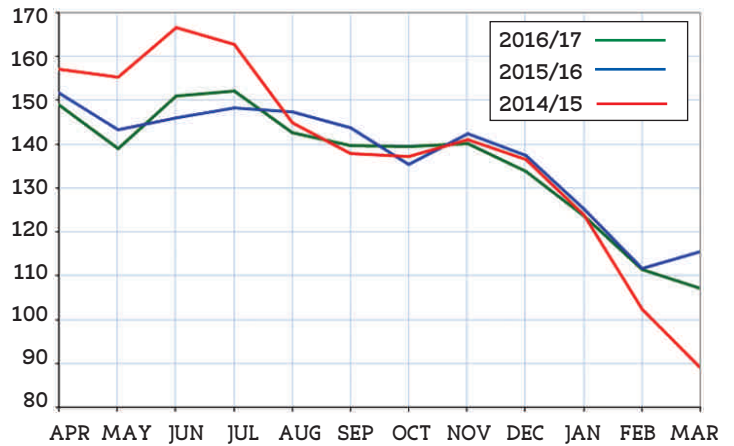
### THREE YEAR CTC & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGE – NORTH AND SOUTH INDIA



Feb'14	May	Aug	Nov	Feb'15	May	Aug	Nov	Feb'16	May	Aug	Nov	Feb'17
108.21	155.30	144.86	140.98	102.50	143.27	147.25	142.35	111.60	138.97	142.51	140.04	111.39
96.70	92.81	75.39	74.08	87.80	79.59	73.16	84.28	113.17	105.61	97.74	103.88	116.40

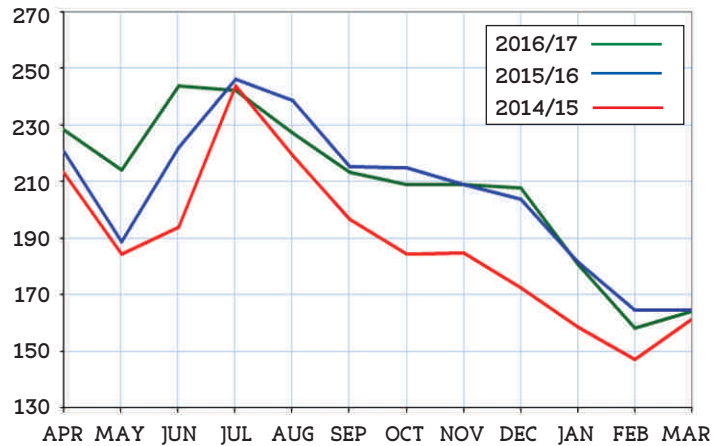
**NORTH INDIA - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	148.97	151.67	-2.70	157.14
MAY	138.97	143.27	-4.30	155.30
JUN	150.95	146.10	4.85	166.44
JUL	152.19	148.33	3.86	162.77
AUG	142.51	147.25	-4.74	144.86
SEP	139.68	143.79	-4.11	137.83
OCT	139.54	135.36	4.18	137.12
NOV	140.04	142.35	-2.31	140.98
DEC	133.84	137.32	-3.48	136.48
JAN	123.59	125.20	-1.61	123.96
FEB	111.39	111.60	-0.21	102.50
MAR	107.23	115.59	-8.36	89.19
April / Mar	136.47	139.10	-2.63	138.30



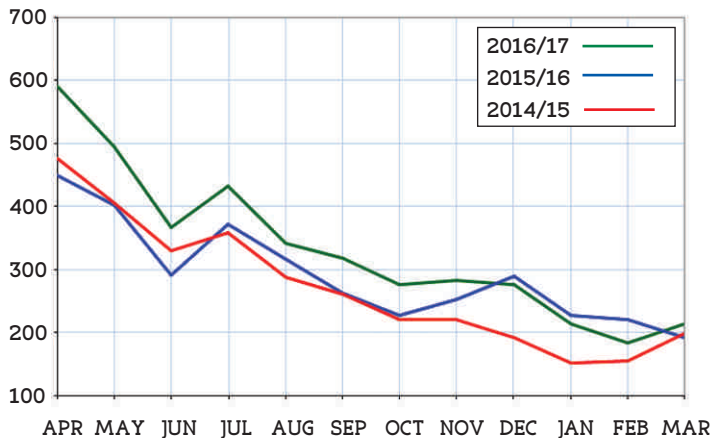
**NORTH INDIA - ORTHODOX LEAF AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	228.44	221.02	7.42	213.53
MAY	214.30	188.85	25.45	184.65
JUN	244.11	222.05	22.06	193.93
JUL	242.49	246.26	-3.77	243.90
AUG	227.28	238.89	-11.61	219.32
SEP	213.57	215.42	-1.85	196.93
OCT	208.88	214.98	-6.10	184.51
NOV	209.18	209.21	-0.03	184.79
DEC	207.88	204.01	3.87	172.56
JAN	180.89	181.89	-1.00	158.60
FEB	158.28	164.81	-6.53	147.08
MAR	164.26	164.47	-0.21	161.28
April / Mar	211.37	216.72	-5.34	197.04



**DARJEELING LEAF AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.**

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	590.86	448.21	142.65	476.10
MAY	494.77	402.07	92.70	404.96
JUN	365.94	290.77	75.17	329.51
JUL	433.05	371.67	61.38	359.10
AUG	342.15	316.55	25.60	287.38
SEP	318.20	262.13	56.07	261.10
OCT	275.47	227.05	48.42	220.32
NOV	282.43	252.67	29.76	220.20
DEC	275.30	289.31	-14.01	191.96
JAN	214.02	226.83	-12.81	151.44
FEB	183.92	220.92	-37.00	154.83
MAR	214.14	192.58	21.56	198.59
April / Mar	328.35	291.77	36.58	264.54



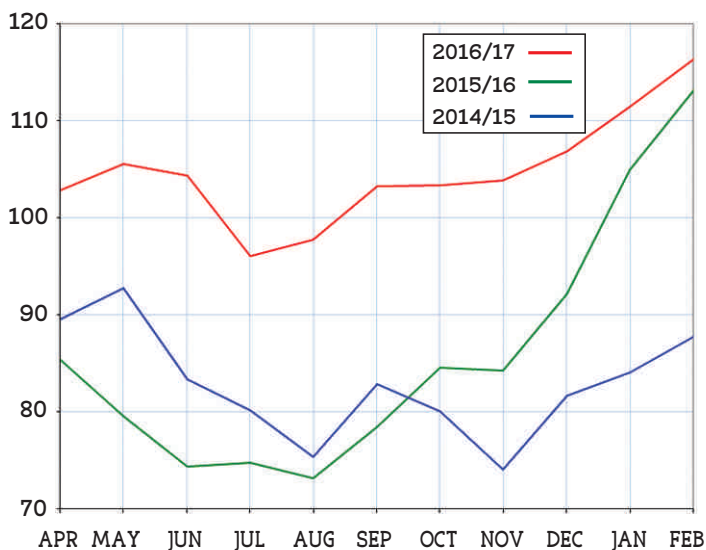




## SOUTH INDIA - CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGE IN Rs.

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	102.89	85.40	17.49	89.57
MAY	105.61	79.59	26.02	92.81
JUN	104.33	74.36	29.97	83.43
JUL	96.07	74.82	21.25	80.17
AUG	97.74	73.16	24.58	75.39
SEP	103.27	78.47	24.80	82.85
OCT	103.32	84.55	18.77	80.08
NOV	103.88	84.28	19.60	74.08
DEC	106.87	92.14	14.73	81.66
JAN	111.46	104.99	6.47	84.06
FEB	116.40	113.17	3.23	87.80
MAR	119.46	101.77	17.70	87.90
April/ Mar	105.53	86.01	19.52	82.91

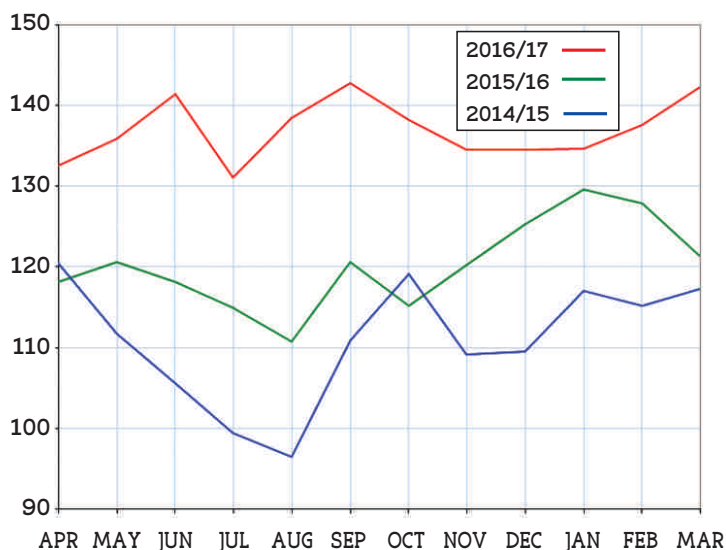
**CTC LEAF & ALL DUST S.I. AUCTION AVERAGE**



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

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	132.67	118.18	14.49	120.53
MAY	136.00	120.68	15.32	111.84
JUN	141.53	118.26	23.27	105.70
JUL	131.16	115.01	16.14	99.53
AUG	138.48	110.87	27.61	96.47
SEP	142.84	120.67	22.16	110.88
OCT	138.25	115.28	22.97	119.20
NOV	134.53	120.26	14.27	109.17
DEC	134.57	125.37	9.20	109.63
JAN	134.68	129.68	5.00	117.08
FEB	137.66	127.97	9.69	115.28
MAR	142.41	121.41	21.00	117.35
April/ Mar	137.22	120.18	17.04	109.80

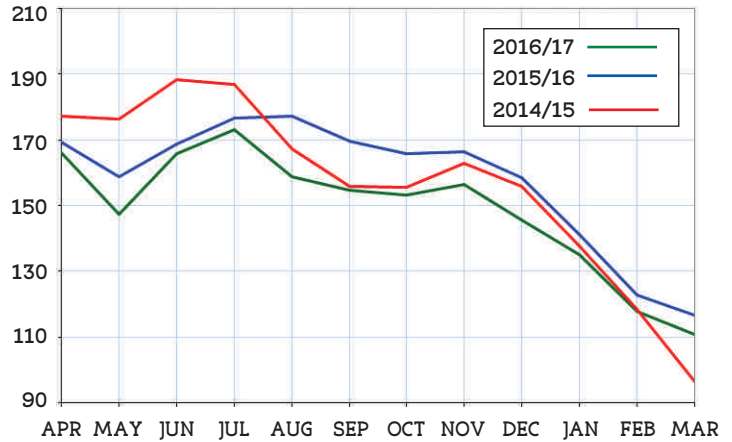
**ORTHODOX LEAF S.I. AUCTION AVERAGE**



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

**Organised Sector**

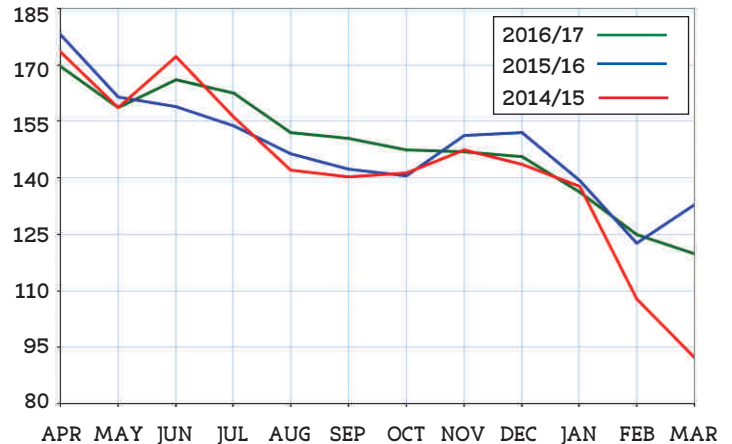
Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	166.08	169.55	-3.47	177.31
MAY	147.59	158.74	-11.15	176.46
JUN	166.00	168.72	-2.72	188.54
JUL	173.07	176.64	-3.57	186.97
AUG	158.86	177.33	-18.46	167.26
SEP	154.72	169.74	-15.02	155.98
OCT	153.25	166.02	-12.76	155.72
NOV	156.65	166.47	-9.82	163.09
DEC	145.68	158.53	-12.85	156.07
JAN	135.03	141.30	-6.27	137.88
FEB	117.97	122.77	-4.80	118.52
MAR	110.89	116.77	-5.88	96.62
April / Mar	149.42	162.69	-13.27	157.72



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

**Organised Sector**

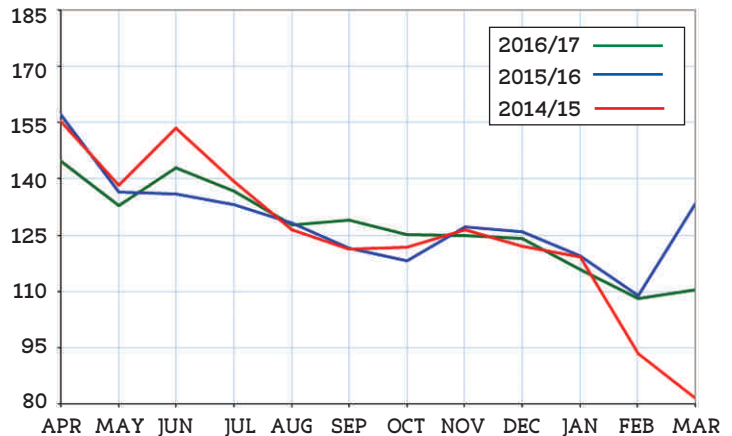
Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	169.69	177.97	-8.29	173.35
MAY	158.62	161.40	-2.78	158.62
JUN	166.07	158.89	7.18	172.07
JUL	162.57	153.75	8.83	156.08
AUG	151.95	146.43	5.52	142.11
SEP	150.45	142.29	8.16	140.17
OCT	147.53	140.54	6.99	141.26
NOV	146.87	151.14	-4.27	147.48
DEC	145.75	151.93	-6.18	143.50
JAN	136.16	139.32	-3.16	137.80
FEB	125.03	122.66	2.37	107.80
MAR	119.97	132.98	-13.01	92.25
April / Mar	148.61	148.30	0.31	142.77



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

**Organised Sector**

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	144.82	157.09	-12.27	155.22
MAY	132.85	136.50	-3.65	138.32
JUN	142.86	135.93	6.94	153.46
JUL	136.76	133.00	3.76	139.26
AUG	127.59	128.21	-0.62	126.51
SEP	129.08	121.64	7.44	121.29
OCT	125.15	118.26	6.90	121.72
NOV	124.98	127.32	-2.34	126.36
DEC	124.12	125.96	-1.84	121.94
JAN	115.88	119.53	-3.65	119.25
FEB	108.14	108.90	-0.76	93.48
MAR	110.53	133.40	-22.87	81.52
April / Mar	126.76	126.99	-0.23	124.22





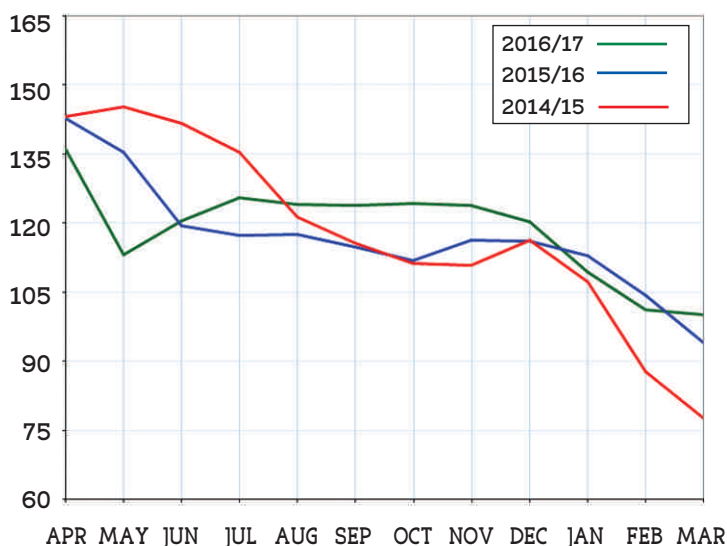


## NORTH INDIA - CACHAR – CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

### Organised Sector

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	135.95	142.79	-6.84	143.19
MAY	113.14	135.41	-22.27	145.34
JUN	120.46	119.42	1.05	141.79
JUL	125.50	117.20	8.30	135.45
AUG	124.06	117.52	6.54	121.34
SEP	123.92	114.78	9.14	115.69
OCT	124.19	111.80	12.39	111.17
NOV	123.89	116.34	7.55	110.78
DEC	120.24	116.06	4.18	116.26
JAN	109.25	112.97	-3.72	107.30
FEB	101.08	104.36	-3.28	87.62
MAR	100.12	94.07	6.05	77.48
April / Mar	117.74	114.83	2.91	114.66

**CACHAR ORGANISED SECTOR  
CTC LEAF & ALL DUST**

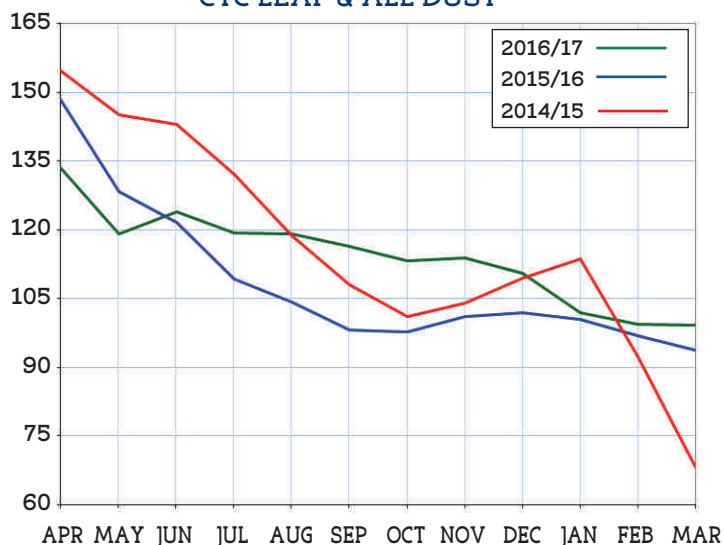


## NORTH INDIA - TRIPURA – CTC LEAF & ALL DUST AUCTION AVERAGES IN Rs.

### Organised Sector

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	133.67	148.51	-14.84	154.84
MAY	119.05	128.25	-9.20	145.16
JUN	123.99	121.65	2.34	142.93
JUL	119.28	109.26	10.01	132.10
AUG	119.04	104.21	14.84	118.67
SEP	116.38	98.19	18.19	108.08
OCT	113.14	97.64	15.50	101.00
NOV	113.81	100.99	12.82	104.03
DEC	110.47	101.82	8.65	109.38
JAN	102.00	100.45	1.55	113.55
FEB	99.40	96.89	2.51	92.17
MAR	99.25	93.78	5.47	68.14
April / Mar	113.69	103.27	10.42	112.58

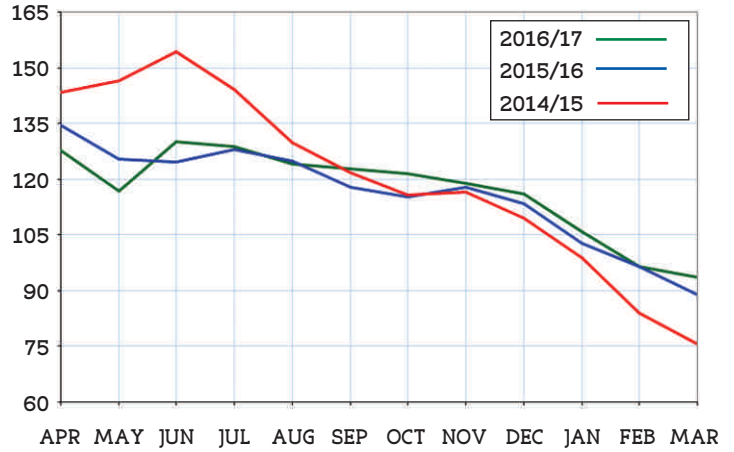
**TRIPURA ORGANISED SECTOR  
CTC LEAF & ALL DUST**



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

**BLF**

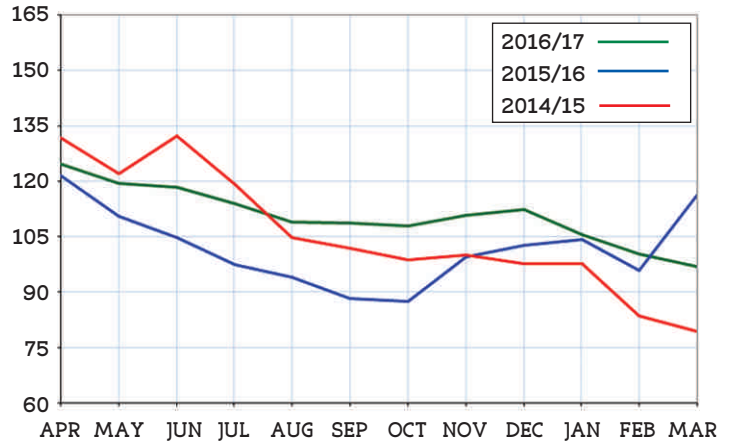
Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	127.77	134.61	-6.84	143.44
MAY	116.82	125.58	-8.76	146.71
JUN	130.21	124.82	5.39	154.38
JUL	128.88	128.14	0.74	144.19
AUG	124.30	124.85	-0.55	130.00
SEP	122.90	118.03	4.87	121.78
OCT	121.46	115.30	6.16	115.79
NOV	119.06	117.92	1.14	116.73
DEC	116.09	113.46	2.63	109.70
JAN	105.85	102.75	3.10	99.01
FEB	96.50	96.46	0.04	84.01
MAR	93.81	89.04	4.77	75.58
April / Mar	<b>118.35</b>	<b>116.61</b>	<b>1.74</b>	<b>118.32</b>



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

**BLF**

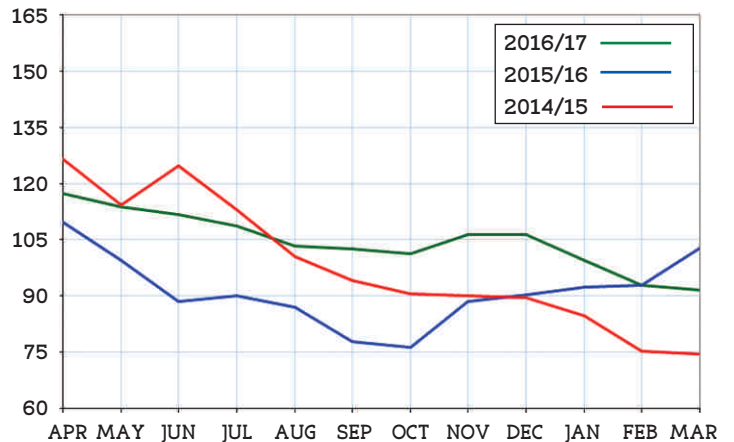
Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	124.59	121.51	3.09	131.66
MAY	119.45	110.36	9.09	122.09
JUN	118.43	104.71	13.72	132.23
JUL	113.84	97.45	16.39	119.18
AUG	108.91	93.98	14.93	104.75
SEP	108.61	88.13	20.48	101.82
OCT	107.86	87.38	20.48	98.63
NOV	110.77	99.44	11.33	100.02
DEC	112.28	102.61	9.67	97.67
JAN	105.50	104.05	1.45	97.73
FEB	100.29	95.86	4.43	83.54
MAR	96.84	116.11	-19.27	79.17
April / Mar	<b>109.95</b>	<b>99.20</b>	<b>10.75</b>	<b>104.53</b>



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

**BLF**

Months	2016/17	2015/16	+/-	2014/15
APR	117.47	109.71	7.76	126.44
MAY	113.69	99.46	14.23	114.27
JUN	111.77	88.57	23.20	124.82
JUL	108.62	90.20	18.42	113.14
AUG	103.34	87.19	16.16	100.63
SEP	102.58	78.01	24.57	94.13
OCT	101.43	76.29	25.13	90.58
NOV	106.53	88.68	17.84	90.09
DEC	106.48	90.45	16.03	89.50
JAN	99.55	92.49	7.06	84.87
FEB	92.85	93.01	-0.16	75.44
MAR	91.59	102.79	-11.21	74.66
April / Mar	<b>103.99</b>	<b>88.86</b>	<b>15.13</b>	<b>96.59</b>







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

Sector: Organised (CTC + All Dust)

*(for new season teas only)*

DISTRICT	2016-17	2015-16	Difference
ARUNACHAL	146.15	155.18	-9.03
MEGHALAYA	111.73	114.52	-2.79
ASSAM	149.42	160.27	-10.85
BARPETA	124.45	129.94	-5.49
DARRANG	153.91	166.33	-12.42
DIBRUGARH	145.29	155.29	-10.00
GOLAGHAT	147.05	164.73	-17.68
JORHAT	156.25	170.72	-14.47
KAMRUP	146.74	163.51	-16.77
KARBI-ANGLON	124.29	140.23	-15.94
KOKRAJHAR	141.19	141.08	0.11
LAKHIMPUR	176.52	199.67	-23.15
NAGAON	148.41	153.39	-4.98
NALBARI	183.62	204.95	-21.33
SIBSAGAR	158.34	174.77	-16.43
SONITPUR	151.00	160.82	-9.82
TINSUKIA	137.05	140.22	-3.17
CACHAR	117.74	113.51	4.23
DOOARS & TERAJ	141.67	139.92	1.75
DOOARS	148.61	146.74	1.87
TERAI	126.76	125.55	1.20
SIKKIM	213.08	192.45	20.63
TRIPURA	113.69	102.30	11.40

Sector: Bought Leaf (CTC + All Dust)

*(for new season teas only)*

DISTRICT	2016-17	2015-16	Difference
ARUNACHAL	105.16	84.03	21.13
MEGHALAYA	114.01	114.42	-0.41
BIHAR	98.60	76.04	22.56
ASSAM	118.35	115.74	2.61
DARRANG	130.23	129.63	0.60
DIBRUGARH	122.39	121.58	0.81
GOALPARA	118.05	122.64	-4.59
GOLAGHAT	122.79	118.60	4.18
JORHAT	115.82	121.17	-5.35
KARBI-ANGLON	116.66	122.76	-6.10
NAGAON	133.85	113.97	19.89
SIBSAGAR	120.94	113.08	7.86
SONITPUR	119.16	119.88	-0.72
TINSUKIA	112.02	105.90	6.11
CACHAR	113.20	111.67	1.52
DOOARS & TERAJ	107.00	93.33	13.68
DOOARS	109.95	98.59	11.36
TERAI	103.99	88.38	15.61





## Price Slab analysis [April 2016 to March 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	100	37	24	18	14	9	8	25	235
Medium Brokens	67	22	13	13	10	8	7	22	163
Smaller Brokens	141	49	30	29	24	21	18	54	366
Fannings	118	47	24	19	16	14	12	23	274
Dust	110	64	55	55	48	43	42	62	480
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>537</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>1518</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	271	17	9	5	3	1	1	1	308
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>808</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>1827</b>
<b>% (2016-17)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2015-16)</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100</b>

NI - Dooars & 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	41	8	4	2	1	1	0	0	57
Medium Brokens	64	18	14	15	12	6	2	2	133
Smaller Brokens	115	37	28	32	37	29	22	22	323
Fannings	62	19	11	17	15	10	7	6	149
Dust	50	14	11	8	4	2	1	1	92
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>753</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	133	13	7	5	3	1	0	0	164
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>917</b>
<b>% (2016-17)</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2015-16)</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</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	28	15	11	4	2	1	0	0	61
Medium Brokens	21	22	21	11	5	2	1	1	84
Smaller Brokens	22	31	25	14	7	4	2	2	106
Fannings	14	18	13	7	4	2	1	1	59
Dust	15	24	26	13	6	3	2	3	92
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>402</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	47	16	3	1	0	0	0	0	67
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>468</b>
<b>% (2016-17)</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2015-16)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>100</b>

NI - Dooars & 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	32	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	36
Medium Brokens	82	21	6	2	1	1	1	0	113
Smaller Brokens	141	47	16	7	3	2	1	4	221
Fannings	48	24	8	3	1	1	1	2	88
Dust	19	9	4	1	1	0	0	0	33
<b>Primary Total</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>492</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>
Secondaries	44	5	1	0	0	0	0	0	52
<b>G.Total</b>	<b>365</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>544</b>
<b>% (2016-17)</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>% (2015-16)</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>

Compiled by Soumen Bagchi






# Artist's Muse

Tea, the golden brew, has inspired many authors and artists down the ages

Tea Board of India once ran an advertising campaign with Bengali poetry and matching sketches that has remained as a treasure in their archives



আগভোম বাগভোম ঘোভোভোম সাজে  
ঘাগর মেঘর বাদি বাজে  
বাজতে বাজতে চলল ঢুলী  
ঢুলী গেলে সেই কমলাপুলি  
কমলাপুলির টিহুটা  
সে-ও বলেল খাবো চা

**চা**

ঊনসের আনন্দময়ের মিনে অপরিহার্য পানীয়

© ১৯৬৬  
কোমলা টি বোর্ড কর্তৃক সঞ্চিত




ভ্রম ভ্রমা ভ্রম ভ্রমা ভ্রম বিসম্ব বাদি বাজে  
টানবর বেটা হাটিলবর বিলম্বর সাজ সাজে  
পালকি চলে গাড়ি চলে চলে হুটি ঘোড়া  
যত জানো তানো ভেল্ল ভেল্লী শুল্লের জোড়া  
বর দেখতে ছুটি এলো পাজাপড়শী যত  
বরবাসী শ্রুশি পেয়ে লা-টি মালবর মত

**চা**

বিষয়টির সামাজিক অনুষ্ঠানে অপরিহার্য অঙ্গ

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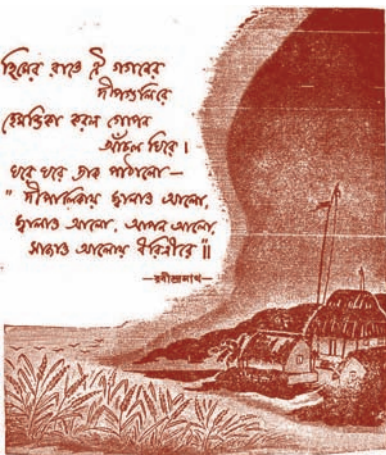


আগরে আর ফেলব পালে মাছ ধরতে যাই  
মাছের ঠিকটা পাল্পে ফুটিলো দোলায় চেলন যাই  
দোলায় আচ্ছ ছপন কড়ি ওপতে ওপতে যাই  
কড় শীঘ্রাটি ছোট শীঘ্রাটি ব্রহ্মর ব্রহ্মর ববু  
তিন পেয়ালো চা যাই আর জন হাঁচিটা বহু

**চা**

খেলা হুগার মাছধরা, মাছফোন প্রভৃতি  
অন্যে-অন্যেতে নিজে ফলি

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হিরে হাত টি গগনরে  
সীমালিখে  
ফেরিফে ফেমে গোপন  
হাঁটল চিরে।  
ধূত ধূত চির পানপরে—  
"সীমালিখের ফলও জানে,  
ফলও জানে, ফলও জানে,  
সহস্র জানেই বিস্ময়" ॥

—স্বীকৃতশাখ—

পশুদের বিভিন্ন উপসং-বুদ্ধি-উপদে  
রকে রসে মধুর করে তোলে

**চা**

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## Tiger Tea




আকাশ জুড়ে মেঘ করলে সূর্যি গেলে পাটে  
ধূত গেল জল তালতে পঙ্কদীঘির চ্যুটে  
পঙ্কদীঘির কালো জলে হলেক বুকম ফুলে  
তুলতে নিলু বিস্তি এল ডিজল পুকুর ছলে  
চলে ডিজলে পুকুরমির চকু ছলে ছলে  
জাই নেধে মা চা বহাতে চড়িলে দিলে জলে

**চা**

বিষয় বহির অপরিহার্য পানীয়

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ART



# Tea for TUMPA



## A story that made Amit Kumar Bose ponder

Not too long ago I would have balked if someone told me that tea companies must find a larger purpose to exist: Like funding, sponsoring or even mentoring initiatives that supported or protected women.

The only relationship I could see between women and tea is that the former ended up making and serving the finest cuppa, many more times than their male counterparts, in most Indian homes. Period.

There seemed to be no need to go beyond acknowledging that.

Until one evening, while sipping a cup of *lebu cha* in Mashi's tea stall at Deshapriya Park, I overheard Tumpa's story...

It was school as usual for 16 year-old Tumpa, the day after *Poila Boishakh*.

She packed her books, had her bath, tucked into a hurried meal under the watchful eyes of her ma...and left home.

Nothing unusual. Except that on that fateful day Tumpa did not reach school.

Instead of attending classes, she attended a wedding. Her own.

Hours after school, Tumpa's anguished parents would discover that she was 'picked up' on the way to school and 'married' to a 19 year-old boy from the neighbourhood, with the active support of his father!

A few days later, much to the amazement of her severely traumatised parents, Tumpa



returned home.

Amidst choking sobs and hysteria, she told her parents a horrifying tale of torture – physical and emotional by her 'husband' and 'in-laws'. Among others, they wanted her to bring marriage dowry from her parents, discontinue her studies and perform domestic chores.

A beaten Tumpa told her mother "I don't want to go back. I want to stay with you."

A couple of days go by... Then something amazing happens.

Tumpa returns to her 'husband' and in-laws' house. Once again, in the same way...

On her way to school...Missing!

This time, her parents repeatedly try to get in touch with her. Then the boy. Then the boy's father.

They draw a complete blank. The boy's father goes to the extent of expressing complete ignorance about the whole matter.

Tumpa's father now decides to file a general diary at the main Police Station. In it, the parents write to express their absolute non-

acceptance of this marriage, questioning its legal status. Between the lines, lie their humiliation and anger.

Ten days pass and nothing is heard as an outcome of the general diary.

Tumpa's parents become desperate. Their sense of utter helplessness forces them to seek the help of a leading NGO.

The very next day, the NGO's representatives meet the Officer-in-Charge (OC) of the *thana*...

"So what finally happened to Tumpa?" I ask the narrator in haste.

"Tumpa is now living happily with her parent's like before" he replied. I heave a sigh of relief. "She continues to pursue her studies with the hope that one day soon; she can pursue a fulfilling career."

Now I don't find it incongruous any more when I see some tea companies sponsor initiatives or organisations dedicated to fighting for the empowerment of women.

I see a certain destined justice.

Who makes the best tea at home after all? Let tea do the best by them.





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