

CONTEMPORARY

TEA TIME

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TEA JOURNAL WITH THE LARGEST READERSHIP | 29th YEAR OF PUBLICATION

A young girl with dark hair and a nose ring is the central focus. She is wearing a vibrant, multi-colored traditional Indian outfit with intricate patterns and multiple bangles on her wrists. She is holding a white plate with a light brown liquid (tea) on it, and she is drinking from it. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Health Benefits of Tea for Children



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TEA QUIZZY



By **Errol O'Brien**

QUESTIONS

1. What risk do people drinking repeatedly Hot Tea at 65 degrees Centigrade incur
2. When tea is harvested only the top two inches are plucked. What are these called
3. Name the oldest brand of tea in Pakistan created in 1947 portrayed on TV with Wing Commander Abhinandan on video with satisfying remark: Tea is Good
4. Which Tea Company has launched Tea Bags filled with inert nitrogen gas that preserves the flavour of the Tea
5. What was significant of the day June 21, 2016 in the tea Auction Rooms
6. The Indian Tea Association together with the Netherlands based Company, Solidaridad Asia has launched which company to provide a three year long project to Small Tea Growers in India advising them to improve agronomical, social and environmental practices
7. Besides all the visual and tasting qualities of a tea what are the most important attributes that a buyer/ blender seeks
8. The expression 'Silky' is found on the labels of Cadbury Dairy Milk Chocolates. What does it connote on Green Teas
9. The name of which Darjeeling Tea Estate comes from the Lepcha word that means "Bamboo Water Carrier"
10. Which UK Tea Company markets a Brand called Teapigs



Answer: 1) Swallowing repeatedly hot cups of tea at this temperature will incur a carcinogenic effect in the throat 2) Flushes 3) Tapal 4) Teabo 5) It was The Sound of Silence. The gavel did not knock anymore for all varieties of Tea: Orthodox, CTC, Darjeelings and Dust. Auctions went online on a pan India basis 6) Trinitea 7) Shell life which does not come from the field but from the drying process in manufacture 8) a smooth and soft texture 9) Balasun 10) Tesco



From the Publisher |



Surely, unless we as a nation start drinking those extra couple of cups each day, at least 50% of our tea producers will be facing the grim reality of survival. In an age of abundance, this is a sorry state. While the tomato farmer is being marginalised the sauce makers brands their profits, and sadly tea is no different. Labouring under a misconception that tea is bad for children, a recent market survey by the Tea Board concluded that children in India under the age of 12 consume no tea. But flavoured aerated caffeinated and sugared liquids are acceptable. All because they occupy a much largershare in the mind. Generic promotion must begin here.

Darjeeling the champagne of teas is reeling under the onslaught of indifferent weather, and is losing global market shares to similar flavoured teas growing on the western slope of the *SIMANA* running along the Mirik –Sukhia, spur. These are marketed as Himalayans. Has the GI, which was initiated for a boom, delivered doom? We discuss this in the next issue.

FSSAI and PPC parameters are being rigidly implemented now, which is welcome as consciousness about the residues of pesticides, weedicides and insecticides and their effect on reducing soil productivity is being experienced by the growers.

A Nandkeolyar

FSSAI and PPC parameters are being rigidly implemented now, which is welcome as consciousness about the residues of pesticides, weedicides and insecticides and their effect on reducing soil productivity is being experienced by the growers.





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Health Benefits of Tea for Children

It is worth to be mentioned, that a small percentage (3%) of preschools declared offering of so-called milk tea. Such milk tea was a popular beverage in Poland in the past years when cocoa and coffee were difficult to purchase. The drink formula for children includes a large proportion of milk in ready-to-drink beverage. Adding milk to tea is a beneficial practice as it can enhance iron absorption (16%). However, it is definitely an unfavourable practice to sweetened these type of beverages: in three out of four preschools such practices were noted.

Dispelling the myths

Drinking tea causes dehydration	FALSE	Tea is an important source of fluids and does not cause dehydration in regularly consumed amounts. Independent scientists have placed tea second only to water as the best hydration fluid and recommend up to 2 litres of tea per day.
Tea contains the same amount of caffeine as coffee.	FALSE	Tea typically contains less than half the caffeine per cup compared to coffee.



Tea and caffeine

There is a great deal of consumer confusion surrounding caffeine and tea. Caffeine is an alkaloid that can be found in varying quantities in coffee, tea, chocolate and cola based drinks. However, the level of caffeine in tea depends on many factors, including the type of tea, brewing time, quantity of tea leaves used and the size of tea leaves. A typical cup of tea contains approximately half the caffeine of a typical cup of instant coffee.

Beverage	Caffeine content
Instant coffee	75mg/190ml cup
Brewed coffee (filtered or percolated)	10-115mg/190ml cup
Decaffeinated coffee	4mg/190ml cup
Tea	50mg/190ml cup
Cola drinks	11-70mg/330ml can
Hot chocolate	1.1-8.2mg/200ml serving
Energy drinks (with added caffeine or guarana)	28-87mg/250ml serving



Tea and hydration

Independent scientists agree that tea is an excellent hydration fluid. A healthy adult should aim to consume a daily intake of 2.2 to 2.5 litres of fluid every day. It is a common myth that tea acts as a diuretic because of its caffeine content and may therefore compromise hydration. Large amounts of caffeine taken in one sitting (i.e.250-500mg) can increase urine output and increase the risk of dehydration, however this has not been seen when caffeinated drinks are consumed. Review of the literature highlights that:

- Only water surpasses tea as the healthiest hydration fluid. A recent clinical study showed that 4 cups of tea per day are equally hydrating to an equivalent amount of tap water.
- Tea is hydrating – not dehydrating. The levels of caffeine in tea will not dehydrate individuals and it is recommended to consume up to two litres of tea per day. A tolerance to caffeine develops so any initial diuretic effect seen is diminished in people who regularly drink tea.
- Hydration is fundamental to a number of physical and mental performances – concentration, alertness, memory, speed and sports performance.



HEALTH BENEFITS OF TEA

1. Tea revitalises both mind and body

Students have shown consuming a few cups of tea during the day helped to sustain alertness. More recent studies have linked regular tea drinking, at around 4 servings daily, with reduced stress and increased relaxation, or an enhanced ability to focus attention. Ruxton (2008) found that moderate caffeine intakes of 38mg to 400mg/day, the equivalent intakes of one to eight cups of tea, appeared to deliver the benefits of improved mood and mental performance without adversely affecting sleep quality. Other studies have also shown that moderate intake of caffeine can improve physical performance. Taken together with data

above showing tea to be a good source of hydration, this evidence supports tea's ability to revitalize both mind and body.

2. Diabetes

A new area of research has seen some studies linking tea consumption with a reduced risk of type 2 diabetes. In a large-scale Chinese survey, drinking one or more cups of tea per day was associated with a 14% reduction in diabetes risk. This was confirmed by two meta-analyses. It is thought that tea flavonoids could support normal glucose metabolism by lowering inflammation and by promoting insulin activity but further human studies are needed before drawing any conclusions.

3. Cancer prevention

Laboratory tests generally show that tea flavonoids stimulate normal cell turnover and inhibit tumour development. While these actions would be expected to help cancer prevention or management in the long-term, evidence from human trials is lacking. Some surveys have reported a lower risk of colon cancer in regular tea drinkers, but the results are inconsistent. Until further research is done, no firm conclusions can be drawn about cancer prevention properties of tea.



Sir John Everett Millais, *Afternoon Tea (The Gossips)*, 1889, oil on canvas. The painting depicts three children engrossed in the rituals of a tea-party picnic. Millais disconcertingly overlays childhood innocence with a sense of the more complex personal and social preoccupations of the adult women whose world these girls unconsciously imitate. A miniature willow-pattern tea service and plates of ripe summer fruits complete the scene.

HRH Prince Charles India Connection



Historically, the Earl's Court Exhibition Centre has been the chosen venue for Indian tea since it first arrived from Assam in 1837. Its fifty-year Jubilee, which coincided with Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, was celebrated at this Exhibition Centre with great pomp as an icon of British imperialism.

In 1978 at the Earl's Court Exhibition Prince Charles

inaugurated the F & B Exhibition Centre. Sniffing the aroma of the tea, then on the boil, the Prince enquired if it was cardamom tea.

The lady Demonstrator informed him that the aroma was not of cardamom, but of a special Malaysian spice which, she added, perhaps his Royal Highness may not be familiar with. Prince Charles's curiosity aroused, he simply said: Test me.

Charles raised the cup to his lips, sniffed the tea and put the cup down on the counter saying "I know what the spice is". Saying that, he pulled out a small silver phial from his jacket pocket, opened its lid to display the clove buds nestling in it.

Courtesy 'Club life' Jan 2019

Contributed By Lal Raisinghani

TATA GLOBAL BEVERAGES

had an interaction with Tea Producers & Brokers in June 2019 to discuss about Food Safety.

What is Food Safety?

- A food which is free from any contaminant (Physical, Chemical or Biological) can be termed as a safe food.
- How will you react when (say) you get a FLY in your SOUP

Food can be contaminated by the following three main hazard types:

- Physical hazards (foreign objects) – metal, wood, glass, plastic, etc.
- Chemical hazards – bleach, caustic soda, detergents, pesticides, etc.
- Microbiological – bacteria, viruses, moulds and parasites.

Food that is contaminated with any of these hazards is unsafe and unsuitable to eat.





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Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet

Special segment dedicated to 'Women Entrepreneurship'



Bharat Arya, Prabhat Bezbaroooh, Arun Kumar Ray (L-R) at 'Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet' at Kolkata on 25th April 2019



Shri Arun Kumar Ray, Deputy Chairman, Tea Board, giving the welcome address at the 'Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet' at Kolkata on 25th April 2019



Tea Board India organized a 'Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet' at Kolkata on 25th April 2019.

Young successful entrepreneurs of the Industry attended the conference to deliberate on pertinent topics and give insights into the recent facets of the Indian Tea Industry.

In his welcome address, Shri Arun Kumar Ray, IPS, Deputy Chairman, Tea Board, thanked the Tea industry for showing overwhelming response towards participation and asserted that the industry has to look forward to the future with certitude as there is no place for retrograde steps.

Distinguished and successful tea entrepreneurs such as Shri Amuleek Singh Bijral, Founder & CEO of Chai Point, Shri Kaushal Dugar, Founder & CEO of Teabox, Shri Udit Gupta, Head of Supply Chain Management, Chaayos etc. spoke at the meeting.

A special segment dedicated to 'Women Entrepreneurship in the Tea Business' was also the highlight of the meeting, where speakers such as Dr. Nazrana Ahmed, Chairperson of the Assam Tea Planters Association, Mrs. Husna Tara Praksah, co-owner of Glenburn Tea Estate, Mrs. Rakhi Dutta Saikia, Director of Arin Tea Pvt. Ltd. & Pabhojan Tea Estate etc. spoke on pertinent issues.



Inauguration of the 'Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet' at Kolkata on 25th April 2019: A Tea Garden Shaped Cake

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Tweet OF THE DAY

ROBERT T. KIYOSAKI
@THEREALKIYOSAKI
At the end of the day, there's no "right" way to entrepreneurship success. There's only your way, whoever you are. #richdad





The women panelists at the 'Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet' at Kolkata on 25th April 2019



Dr. Nazrana Ahmed, Chairperson of the Assam Tea Planters Association



Smt. Rakhi Dutta Saikia, Director of Arin Tea Pvt. Ltd. & Pabhojan Tea Estate



Smt. Husna Tara Praksah, co-owner of Glenburn Tea Estate



Ms. Chetna Agarwal, owner of the brand Sache Wellness Pvt. Ltd



Meghna Chettri, Executive Assistant to the Director of the brand Chai Chun

Shri Amuleek Singh Bijral, Founder & CEO of Chai Point, stated that getting good quality teas from the gardens is very important for sustaining the end business. Customers are increasingly becoming conscious about the teas, its origins and its health benefits. Therefore, traceability and MRL compliance are very important.

Shri Kaushal Dugar, Founder & CEO of Teabox, stated that the image of Indian tea has to be reinforced as a global brand. He opined that the true potential of Indian teas is still lying untapped. Setting up stores is an expensive proposition but marketing through internet is very much affordable, he said.

Dr. Nazrana Ahmed highlighted that more than 60% of the workforce employed in tea gardens consist of women, and therefore there is a greater need to emphasise on issues related to women's health and welfare. Mrs. Husna Tara Praksah, co-owner of Glenburn Tea Estate, recounted her journey of setting up a successful business model of offering visitors a highly personalized experience of stay at the Glenburn Tea Estate. Mrs. Rakhi Dutta Saikia, Director of Arin Tea Pvt. Ltd. & Pabhojan Tea Estate, emphasized on the need to go for production of organic handmade teas and stated that the future of the tea industry lies in going for organic production.



Shri Kaushal Dugar, Founder & CEO of Teabox



Shri Ketan Patel of Jalinga Tea



Shri Udit Gupta of Chaayos



Shri Amuleek Singh Bijral, Founder & CEO of Chai Point



The impressive gathering at the 'Young Tea Entrepreneurs Meet' at Kolkata on 25th April 2019



Integrated Weed Management

(Ideal for Plantations -Tea, coffee, rubber, palm oil, cocoa, spices, mangoes)



by **Harki Sidhu**

Consulting Program Coordinator India
Sustainable Landscapes & Livelihoods,
Sustainable Agriculture Division
Rainforest Alliance

Labour shortage is a big issue for the plantations (specially tea sector across many countries) that is getting more acute with each passing year. Catchment and migrant labour is both scarce and expensive. This is leading to excessive use of herbicides, especially in the last 3 decades, affecting sustainability of the sector. It has led to degradation of soils :-

1. Loss of vegetative cover (in and around the estates) and loss of bio-diversity.
2. Compaction of soils that increases run-off and thus soil wash, leeching and reduced ground water recharge.
3. Formation of soil algae on bare soils that, in dry periods, peels-off, exposing topsoil that is susceptible to erosion by rain & wind. (see photograph #1)
4. Effect on living organisms in soils (include archaea, bacteria, actinomycetes, fungi, algae, protozoa, and a wide variety of larger soil fauna - springtails, mites, nematodes, earthworms, ants, insects, burrowing rodents...) is devastating.



Photograph #1

This problem has contributed greatly to the decline in land productivity, threatening the industry's viability. In *Integrated Weed Management (IWM)* Rainforest Alliance trains farmers to manage a shift of the weed flora from the "noxious" to the "softer".

This shift to more acceptable weed flora crowds out the spread of noxious weeds, thus bringing down the use of herbicides, preserving & enriching the soil, increasing the soil organic carbon, increasing ground water recharge, improving fertilizer use efficiency, ... and managing weeds. They are trained and shown that this paranoia of 'weed-free fields' is created more by interested parties who want to sell more herbicides. It only increases the farmers cost and slowly degrades his soils; then it is all down-hill. When there is a tremendous shortage of workers the herbicides can be used for 'spot spraying' the noxious weeds, thus giving more room for the softer weeds to grow. The aim is to maintain weed populations at manageable levels, where they don't compete much for nutrition, however, recognizing the value of weeds in providing food and habitats for a range of beneficial organisms & their contribution to soil health.

The composition of weed communities should be shifted toward less aggressive, easier-to-manage species. Weed species differ in the amount of damage they inflict on crops and the degree of difficulty they impose on crop management and harvesting activities. Consequently, it is desirable to tip the balance of weed

The aim is to maintain weed populations at manageable levels, where they don't compete much for nutrition, however, recognizing the value of weeds in providing food and habitats for a range of beneficial organisms & their contribution to soil health.



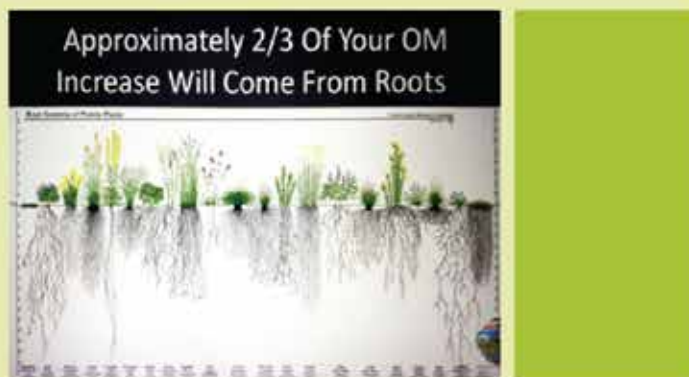


Bare soil under herbicides Tea plantation with natural vegetation

community composition from dominance by noxious species toward a preponderance of species that crops, livestock, and farmers can better tolerate. This can be achieved by selectively and directly suppressing undesirable weed species while manipulating environmental conditions to prevent their re-establishment. This "Selective vegetation management" is particularly well suited to plantation crops like tea, coffee, cocoa, Palm oil, rubber etc.

Rainforest Alliance (RA) recommends letting, organic matter to the soil (photograph #2)

The type of natural vegetation, that can be managed within the production areas, differs from region to region. It is crucial to pick the right ones to proliferate and the noxious ones to reduce, specific to the different climatic conditions of each region. RA experts can help farmers ascertain the best 'weeds' suited to their particular plantation.



Roots contribution to Organic Matter (Photograph #2)



The indiscriminate use of herbicides (and sickling in Organic agriculture) has selected the noxious (& invasive) few weeds that have crowded out the other vegetation. These 'selected' weeds require increased quantities of herbicides & manual labour; ultimately leading to the presence of a couple of weeds that are resistant to all permissible herbicides.

The type of natural vegetation, that can be managed within the production areas, differs from region to region.





An example of huge tracts of land covered by 1 single resistant weed

Rainforest Alliance conducts workshops for the education and training of farmers in plantations across countries (India, Sri Lanka, China, Indonesia) & crops (Tea, coffee, Rubber, Mangoes, Cocoa, Palm Oil).

These workshops have led to a perceptible change in thinking and adoption in the following areas -

- Weed Management
- Re-working on weed flora
- Reduction of Herbicides
- Reduction in pesticides
- Alternate to chemicals
- Focus on Predators
- Soil Conservation
- Organic Matter addition
- Soil Wash Reduction

Best Practices recommended by Rainforest Alliance for Weed Management:

Retain/ proliferate a host of indigenous soft weeds:

- a. Noxious weeds – uproot/sickle before seeding
- b. Soft weeds – wait till they seed
- c. Know your weeds:
 - i. time of flowering/seeding of each of the major weeds.
 - ii. Where are they coming in from & why?
 - iii. Source, reason, deficiency
 - iv. Do any of them attract beneficial?
 - v. What are the critical periods of competition.

Training in Darjeeling



Changing Weed Flora:

1. Collect seeds of softer weeds from around the estate or where ever ...
2. Cheel-hoe between alternate rows of tea (along contours in undulating terrain) to remove the weeds. Pick time ... (not during the monsoons)
3. Make 2 rills in each of these cheel-hoed rows & sow seeds of soft weeds. (seeds could be broad-cast but, sowing preferred).
4. Add some compost in the rills. This helps establish these soft weeds, which get into their own cycle of growth.
5. Then the weeds cheel-hoed can be dusted off the soil attached to any roots & spread over the exposed area.

6. Do a few rounds of weeding to remove any noxious weeds re-appearing. This helps give the soft weeds a start and soon they spread with good management and reduce the space available for noxious weeds to grow.
7. Then you can go ahead with the brush cutter, keeping an eye on the weed flora.



Identifying Invasive species

1. Micania micrantha
2. Eleusine indica (the Indian goosegrass)
3. Ipomoea (Morning Glory)
4. Cascuta japonica
5. Lantana camara
6. Leucaenaleucocephala

While conducting Rainforest Alliance training this system was taken to Sri Lanka in 2012/13. An estate adopted it there (under the GEF project) and their results have been recognised & Dilmah tea company has given them an innovation award for it.

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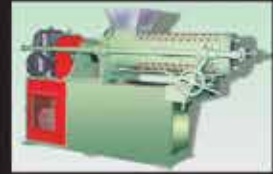
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Extracts of Speech by **Jeroen Douglas**, Global Director, **SOLIDARIDAD** Network at the Indian Tea Trade Dinner

PART I



Jeroen Douglas
Global Director Solidaridad Network

A few words about Solidaridad. We look back with emotion at our small and humble beginning in 1969 at Utrecht and where we have reached today with your incredible support. From a fledgling network of less than a dozen employees some 50 years ago to 600+ employees working in 50 countries around four continents as an impactful organisation. In my view there were two major factors that allowed us to observe, anticipate, innovate and adapt to create products and services that will fulfil needs of different sectors.

First the proposition of Solidaridad is inspired by the concept of a 21st century civil society organization. In essence, this means having a solution-oriented focus. It means not just criticizing everything that is going wrong from the side lines. We as Solidaridad want to take the

role of a partner aiming to work with you towards a more inclusive and sustainable future. Public-private partnerships will be increasingly important for leveraging the change we seek: sustainable market transformation.

Secondly our success is related to our new organizational structures. The process of transition from a more traditional, Western organization for development cooperation, into a network organization based on local vision, knowledge and expertise in all continents of the world.

Building local capacity to supervise our programmes, to design, to manage and to execute the programmes with local staff – our boots on the ground – has differentiated our organisation from many other international organisations. Our world is changing into a multi-polar world, thus ending a long period of Western dominance. Our interconnected network has created an exciting dynamic of cooperation between people from different backgrounds serving the same cause. Walking the talk is our spirit. Achieving results and impact is our goal.



Lightning the lamp by Solidaridad and ITA officials.

Secondly our success is related to our new organizational structures. The process of transition from a more traditional, Western organization for development cooperation, into a network organization based on local vision, knowledge and expertise in all continents of the world.





Mr. Jeroen Douglas speaks on the occasion

Jeroen Douglas has been continuously associated with Solidaridad. He has been a founder or co-founder of several global sustainability initiatives. From leading the implementation of world's first Fair Trade schemes in the 1990's to some of the most significant global sustainability initiatives like BONSUCRO (for sugarcane), Round Table for Responsible Soy (RTRS), and Global Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (GRSB). Being the founder of two major sustainable European businesses like Agro-Fair and Kuyichi International, he has experienced the challenges and the benefits of adopting sustainable practices. The track record of Solidaridad can be described from the 'pyramid of change', reflecting four generations of sustainability labels, over forty years time.

The first generation, developed in the 80s, are consumer labels like 'organic' and 'fair trade'. Solidaridad launched the first fair trade labelling system for coffee in Europe in 1988,

and for bananas in 1996. The drivers behind these markets are conscious consumers, who unfortunately turned out to represent a niche market. Highly relevant as catalyser, but not creating the required scale and speed.

The second generation are so called Corporate Social Responsibility concepts like UTZ Certified or Rainforest Alliance. The drivers behind this second step of innovation are first mover companies, mainly end-consumer companies. The big brands who are vulnerable to public criticism.

The third generation, the so-called sector initiatives - like the commodity Round Tables in Soy and sugarcane - are meant to be adopted as a license to operate in the sector.

The fourth and most recent generation are the so-called domestic standards in producing countries like Brazil, China, India and Indonesia that create local ownership for sustainability in their upcoming consumer markets.

Amongst others there are two fundamental benefits we could observe from the last 30 years of certification-based sustainability movement.

to be continued.....

The fourth and most recent generation are the so-called domestic standards in producing countries like Brazil, China, India and Indonesia that create local ownership for sustainability in their upcoming consumer markets.

Industry |

Introduction of tea into England

THE introduction of tea as a drink into England forms a chapter teeming with high adventure, strange peoples, and intriguing events.

The first printed reference to tea in English, calling it chaa, appeared in 1598 in Linschooten's Travels, an English translation of a work originally published in Holland in 1595-96.

An inventory of the plate and household furnishings in Peel Castle, Isle of Man, dated November 3, 1651, has been quoted as mentioning a "Tea Cupp Gilt." This has been taken by some as indicating that tea was drunk in the Isle of Man previous to the year 1651. However, antiquarian authorities in the office of the Deputy Keeper of the Records, Public Record Office, London, agree that the first letter of the item of the inventory under discussion can not be "T" and probably is "S" the whole word being a contraction for "Silver". One "Silver Cupp Gilt", they hold, would make sense, but on "Tea Cupp Gilt" would not.

Dr. Thomas Short, 1690-1772, a Scottish physician and medical writer, is of the opinion that tea may have been known in England as far back as the reign of James I, because the first East India fleet sailed in 1601. But had the use of the leaf been known, it would seem that because of its novelty, it hardly would have escaped notice by the early English dramatists, whose works mirror the prevalent tastes and humors of their time.

It seems extraordinary that the English East India Company should not have discovered and developed the possibilities of tea as early as did their commercial competitors the Dutch East India Company, who were bringing Chinese, as well as Japanese, tea with every ship in 1637. Yet it certainly was not known in England as early as 1641, for in a rare Treatise on Warm Beer, published in that year, the author undertakes to chronicle the advantages of the known hot drinks as opposed to cold, and mentions tea only by quoting the Italian Jesuit Father Maffei that, "they of China do for the most part drink the strained liquor of an herb called Chia hot".

First Reference by an Englishman

The earliest known reference to tea by an Englishman is found in a letter preserved in the archives of the East India Company – now at the India office, London, S. W. Mr. R. Wickham, the agent for the company at "Firando" (Hirado), Japan, wrote to Mr. Eaton, another agent of the company, at Macao, China, on June 27, 1615, requesting him to forward to the writer "a pot of the best sort of chaw." This reference leads us to the conclusion that some Englishmen knew about tea as early as 1615.

Shortly after 1644, English traders established themselves at the port of Amoy, which was their principal Chinese base for nearly a century. Here they picked up from the Fukien dialect the word t'e ("tay") for drink used by the Chinese, and they spelled it t-e-a, writing ea as a diphthong, aehaving the sound of long a.



Richard Collins, *The Tea Party*, c. 1727, oil on canvas. Family tea was an occasion for the conspicuous display of prized possessions and polite behaviour. This anonymous family proudly display their tea service and their successful performance of the tea party ritual. On the tea-table, a made-up silver tea-set comprises a teapot on a stand, jug, sugar bowl with lid, sugar tongs, slops bowl, spoon dish with teaspoons and tea canister, together with four blue-and-white porcelain teacups and saucers.

courtesy: Ukers





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Announcements From Tea Board



By **Arun Kumar Ray**
Deputy Chairman, Tea Board

The Tea Board at a press conference held on July 8, 2019 made certain announcements.

1. Tea Board has awarded the contract to M/s. Mjunction services Ltd. For setting up of an electronic auction platform

for Jorhat to cater to the Assam tea cluster. M/s. Mjunction services Ltd. is developing an innovative e-market place with associated services like central warehousing, logistics in consultation with Tea Board. The same is expected to score heavily in terms of turnaround time and cost effectiveness. The proposed e-marketplace model is also expected to bring on board secondary and tertiary buyers from all over the country, giving them access to the freshest tea, easy to use automated e-catalogue and faster movement of produce resulting in increase of unit price of tea. Organic small growers producing speciality teas in the North East will be benefitted by this separate platform.

2. Tea Board has also consulted IIM, Bangalore for certain policy reforms in respect of e-auctioning.



3. Tea Board has also proposed to allow export of un denatured tea waste to other countries for using the same as raw material in manufacturing of

instant tea, caffeine production etc. The said proposal is at an advanced stage of consideration and is expected to generate revenue for the country along with reduction of poor quality tea in the market.

4. In order to further increase the price realization of made tea, Tea Board has imposed certain restrictions in issuance of licenses to those areas which are having scarcity of green leaves. This has been done with the view to control the oversupply situation including production of quality tea which in turn will help in increasing unit price realization of the made teas.

5. However, Tea Board is encouraging production of orthodox and speciality teas which are manufactured in small quantities but has got huge demand in the export market.

6. Towards this direction, Tea Board has also reduced the registration fee for flavour tea manufacturers to encourage manufacturing of value added products having high demand amongst the younger generation.

7. Board is also in the process of implementing a system where teas below a minimum price will not be permitted to sale in auction. The matter is under discussion with various associations and would be declared soon.

8. Tea Board is also taking strong measures towards coloured tea which is a violation of FSSAI norms. Board has already taken up the matter with FSSAI through Commerce Ministry for further action.

9. Internal generation of revenue (IEBR) has increased by 51% in 2018-19 over 2017-18.





Tea Board initiatives and the way forward - SOME HIGH LIGHTS

Production from the small grower sector has gone up more 50% in the month of June, 2019. However, overall production from the small grower sector remains at 48%.

TOP EXPORTERS 2018-2019

SSK Exports Limited
McLeod Russel India Ltd.
Girnar Good & Beverages Pvt. Ltd.
Shah Brothers
Bhansali & Co.

MAJOR COUNTRY WISE EXPORTS DURING 2018 (in Mkg)

Russian Fed	46.91	18%
Iran	30.78	12%
U.A.E	21.45	8%
Pakistan	15.84	6%
United Kingdom	15.71	6%
Egypt (ARE)	11.61	5%
U.S.A	11.03	4%
Kazakhstan	10.77	4%
China	10.31	4%
Germany	9.90	4%
Poland	6.09	2%
Other	65.66	26%
	256.06	100%

MAJOR COUNTRY WISE EXPORTS DURING 2018



ORTHODOX TRENDS current year

- VALUE REALISATION 18% HIGHER
- EXPORT to Iran, Russia, UAE, Egypt and China has increased.

A WORK SHOPS

SPECIALITY

A workshop has been conducted in Guwahati for linking the speciality tea produced by small tea growers for their market access.

CLIMATE CHANGE RESILIENCE

On climate resilience programme for small tea growers, the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) has conducted a study and based on the study, adaptation programme has been made for climate change for Assam and West Bengal. This project envisages expenditure of Rs. 25 crore.

TEA AUCTION PRICES FOR THE PERIOD 01/03/2019 TO 31/05/2019 CTC LEAF & DUST

HIGHEST PRICE		GUWAHATI		KOLKATA		SILIGURI	
GRADE	MARK	PRICE	MARK	PRICE	MARK	PRICE	
BCP	Halmari	433	Halmari	651	Pahargomah	266	
BCPSM	Mahulassi	327	Doemai	302	Pahargomah/Kartick	281	
BP	Halmari	495	Halmari	351	Pahargomah	302	
OF	Manhapor	276	Nangdala	301	Pahargomah	299	
PD	Hookhoul	271	Dufabing	299	Pahargomah	262	
D	Madhapor	269	Halmari	258	Pahargomah	238	
CD	Kiputi	229	Halmari	452	Goodhope	196	
LOWEST PRICE							
BCP	Isule/Ingulum	91	Ciyafreegidi	86	Singashora	82	
BCPSM	Kesari/merita	90	Darbaw/Lyabepdi/Magan	86	Ordetar	82	
BP	Kesar	88	Tick	85	Jagbari/abgashwec/keatze	90	
OF	Manhowa	80	Bighora	85	Sedhivinyak	85	
PD	Dowmaria	65	Sribidina	80	Sambathiddhivinyak	85	
D	Budlabeta	81	Amhikapur	80	Aroma	87	
CD	Sesabed/Nisanouli	100	Dhoetsaeni	95	Satishchandra	96	

North India Price Bands : Tea Sold %

	<100	100-120	121-140	141-160	161-180	181-200	201-220	>220
CTL	5	31	34	12	9	7	5	6
DUST	6	27	29	15	13	6	3	1
ORTHODOX	1	1	1	2	3	4	6	8

North India Price Bands- All Teas : Category wise Buying %

	<100	100-120	121-140	141-160	161-180	181-200	201-220	>220
H/L	2	28	32	22	14	2	0	0
TGBL	3	45	40	10	2	0	0	1
Wholesalers	8	27	23	11	11	8	5	6
Packers & Brands	7	35	14	6	7	13	11	18
Exporters	4	21	19	7	6	3	3	36

SEGMENT-WISE BUYING FOR CTC LEAF AND DUST

	HUL		TGBL		Brand Packers		Wholesalers		Exporters		Total	
	Q. Mkg	Avg Pr.	Q. Mkg	Avg Pr.	Q. Mkg	Avg Pr.	Q. Mkg	Avg Pr.	Q. Mkg	Avg Pr.	Q. Mkg	Avg Pr.
Leaf	2.1	128.96	8.7	119.14	8.6	168.31	21.6	144.82	2.8	131.24	33.8	143.87
Dust	0.9	151.20	0.5	112.24	0.7	132.60	6.3	140.05	1.1	123.50	9.6	138.20

KOLKATA	HIGHEST PRICE		LOWEST PRICE	
	MARK	PRICE	MARK	PRICE
ORTHODOX				
TGDP1	SINGLIAN/GREENWOOD	400	SATSPUR	61
TGDP	HALMUR/CLONAL	526	SATSPUR	78
GFOP	BAGHIAN	371	AMLA CURF	150
FBOP	KOLAMARI	390	SATSPUR	66
GBOP	KOLAMARI	390	DONYPCH/O/BJL/IBARI	111
GFOP	KOLAMARI	351	KHOBONG	147
FCF	DEJOD	260	HIMALAYN	66
DFP	REESAKONE	172	BIRAHORA/NOORJCL	70
OKD	HATIALI	131	DARJAN/NAT TIALI/BOJL	81



Tea Vision-India's first Think Tank for the Tea Industry



By **Arun Singh**
Founder Trustee

There is all round talk of a sustainable industry, living wage etc. but we must reflect - have we really done enough to improve prices?

The Tea Industry is at a cross road from where it may appear that it is at the beginning of an impending disaster. For an industry that is 150 years old and employs over 1.2 million people directly besides 2 Lac small growers, this does not come as good news. But are we certain this disaster will come to pass? Certainly not. As this industry has been resilient and fought through many cycles of ups and downs.

What makes this Industry unique is that it is operating under two different set of conditions. One the traditional organised sector who is operating on lease hold land and is governed by Plantation Labour Act (PLA) and various acts of the government and the other by small growers who do not have to carry any such burden. They are highly unorganised and are equally vulnerable. We have already seen the prices of green leaf not increasing for past five years in real sense. Any natural disaster will mostly affect them. There is vast opportunity to organise them to increase their earning and also improve their quality to be able to contribute to export segment because of their cost competitiveness.

There is all round talk of a sustainable industry, living wage etc. but we must reflect - have we really done enough to improve prices? What has been done by non-grower stakeholders on any serious initiative in term of welfare measures for the workers. The answers will be in negative. All those who make money from the industry owe the responsibility to give back to the communities who are responsible for

producing this unique product.

The major issues that require attention of the authorities are

1. How to make the industry viable.
2. Enhanced and respectable wages for workers and recommending a basis for calculation. Nature of compensation, whether composite or in its present form.
3. Housing and its ownership.
4. How to improve skills of dependent workers to meet the aspiration of educated population.

Here is where Tea Vision comes in in its role as a Think Tank for India's Tea Industry. Think Tanks play an important role in any industry and are critical stir debate, highlight and support industry in solving teething problems. It is with such a purpose that we have established Tea Vision as a non-profit trust with one simple goal - to help ensure sustainability of our tea industry. This Think Tank will take an independent view on various issues affecting the sustenance of our Industry and bring all stakeholders on one platform to create consensus.

It will take on several issues plaguing the industry such as tweaking of the PLA, drive Advocacy, Research, Knowledge Sharing, Education & Training for improving management capability and drive Sustainable Social Development.



It's trustees are some of the most well-known industry veterans, distinguished bureaucrats and renowned union leaders, who have very kindly agreed to work to help industry overcome such many issues. They come from diverse background to ensure the right representation of all interests, having deep knowledge of the tea industry and are well equipped intellectually to shape a better future for the industry.

Board of Trustees

Arun Narain Singh, Founder Trustee

Mr. Singh has been an integral part of the Indian Tea Industry for over 40 years. Starting life as a planter he moved on to various roles culminating with his stint as Managing Director & CEO for

Parliament from Assam. A former Minister of State in the Union Cabinet, Government of India, he is a renowned Trade Union Leader who has championed the cause of tea workers for over 40 years.

Trilok Dewan, IAS (Retd.), Trustee

Mr. Dewan is an ex-Army officer and 1969 batch IAS officer of the Andhra cadre and retired as Chief Secretary. Post retirement he was chairman of AP Tourism Development Corporation and has been a former MLA from Darjeeling.

N K Das, IAS (Retd.), Trustee

Mr. Das has been Chairman, Tea Board of India. During his tenure he introduced Plantation Subsidy Scheme, that greatly impacted quality



At Tea Vision launch in Kolkata on 21/5/19 Mr Vikram Singh Gulia, CEO Assam Co, Mr Dipak Atal, Mr S Soundarajan., Mr C S Bedi, Mr Bobby Bhargava, Mr Arun Singh, Mr Kamal Tewari, Mr Pawan Singh Ghatowar former Minister and Mr J S Kandal from Tata Tea.

Goodricke Group of Companies. In this time he has also been Chairman ITA & Chairman TRA. He also serves on the board of Goodricke Group as Vice-Chairman.

Deepak Atal, Trustee

Mr. Atal has been a tea industry stalwart, having groomed Duncan industries in its heydays and been in a coveted position as one of the youngest ITA Chairman. Retiring as MD of Amalgamated Plantations (Tatas), he currently serves as Vice Chairman, APPL Foundation.

Paban Singh Ghatowar, Trustee

Mr. Ghatowar has been a five time Member of

initiatives in the sector with owners taking large scale replantation. He also served as Chief Secretary with Government of Assam.

Basudeb Bannerjee, IAS (Retd.), Trustee

Mr. Bannerjee has had a deep impact in the Tea Industry; during his tenure as Tea Board Chairman he was responsible for reforming the auction system and was instrumental in driving quality upgrade initiatives. He has also served as Chief Secretary, Government of West Bengal.

For more details kindly contact:

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+91 9903 000 999



LONDON LETTER



Planting Piloting



Kalyan Sircar writes on the halycon days of the early planters

1946. The War has just ended. J.L.C Strang, a young Yorkshire man in his early twenties, finds life rather boring, 'without the stimulating urgency of the past six years' when he served as a RAF pilot. What shall he do with the rest of his life? He knows what he doesn't want to do. A university education or a sedentary office job in London has no appeal for him. Strang is looking for a life of adventure in a faraway country: "At school before the War I had vague ambitions of exploring wild places ... and had often said I wanted to trek the whole way along the foothills of the Himalayas, turning south from Upper Assam down to the Shan states, Burma, and eventually to what was then called Siam". The young man will not be disappointed.

Before his discharge from the RAF Strang is given a final assignment. He is to deliver a Spitfire in Bangkok. On his way he stops in Karachi where he has a 'marvellous explosive curry'. Allahabad is 'extremely hot' and is in the grip of Hindu-Muslim trouble. He is instructed 'to wear revolvers when outside the Air Force Station'. At a social evening in the army club he meets the Commanding Officer who says to the young man: "I'm going back to my old job. In 1935 I came out to India to be a tea planter in Assam. I've dreamed about it all the time, and can't wait to get back to it". It didn't exactly match with his father's description of tea planters as 'a damned hard

drinking crowd'.

The Spitfire duly delivered, and Strang on his way back stops in Calcutta. One morning he finds himself in the commercial part of the City, and outside the office of the British India Tea Company. He goes in and 'asked to see the Manager of the Company'. After going through various doors he comes to one bearing the title of the Chairman. 'Are you looking for young men like me to train as tea planters?' "Yes. In fact we are". After the exchange of a few introductory words the Chairman said, "How soon could you start?"



"There is a very good social life, plenty of tennis, bridge, good clubs where one meets everyone; cricket in the cold weather, rugby in the rains."

The Chairman excited the imagination of Strang: "There is a very good social life, plenty of tennis, bridge, good clubs where one meets everyone; cricket in the cold weather, rugby in the rains. Daughters and nieces come out in the cold weather, known as the 'fishing fleet', and most of them find husbands within a few months".

Back in London which is 'a battered grey city'. The formality of interview by the Head Office there completed, he leaves 'the drab austerity of a Britain' in January 1947 for Tinsukia, Upper Assam.

The apprenticeship is for six weeks. Within that time he has to learn 'the rudiments of estate organisation, learning the language, how to deal with all the different people you will be involved with; the system of books, accounts and inventories, the general protocol of the planting society; then move out to a large estate about

STRANG IS LOOKING FOR A LIFE OF ADVENTURE IN A FARAWAY COUNTRY

Contemporary Tea Time ■ DECEMBER '01 – FEBRUARY '02 47



Innovations & Traditions Take Tea Forward



By P S Sundar



Ramesh Bhojarajan (left) receiving his 6 certificates for TGLIA in Ahmedabad.

Innovations and traditions continue to take the south Indian tea industry forward amidst competition from different angles.

Have you heard of 'bamboo tea', for instance? This has nothing to do with bamboo but since the tea is in the shape of small bamboo piece, it is named so.

This is an innovation by a micro tea factory named 'Tea Studio' located in a small hamlet called Thatrerban Manihatty in Kattabettu, some 18 kilometres from Coonoor.

"We use the stalk of the tea leaves for this tea. The stalk is cut to about three inches long and processed in the machine to flatten it. No other factory uses the stalk. Our application for patent for 'The Nilgiri Bamboo' is pending", Muskan Khanna, Head of Operations of the factory, told me showing this product at her factory.

"The process of drinking this tea is the same as others – 2 gms per cup allowed to brew for about three minutes. It is sold for Rs 2,150 a kg", she said.

The factory is called 'Tea Studio' because the tea manufactured here is artisanal coming under speciality category and a choice for tea connoisseurs.

"We manufacture 16 varieties of teas all of them are 100 per cent The Nilgiris teas. Three are White teas – Platinum Needles, Bai Mudan and Peony. Seven are green teas – slender, long jing, swirl, Mao Fong, Dew Drop, Bamboo and Kukicha. Two are Oolong – Oolong and Wulong. They are half green and half black. Four are black – pearl, tress, orchid and frost", she listed.

"All of them are unique because of the style we adopt, the clonal leaf we use as raw material and the exclusiveness of some products", Muskan said.

More importantly, this factory, just about 18 months old, is known to be paying the growers significantly. Even as the Tea Board has fixed Rs 15.43 per kg as the district average price which the factories should pay the small growers in The Nilgiris for purchasing their green leaf in June, it was paying as much as over seven times this price!

"We pay Rs 100 to Rs 150 per kg for the green leaf we procure from small growers", Muskan said.

"We procure the green leaves from nearby farmers, mostly from recently pruned fields. These leaves have to be fresh 'two leaves and a bud'. They have to be hand plucked and brought in bamboo baskets, not dumped in sacks, to retain the freshness. Since the volume of such tea is low, the farmers mostly bring them on hand and not in transport vehicles", she explained.

"We manufacture our teas against orders only and hence, there is no stock waiting for customers. As much as 90 per cent of our teas are exported to countries including Canada, the UK, the USA and Japan. The balance 10 per cent is sold in our select branded containers in cities including Bangalore, Delhi and Goa", observed Muskan, the only woman tea manufacturer in The Nilgiris.



Muskan Khanna showing the green leaves for which her factory 'Tea Studio' is paying Rs 100 to Rs 150 per kg to the small growers.





Muskan Khanna engaged in tea tasting session at her 'Tea Studio' factory.

"And, all our employees are women. Ours is the only tea factory in the whole of India run on LPG. So, there is no pollution due to firewood or oil", she added.

Another innovation has come in the form of tea-based thematic tiles. In their pursuit to promote the aesthetics of tea consumption, tea industry and trade in The Nilgiris have come out with an innovative concept of fixing quality tiles on walls bearing attractive images of tea cups, pots and sets.

"We have dozens of tiles showing a variety of tea pots and cups enhancing the ambience of drinking tea", Ramesh Vakharia who has been in tea trade for 47 years now, told me.

His family business Raj Traders, engaged in tea buying at the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association, recently diversified by establishing 'The Chai Wala' to offer a variety of liquid tea to tourists.

Now, his another unit J C Ceramics in Coonoor is adding value to tea promotion through tea-based thematic tiles.

"These tiles have become popular among tea factories and traders. Also, they are a favourite among the hotels and guest houses in The Nilgiris as they create a great connect with the tea industry which is the major economic stay in this district. More importantly, the younger generation is taking them in large numbers", J C Ceramics' young Director Jatin Vakharia said.

"Now, young ladies are placing orders for a variety of tea-based tiles for fixing them in the walls of drawing room, dining room and kitchen in their houses. Accordingly, we are now in the process of bringing in newer images to offer



The Nilgiri Bamboo tea manufactured by 'Tea Studio'.

variety", he disclosed.

"Considering that they hold aesthetic value, have nil maintenance expense and long lasting, tea-based tiles are a great hit now", he observed.

Tea factories are upbeat over this concept. "We warmly welcome the tea-based tiles as another tool to promote quality tea. Factories have bought such tiles and adorned their walls. The demand for such tiles will continue", Ramesh Bhojarajan, President, The Nilgiri Bought Leaf Tea Manufacturers' Association, told me.

Meanwhile, Ramesh Bhojarajan has hit news for his clean sweep at The Golden leaf India Award: Southern Tea Competition (TGLIA). His bought-leaf factory Vigneshwar Estate Tea Factory located in Aravenu, a tiny hamlet in Kotagiri taluk, has brought laurels to The Nilgiris district by annexing titles in all the six applicable categories in TGLIA, a joint initiative of the Tea Board of India and UPASI.

"It is a clean sweep for us as we have bagged all the titles in orthodox and CT tea categories in bought-leaf segment", Ramesh Bhojarajan told me.

"Thus, we have won three titles in orthodox tea categories – whole leaf, broken and fannings. We have also won three titles in CTC tea categories – leaf, fannings and Dust, making the total six awards", he said.

"Till last year, we competed in The Nilgiris open category beating even the entries from corporate sector but now, following a change in procedure, we had to compete



Avataa Speciality Tea Production Executive ENR Vejayashekar serving food to the works and their families at the temple festival in Billimalai estate.



The deity of Karumariamman temple in Billimalai Tea Estate decorated as 'Maangadu Kamatchi Amman' during the annual temple festival.

among bought-leaf factories. Thus, we have emerged the titleholders in all applicable categories among the bought-leaf factories in the entire TGLIA Southern Tea competition making us the first factory to win this credit", he noted.

"With six awards, we top the list of all winners at TGLIA 2019. Ours is the first bought leaf factory to win six awards in the all the editions of TGLIA so far", Ramesh observed.



Ramesh Vakharia (right) and Jatin Vakharia showing some tea-based thematic tiles in Coonoor.

"Besides, the Hittakkal group to which our factory belongs has won awards in all the 15 editions of TGLIA held so far", he disclosed.

Another credit has been fetching the topmost prices. "At the special TGLIA auctions held in Kochi, our orthodox teas contesting for TGLIA topped with one grade fetching Rs 301 per kg and two others Rs 300 each, which were the highest price fetched by any tea, orthodox or CTC from any factory, bought leaf or corporate, at the TGLIA auction 2019", Ramesh added.

At the final tasting session held in Ahmedabad, jury members distributed the certificates. The trophies are expected to be distributed during the UPASI Annual Conference in September in Coonoor.

As for upholding tradition, festivals of temples inside tea estates are a case in point. When the Tamil month Chithirai is born, Tamil New Year is born. This usually happens in mid-April. Along with that, festivals are held throughout the Tamil Chithirai month in various temples all over Tamil Nadu.

Some tea estates also follow this tradition as practised in the rural areas where the estates are located. More so, in those estates where a Temple exists and the management and workers with their families regularly offer worship in the estate temple. Besides, estate managements use such Temples and the festivals as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility to offer a festive mood to both the resident worker population and the community in the villages surrounding the estates.

One such instance regularly happening for 42 years is in Billimalai Estate where the speciality teas of Avataa

Beverages are manufactured.

Hundreds of migrant workers and their families from different North Indian states joined hands with Tamil tea estate workers at the 42nd Annual festival of Arulmigu Devi Karumariamman Temple in Billimalai Estate, 10 kilometres from Coonoor. "We conducted a series of poojas including Abishekam and Maavilakku to invoke the celestial blessings for rain for the prosperity of farming and supply of drinking



Jatin Vakharia showing the tea cup tiles used in kitchen.

water for the benefit of all life", Billimalai Director G Udayakumar told me.

"We decorated the main deity as Maangadu Kamatchi Amman. We presented Lord Ganesha in Raja Alankaram. We also adorned the deities in Parivara Sannadhis suiting the festive occasion", Bharath Raj Gurukkal who had come from Triplicane, Chennai, for the purpose, said.

"We performed Mariamman Sahasranama Archanai and Poocheriyal accompanied with Themmangu Pattu. Special Abishegam, Poojas to Parivara Devadhai, Maa Vilakku Poojai, Maha Deeparathanai and Prasadam distribution were conducted", said Sridhar Gurukkal who had come from Tiruvarur to lead the ceremonies.

Migrant workers and their families speaking different languages performed Archana in Tamil. Earlier, they brought in procession Thiru Karagam from Rettai Palam River bank.

Udayakumar and Avataa Speciality Tea Production Executive ENR Vejayashekara led his executives in serving food to the workers and their families at a massive Annadanam. Residents of neighbouring villages also took part.

Orchestra performance marked the occasion. In the night, colourful fireworks display lit the Billimalai skies.

"Uriyadi, the traditional rural Tamil festival, was held. The deity was taken out on procession along the estate campus. Special poojas were performed at Muniswarar Temple. The ceremonies ended with Manjal Neerattu appeasing the Goddess as per traditional rites to seek Her blessings for timely rain", Udayakumar said.

The Assam Company Story |



Binay Shetty: CEO, Vikram Singh Gulia: COO, Dr. BR Shetty: Chairman

Recently B. R. Shetty from Dubai, with interest in Healthcare, Nutrition, Education and Community Empowerment took over the reigns of the Assam Company Limited which was established in 1839.

This was done at the behest of PM Modi who wanted investment in the North East region of India.

Tea Time interviewed the spokesperson from Assam Company.

Q. What are the greatest challenges facing your Company today?

A. Company has been acquired with a view to serve the people of Assam to help with investment in North East and we look at Assam Company investment as an opportunity to serve the people of the region. Tea Garden workers are a neglected lot and our mission is good healthcare, housing and food for our workers. Challenge for us is time, as tea agriculture is a time bound business and we will have to patiently wait to revive the agricultural outputs.

Q. During the past several years the Indian Tea Industry has gone through a very difficult time. What is your perception of the tea scenario

in the future?

A. We look at bringing in international technology to the industry for improving the efficiency as well as product processing. We foresee the Indian Government taking adequate steps to provide product knowledge to the consumer to enable them to purchase their tea with knowledge of origin, sustainability and certified quality levels. This knowledge will empower the consumer to decide which tea to purchase at what price rather than being misled by the brand marketing and pushing of inferior teas to the households in India.

Q. What are your visions for your Company in the future?

A. We look at Assam Company as the leading tea company of the world in terms of product quality, welfare standards, social obligations, technological interventions, safety standards and consumer loyalty. It will be ensured that the premium quality produced by the Group is suitably packaged and reached to the right consumers who are willing to pay a premium for the product.

COVER STORY

Historical Beginning

The story of Assam Company is that of the Indian

The tea industry in Assam owes its origins to a river gunboat commander called Charles Alexander Bruce. In 1825 he braved the mighty Brahmaputra to sow the seeds of the tea plant in the Assam wilderness. After quite a long hiatus of around fourteen years, Bruce managed to get official approval for commercial cultivation and the first consignment of Assam tea left Indian shores for the London market.

The warm reception given to this new tea provided the initial impetus to the formation of the first commercial tea company in the world – The Assam Company. The founders were distinguished British merchants and such Indian luminaries as Prince Dwarkanath Tagore (grandfather of poet and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore), Babu Motilal Sii and others. Outstanding personalities subsequently served as directors like Richard Twining, James Warren and William Duncan.

The Assam Company was formed at a meeting of merchants in London on 12th February 1839 with a capital of £500,000 in 10,000 shares of £50 each, of which 8000 were to be allotted to Great Britain and 2000 to India. The name of the company was decided upon keeping in mind the fact that lime, coal and oil were all to be found

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Voice from the Past

Charles Alexander Bruce's letter to the

"I am the oldest resident of this place (Suddeya) and in Assam too, therefore I cannot learn anything connected with tea from any person in this country (Assam) for I have seen more of them and was acquainted with them before anyone now in Assam came into it... My brother was the first person that ever thought of the tea plants in these parts. Before the Burmah War, when he was in Rungpore Assam, he offered a musical snuff box for two plants to the Beesa Gaim. In the course of the war, I was at Suddeya. I begged and got from the same man a canoe full of plants and seeds."

Charles Alexander Bruce was engaged in a fierce defence of the Agri-Horticultural Society – that controlled all agriculture – engaged in an investigation as to who was the original discoverer of tea. Undoubtedly a pioneering spirit in his own right, had claimed tea. Of course, the Bruce brothers won the day.



S
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in the region and there was a distinct possibility of trading in any or all of these commodities, besides tea. Hence, The Company rather than The Assam Tea Company, though tea was to be the main business. The acquired two-thirds of the government's tal Tea Gardens, together with permission to ter lands as well.

ast
ea Committee in 1836



his brother, when the Tea Committee of il discoveries and developments — was coverer of tea. A certain David Scott, that he was the first to have discovered



The Royal Charter awarded to The Assam Company in 1845 by Her Majesty Queen Victoria in recognition of its pioneering achievements and excellence

The Assam Company was not the first formed with the objective of tea cultivation in India. Some people of repute with the requisite capital had met in Calcutta for the same purpose; the company was to be called The Bengal Tea Association. The two companies merged with the stipulation that 1400 of the 2000 shares would be given to the promoters of the Bengal Tea Association. Charles Alexander Bruce joined the Company's service on 1st March 1840, as he was the only person with any knowledge of tea cultivation and manufacture. From 1844 the Company was on the upswing,



with performance and profits enhanced, which was primarily due to two outstanding entrepreneurs of the time, Henry Burkiyoung and William Roberts. In 1845, the Company was granted a Deed of British Parliament and was awarded

The Company has maintained its close allegiance to tea, specialising in some of the finest Assam teas in the world

In 1846, the Company declared its first dividend, but a period of crisis prevailed for some time as resources, lives and energy were strained to the utmost by the prevailing conditions in Assam. In 1852, the silver lining appeared at last with a modest dividend and the tide turned for the company.

The company's progress was consistent, together with the emphasis on the quality of its product. In 1978, after the momentous years of the post-independence era, the Partition of the country and the World War, the Indian undertakings of The Assam Company along with those of five other sterling companies, were amalgamated to

MILESTONES

- * FIRST tea company in the world (established on 12 February 1839) by a Deed of British Parliament
- * FIRST to be awarded The Royal charter in 1845 by Her Majesty Queen Victoria
- * FIRST to establish tea estates
- * FIRST to brand premium tea
- * FIRST to export teas
- * FIRST to create "Tea Seed Gardens"
- * FIRST to containerise tea

constitute what was known as The Assam Company (India) Limited. The new company went public one year later, to an enthusiastic response.

Over the years the Company has maintained its close allegiance to tea, specialising in the cultivation, manufacture and marketing of some of the finest Assam teas

in the world. Keeping pace with technology and modern management practices, the Company has grown to be a major player in the industry. Today Assam Company has 16 factories, 52 gardens covering an area of 12,000 hectares and employs well over 25,000 people. 80% of the gardens are spread over three prime tea-growing districts and the remainder are in Assam's "quality zone".

The unique contribution of this 162-year old organisation to the growth of the Indian industry does not need to be emphasised. The original pioneer has over the years evolved into a foremost producer of quality tea. Exporting to Europe, the USA and several other countries, the company is positioning itself as a major provider to the sophisticated gourmet market. Continuous research and development ensures that the parameters of excellence are monitored and enhanced, taking forward the tradition that began in London so many years ago.

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B.R.Shetty with his team

We look at Assam Company investment as an opportunity to serve the people of the region. Our mission is good healthcare, housing and food for our workers.

Scope of AI in Agriculture

The term Artificial Intelligence was introduced in 1956, as “the science and engineering of making intelligent machines” (Andresen, S. L, 2002).



Building intelligent agents (machines) able to find solutions

for complex problems and to achieve goals like humans, proved to be a difficult task, despite the initial enthusiasm. This involves reproducing complex behaviours like perception of the environment, reasoning and planning, learning, using natural language (writing and speaking), motion and manipulation, only to name a few (Matthew Stone, 2006).

If considering the “general intelligence” concept, which tries to copy or replace somewhat the human mind entirely the progress is not so spectacular, in some particular narrow areas have been created intelligent

agents which perform better than a well-qualified person and brought positive economic and environmental results.

Agriculture is seeing rapid adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) both in terms of agricultural products and in-field farming techniques. Cognitive computing in particular is all set to become the most disruptive technology in agriculture services as it can understand, learn, and respond to different situations (based on learning) to increase efficiency. Providing some of these solutions as a service like chatbot of other conversational platform to all the farmers will help them keep pace with technological advancements as well as apply the same in their daily farming to reap the benefits of this service. Currently, Microsoft is working with 175 farmers in Andhra Pradesh, India to provide advisory services for sowing, land, fertilizer and so on. This initiative has already resulted in 30% higher yield per hectare on an average compared to last year.

New Financial Mechanism to protect Tea firms



James W. Montlake, an expert on tea-swap has responded to request from the Indian tea industry and offered to the India Tea Association (ITA) to

start a tea swap mechanism. Tea swap is a financial product to enable tea grower to maintain a constant cash flow despite price fluctuations. The mechanism provides several benefits as the leaf factories could hedge their future sale realisations with green leaf prices. Buyers would gain as they could lock in prices at the lowest point and lift the physical tea closer to the time of usage. Tea firms would thus be protected against fluctuation in prices.

Montlake will ask for approval from the finance ministry and the Tea Board to introduce the system which will be a bilateral contract between the buyer and the seller. Tea-swap is gaining popularity in Africa and Sri Lanka.

Tea Time had reported on SWAP in Q1'18

TATA Global acquires Dhunseri's popular tea brands



Tata Global Beverages Ltd (TGBL) entered into an agreement with C. K. Dhanuka – owned Dhunseri Tea & Industries to pick up a majority stake in its branded tea business at Rs. 101



crore. Dhunseri's “Lalghoda” and “Kalaghoda” are brands launched in 1988 and lead the market in Rajasthan doing around Rs. 70 crore business annually. The transaction will involve the transfer of the entire distribution network of the brands only. Dhunseri commands a production capacity of 11mkg in Assam and 10mkg from its gardens in Malawi, Africa.



Darwinism in Assam Tea Industry



By J S Kandal

Charles Robert Darwin, the famous English naturalist, geologist and biologist suggested in his THEORY OF EVOLUTION BY NATURAL SELECTION the following postulates:

- More individuals are produced each generation than can survive.
- Phenotypic (the physical and psychological characteristics of an organism from both genetics and environment) variation exists among individuals and the variation is heritable.
- Those individuals with heritable traits better suited to the environment will survive i.e. natural selection.
- When reproductive isolation occurs new species will form.

In all honesty, a business organization or an industry is very much like an organism or a species and therefore follows the same principles in its course of evolution. This phenomenon is commonly termed as "Darwinism in Business" by neo-classical economists.

The Assam Tea Industry, over the last 200 years of its evolutionary history, has also seen this interesting phenomenon at work from very close quarters.

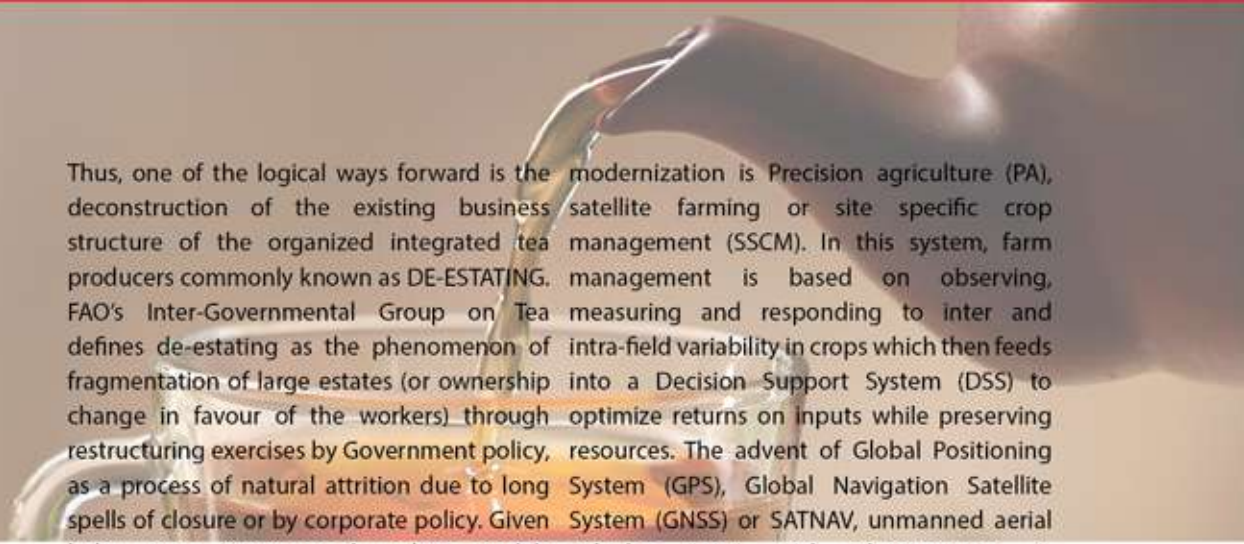
But DARWINIAN PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL SELECTION are still at play. A completely new species of tea growers (Small Tea Growers - STG) and manufacturers (Bought Leaf Factories - BLF) have emerged since the latter half of 1990s to fill in the demand and supply gap created by the industry's switch to create and expand retail tea brands. These growers own virgin lands and have newer tea bushes with higher yields and vitalities. They don't employ an army of permanent workers and don't own swathes of land, which contrary to popular belief, have actually proven to be boons for them in maintaining a lean cost structure devoid of huge overheads. Additionally, they don't bear the burden of regulatory social costs of workers they employ which helps them cultivate tea at a very low cost. The Bought Leaf Factories also maintain a lean cost structure and operate simply as converters of green leaf to made tea. They sell off their made tea either in the commodity market (auction) or directly to blenders and packers.

In effect, the entire value chain consisting of STGs & BLFs operates on a cost plus model and derives a positive margin on every Kilogram of tea (green leaf or made tea) it cultivates or produces.

During the initial years, when their production volumes were much lower than that of the organized integrated tea producers, this lean cost structure had helped them create their own BLUE OCEAN in the saturated commodity market as a low cost alternative to the tea manufactured by the latter. Over the years, they have thrived whereas the organized integrated tea producers are slowly but surely exiting the business one after the other, voluntarily or involuntarily. Unemployed youths taking to small scale tea production as their profession owing to the fact that the tea industry is one of the oldest and largest employers in Assam, also contributed to the immense growth of this new species of micro-entrepreneurs. And today, their volumes match that of the organized integrated tea producers indicating that this evolved new species is here to stay and dominate.

The new species of tea producers and manufactures have clearly shown that maintaining a lean cost structure is an absolute imperative if one wants to survive long. And this is not just an exception; world over the STGs and BLFs are dominating the supply chain of major and minor tea producing countries including China, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania et al.





Ushering in this technology will require huge investments but would reduce operational manpower requirement by 75%.

Thus, one of the logical ways forward is the deconstruction of the existing business structure of the organized integrated tea producers commonly known as DE-ESTATING. FAO's Inter-Governmental Group on Tea defines de-estating as the phenomenon of fragmentation of large estates (or ownership change in favour of the workers) through restructuring exercises by Government policy, as a process of natural attrition due to long spells of closure or by corporate policy. Given below are 3 international working models which India and especially Assam could learn and emulate.

1. In Sri Lanka, all private plantations were nationalized by the Government in the 1970s. Following a policy change in the 1990s, it was decided to parcel out gardens belonging to two State corporations and hand them over to private regional plantation companies under a profit-sharing arrangement. In the process of sale and allocation of shares, the Government ensured that the workforce was also given a chance to hold shares.
2. In Vietnam, another model is in place where the Government leases the land to the Tea Companies which in turn leases them to the workers. The workers put in all the inputs required for cultivation under the supervision and guidance of these companies. The field policies are decided by the companies. Workers harvest the green leaves as per the defined standards and sell them to the designated factories. To maintain quality standards, a quality based premium pricing method is followed.
3. In Rwanda, STGs own three fourth of all the lands under tea cultivation and organized industry holds the rest. But the STGs follow the cultivation directives of the companies to whom they supply their harvest. The STGs operate together as cooperatives and aggregate their produce before supplying to the companies. Rwanda produces the best quality teas in the world and their model is a great model to learn from and emulate.

In case the de-estating appears too drastic a step for the industry to consider, going full steam on modernization is the only logical path of salvation. And the first step to this

modernization is Precision agriculture (PA), satellite farming or site specific crop management (SSCM). In this system, farm management is based on observing, measuring and responding to inter and intra-field variability in crops which then feeds into a Decision Support System (DSS) to optimize returns on inputs while preserving resources. The advent of Global Positioning System (GPS), Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) or SATNAV, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) and advancements in Information Technology (IT) have jointly contributed to this new revolutionary way of managing farms. The various farm parameters like crop yield, terrain features/topography, organic matter content, moisture levels, nitrogen levels, pH, EC, Mg, K, etc. are collected by sensor arrays which consist of real-time sensors and suitable preventive and corrective actions are taken based on these data. In conjunction with PA, robotics can also be used in tea. The robots work by receiving a plan with a set of locations to visit on the field based on the satellite imagery provided by the PA system. To improve the degree of control further, carefully engineered greenhouses fit with tracks which these robots can follow to reach desired locations can also be thought of.

Bosch startup "Deep field Robotics" says that the performances of autonomous robots have already been successfully demonstrated in many conventional tasks such as tilling, sowing, harvesting etc. and the accuracy of the performances far outmatched anything that is humanly possible.

Ushering in this technology will require huge investments but would reduce operational manpower requirement by 75%. Unskilled labour would be totally replaced by skilled technical operators, technicians and robotic machinery. Therefore, the entire cost structure would also automatically change.

None of the above two options are easy to implement. Only time will tell if Assam Tea Industry weathers the imminent storm and survives. For now, let us put our faith in Darwin's proven postulates.



Amul launches Camel Milk in Gujarat



The Dairy major Amul for the first time has launched camel milk in select Gujarat markets – Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad and the Kutch. Sourced from the Kutch, the camel milk will be available in a 500 ml PET bottles priced at Rs. 50 and needs to be refrigerated, as has a shelf life of three days.

Earlier, Amul had introduced a camel milk chocolate which continues to receive a good response from the consumers. According to the company, camel milk is easy to digest and healthy with numerous benefits, like high in an insulin-like protein, making it beneficial for diabetic patients.



Amul

Whiskey Tea

Decreases cholesterol || improves mental strength || lowers risk of heart diseases



A non – alcoholic, alcohol. Brew it hot or cold to enjoy an amazing aroma and taste of Whiskey.

Like tea, Whiskey is a long-established beverage that calls on years of tradition and skill. The two make a particularly

good match by complementing each other through shared notes of smoke and malt. The pairing of Whiskey and Tea has created many new forms of beverages through the years, but today using nature identical flavouring we bring to you 'Whiskey Tea'. A tea, that smells and tastes like Whiskey but has no Whiskey.

Green Tea from The Leaves of Jute



Bangladesh has started production of 'green tea' from jute leaves. It is already exported to Germany. But it will take more time to start production in large scale. That's why the work of setting up a factory at Jamalpur has started. Bangladesh Jute Research Institute has begun its first claim to be successful in generating this organic tea from jute leaf in 2016.

Then, in Guayaqui, Acqua Agro Tech, a company called Dhaka's Organic Tea started exporting in Germany. The organization's chief Ismail Hossain Khan. The company has already gone to government management. Ismail Hossain Khan has been made the adviser to the tea production project from the new jute leaf in the government.



Tidings from Bangladesh



By **Monjur Hossain**

Bangladesh Tea

Current overview of Bangladesh Tea Sector

Bangladesh is a very small player in the global tea scenario but plays an important role in the national economy. Its contributions in terms of employment and welfare to rural backward areas is highly considerable. It employs about 150000 people of ethnic minority directly, fifty one percent of whom are women. Besides, more than 100000 people are indirectly dependent on its marketing, distribution, supporting industries, transportation and packaging industries etc. It contributes about 3.3% to the national employment 0.81% to GDP and about 1.0% to export earning. Tea is grown on such land of the country where no other agricultural crop could be produced on commercial basis. It pays about Tk. 800 million to the govt. as VAT, LD Tax, tea cess, Income and other taxes every year.

Geographical Distribution

There are 166 tea estates in Bangladesh of which 135 are in Greater Sylhet (Sylhet, Moulvibazar and Habiganj) 21 are in Chittagong. One each in Chittagong Hill Tract and Brahmanbaria district and newly developed 8 in the Northern Bangladesh.

Ownership Pattern

The tea estates in Bangladesh are managed by the British/Sterling companies registered in the UK, public limited companies viz National Tea Co. Ltd. (NTC), having Govt. and private shares, private limited companies, proprietary ownership and Govt. or Bangladesh Tea Board.

Market Growth

Bangladesh tea is a small player in the world tea scenario, but has a mentionable role in the national economy and employment sector. During the last ten years, there has been a considerable growth in production, but a gradual fall in the export during the corresponding years. This is primarily because of increase in the internal consumption due to population growth, urbanisation and social upliftment as will be seen in the following table.



BD Tea Packets



BTRI factory



Table 1: Tea Production, Export And Consumption For Last 10 Years

Year	Supply/Production (M Kg)	Absorption/Consumption (M.Kg)	Export (M.Kg)
2009	59.99	53.74	3.15
2010	60.04	57.63	0.91
2011	59.13	58.50	1.47
2012	62.52	61.19	1.50
2013	66.26	64.00	0.54
2014	63.88	67.17	2.66
2015	67.38	77.57	0.54
2016	85.05	81.64	0.62
2017	78.95	85.93*	2.56
2018	82.13	90.00*	0.78



Tea Garden

Source: BTB* Shortfall covered from the import

Bangladesh, which was the world's fifth tea exporting country until 1990s, is now a tea importing country, procuring around 8 million kilogram (kg) from abroad annually.

The export decreased gradually since 1990 and in 2017 the country exported only 2.56 million kg of quality leaves, but imported 8.2 million kg of in the same year to meet the growing demand in the country. According to Bangladesh Tea Board (BTB) data, local consumption of tea in 1985 was only 10 million kg annually and in 2017 the consumption rose to 85.93 million kg, more than 8 times over the past 33 years.

In 2009-10, Bangladesh imported 2 million kg, in 2010-11 it was 5 million kg and in 2011-12 the import figure was 3 million kg and in 2012-13 it was nearly 6 million kg.

The import continued to grow and in 2013-14 it was 7 million and in 2014-15, 7.7 million kg of tea was imported to meet the local demand. However, the rate of tea production is not so bad. But the production in 2017 declined to 78.95 million kg from the record 85.05 million kg in 2016.

The above table clearly shows a steady growth in over all volume of tea consumption in the domestic market thereby ensuring a guaranteed market for the tea

producers now and in future also since number of tea consumers are increasing every year along with the increase in per capita consumption of tea.

It would be revealed from the table that, the supply side is increasing slowly, on the other hand the demand side is showing an increasing trend as such market growth is evident. Further the per capita consumption of tea is increasing every year, which will lead the demand side further.

The above table and figure show a gradual increase in per capita consumption of tea in Bangladesh and these figures also give an indication of a guaranteed market for Bangladesh tea locally in future.

On the other hand profitability of the sector depends on the productivity per hectare and the price realised for tea in the auction. The following table will reflect the price scene in the auction for last 10 years.

Tea price depends on the international market situation and the producer does not have any control over the auction. At the same time due to increased cost of inputs, the cost of production is also going high every year. However, since Bangladesh tea is mostly marketed for internal consumption with very less export, the auction price of tea for last 3 years were remunerative for the producers.

Graph 2 Chittagong Auction Weekly Average Price of 2017/18 and 2018/19



Tea Sale



Road through Tea garden

Major issues facing Bangladesh Tea Sector (SWOT Analysis)

Strength

- A sustainable labour intensive industry aged over 165 years.
- Skilled 100% resident labour force available for over century.
- Institutional management developed by a process of trial, error and practical application.
- The industry is self contained business enterprise since 150 years.
- The industry is supported by a guaranteed market and various Acts/ Laws and ordinance to protect and control by the government.
- The industry is supported by government R&D service through BTB/BTRI/PDU though many companies have their own R & D wing.
- The industry has developed its own technology in major areas such as plant breeding, cultivation practices, manufacturing and management/ operation.
- Tea is grown on such type of land which is unlikely to be brought under any foodstuff production or other commercial agriculture and therefore, tea generates revenue for the government, employment for the ethnic minority and good business for the entrepreneurs on fallow land.

Weakness

- Production per hectare area is very low as compared to other tea producing countries.
- 40-42% area has crossed the age of 50 years and turned into uneconomic plantation.
- Till now HYV plantation not yet reached 50% of the whole plantation area.
- The industry has not been able to create a healthy reserve fund from which all development works could be implemented.
- The industry yet has to borrow money from the Bank both for development and operation though the industry is 165 years old.
- Workers do not have the desired level of education for productivity motivation.
- Talented graduates do not find the career interesting due to isolation in nature and not compensated with perks.

Opportunities

- The industry has a fast increasing domestic market.
- The industry has yet some virgin land where HYV clones could be planted and newly developed small holding sector growing.
- The government gives financial supports through the Banks on very soft terms for development.
- Bangladesh has the cheapest labour cost in tea sector and if production is increased by appropriate utilization of skill but with cheap labour cost Bangladesh tea can enter into world tea market offering very competitive price for even better tea than many other Countries.
- A large number of un-employed labour force available in the industry to execute development programme.
- Land and opportunities exists to develop convention and non-convention non-tea income generation programme.

Threats

- Production is not increasing to cope with the growing rate of consumption locally as such there are chances of gradual increase of importing cheap tea from neighbouring countries.
- If in any case, tea import increase. Bangladesh tea's future will be very bleak.
- Cost of labour, fuel and all other inputs are increasing every year leading to higher cost of production per Kg of tea which is at times lower than the auctions price.
- In very near future there are chances of shortage of workers in the industry which is likely to hamper development.
- Law and order situation gradually deteriorating due to the country's overall situation. Unless this issue is appropriately addressed this will remain a threat as has been in the past.
- Planters' leaving the profession at their mid-career is a major threat now and will remain a threat in future unless this issue is addressed.

* The writer is Managing Director PMTC (Bangladesh) Limited



Young Indians on Chai vs Coffee



Loss of identity (Negative emotions in 29% chai haiku): Sadness, anger and disgust makeup 29% of the emotions expressed in chai haiku, as Young India views the shift from chai to expensive coffee as a loss of national identity and an act of snobbishness.

Morning Ritual ('Morning' in 6% of chai + coffee haiku): Chai and coffee are morning drinks and especially loved during cold and rainy seasons.

Alone and together (Coffee associated with 'feeling alone' 5x more than chai): Coffee has two social dimensions: Feeling alone (5x more than chai) and togetherness (with young Indians discussing dates and friends). Chai predominantly inspires a sense of community.

Sutta vs Chocolate ('Sutta' mentioned in 5% of chai haiku): Sutta is the most popular complementary product to chai; Chocolate and Novel are most closely associated with coffee.

Chai vs Coffee: A comparison:

Which words does Young India use when describing chai vs coffee?



Dost | **Gossip** | Canteen | **Saath**
 Toast | **Masala Rusk** | Train
Monsoon | Biscuit | **Pakoda**
 Samosa | **Dil** | Pyar | **Sutta**

CHAI ONLY



Friends | **Happy**
Memories | Morning | Rain
Winter | **Life** | **Need** | Work
 Cigarettes | Sleep

CHAI AND COFFEE



Aroma | Chocolate |
Novel |
 Bitter **Reading** |
 Sunshine **Sleepy** |
 Netflix

COFFEE ONLY



Takeaways: Starbucks should explore a chai-centric campaign for India. However, home-grown brand Café Coffee Day, which has a preferred choice for coffee, should focus on creating more experiences.





Persian tea: love at first sip



*'I sipped some of love's sweet wine
and now I am ill.
My body aches,
my fever is high.
They called in the doctor and he said
drink this tea!
Ok, time to drink this tea...'
- Jalaluddin Rumi*



By Dr K K Dey

Dr Kallol K Dey is a consultant Neurologist with varied interests outside medicine including photography, cooking and tea. He loves to drink tea in the middle of his work. His blog can be found at www.facebook.com/cmirstroke

Jalaluddin Rumi, also known as Mawlana, was born in Balkh, then an acclaimed centre of learning in Iran. Rumi is considered the greatest mystic poet of Iran. It is good to see tea has featured in his writing.

My love for Persian tea is at first sip! And the story began in London where I had my first taste of Persian tea at a famous Persian restaurant in Hammersmith. I simply loved the way it was presented and the aromatic tea enlivened me and our conversations at the dinner table.

Tea was first introduced to Iran at the end of the 15th century. Tea came to Iran from India through the silk route. It was difficult to import coffee to Iran and this also contributed to the development of tea culture in Iran. At this time 'Chaikhana's or tea houses became popular. Chaikhana's are around since the Persian empire. They gained prominence after the 15th century when coffee was abandoned in favour of tea.

The tea industry including cultivation was a British monopoly under the East India Company. Kashef Al Saltaneh an Iranian diplomat decided to change this. In 1895 he visited India and being fluent in French and familiar with the French culture because of his time in Paris, he posed as a French businessman. He learned the trade and managed to smuggle some tea saplings and seeds to Iran. After six years of hard work and experimentation he introduced the first product to the market. The industry he started has since transformed the economy of the two northern states of Iran, Gilan and Mazandaran. Lahijan, a region in the northern province of Gilan in Iran saw the beginning of the tea industry in Iran. Today in Iran Kashef Al Saltaneh is known as the 'Father of Iranian tea' and his mausoleum in the city of Lahijan houses the tea museum.



Iran is now the eighth largest producer of tea in the world and consumes its entire output of tea. Tea is everywhere in Iran-at home, in offices and in the bazaars. Iranians are well known for hospitality: 'Mehman hediye kodašt' (guests are blessing of the god). Not offering tea to someone is considered rude-'Yek chai taarofnakard' (They did not even offer me tea).

Pull up a chair and make yourself comfortable with a nice cup of tea and join me in knowing more about the Persian tea.



Black tea(Chai Siyah)

- Assam black tea
- Ceylon black tea
- Lahijan tea (grown in Iran)

Dried herbs

- Spearmint (Na'na)
- Lemon balm (Badrang Buye)
- Lemon Verbena (Behlimu)
- Red Rooibos (Chai Rooibos)
- Mulberry leaf (Barg'e Tut)

Spices

- Allspice (Felfe's Bahareh)
- Ceylon cardamon (Hel)
- Ceylon Cinnamon (Darchin)
- Cloves (Mikhak)
- Dried Ginger root pieces (Zanjebil)
- Nutmeg (Jowz'e Hendi)
- Star Anise (Badian'e Khatai)
- Saffron (Za'feran)
- Peppercorns (Felfel'e Siyah)

Organic essential oils and extract

- Bergamot Essential oil (Baderang)
- Pure Vanilla extract (Osareh Vanil)

Dried Flowers, Fruits and nuts

- Chamomile flowers (BaBUNEH)
- Chrysanthemum (Gol'e Davudi)
- Rose petals (Gol'e Sorkh)
- Rosehip
- Hibiscus flowers (gol'e Bamieh)
- Lotus flower (Gol'e Niloofar)
- Marigold petals (Gol'e Hamisheh Bahar)
- Lavender (Austokhodus)
- Jasmine (Gol'e Yas)
- Borage flowers (Gol Gab Zabun)
- Dried pistachios (Pesteh) Etc

Tea accompaniments

- Rose water (Golab)
- Orange Blossom water (Ab Bahar Narenj)
- Raw organic honey (Asal)
- Ab Bahar Narenj
- Quinche preserve (Moraba 'ye Beh)
- Sour cherry preserve (Moraba'ye Albalu)
- Rose petal Preserves (Moraba 'ye Gol'e Sorkh)

What is Persian tea?

Typical Persian tea is black tea brewed to the reddish-brown colour drunk in glass tea cups. One can dilute the tea with water depending on their preference. The black tea is steeped with rose petals and various other dried flowers, spices and essential oil. Black tea blend scented with Bergamot essential oil is the classic Persian tea blend. This tea has a distinctive earthy flavour with strong notes of honey. Here is a ready-reckoner of ingredients you need to make your perfect Persian tea.

- Dainty Sugared Almonds (Noghl)
- Sugar Cubes (Ghand)
- Dired lime (Limu Omani)
- Rock candy sticks (Nabat)
- Persian sugar plum (Poolaki)

I drink my bergamot flavoured black tea with a splash of rose water, a drizzle of raw organic honey and a spoon of sour cherry preserves. It is important to keep on experimenting to find out what tickles your taste buds best.

How to make Persian tea?

You need to keep in mind the four factors that influence your cuppa:

- Tea leaf- quality and freshness
- The water-use fresh cold filtered water
- The vessel- Glass teapots are the best as flavours do not cling to the glass. Ceramic is great but metal can give an unwanted flavour.
- Time- you need to strike a balance between flavours and tannins by getting the time of steeping right.

The Method

To brew a perfect cup of Persian tea, you need proper equipments and follow a ritual which with time may be perfected to an art form.

You need

- tea pot (ghuri)
- kettle (ketri)
- estekan (tea glass) or fenjun
- saucer (nalbeki)

Instead of kettle you may use electric or charcoal samobhar to boil the water. The samovar literally means 'self boiler'. The traditional Russian made samobhars are popular in Iran.

There are two types:

- Samovar zoghali (chacoal)
- Samovar barghi (electric)



Traditionally tea is served from a samovar originally imported to Iran from Russia. The samovar is used to keep water hot for a long time through a fuel filled pipe in the middle of the structure that heats the contents surrounding it. Made from copper, brass, silver and gold, the samovar is still used throughout Russia, central Asia, and Iran, and ornate versions from the Qajar dynasty may still be found in

Step by step:

1. Put the kettle on stove and bring freshly filtered cold water to boil.
2. Put some hot water into the pot (ghuri) and warm it up.
3. Place 1-2 teaspoons of loose leaf tea into the pot. You may use black tea leaves blended with Bergamot oil (that is what I often do) or you can blend your own tea with the essential oil (see below). You may put in rose petals and other dried flowers as you fancy.
4. Fill the teapot halfway with boiling water and place the pot on top of kettle. Let the tea 'cook' so to speak. The tea needs to be steeped for 2-5 minutes and the temperature should be 210 degree Fahrenheit for rolling boil.
5. When it is ready to pour, you fill the bottom of estekan with tea and dilute it with boiling water from ketri to taste. How much tea you pour depends on what you want- chai kam rang (weak tea) vs chai por rang (strong tea). Persian tea is served in glass so that you could add the right amount of boiling water and make it visually appealing brown-red.

When you are out in nature you may try 'chai zoghali' (charcoal tea) which is brewed in a ghuri and ketri but over a fire. This helps develop a nice smokey flavour of the tea.

A perfect cup of good Persian tea should be:

- freshly made (tazeh dam)
- filled to the brim (lab riz)
- hot enough to burn your lips (lab suz)
- lip-smacking (lab duz)

If tea is anything other than scalding it is too cold in Iran. The Iranians take 'lab suz' seriously.

How to drink Persian tea

The most traditional tea glasses are



known as estekan kamar barik (thin waisted glass).

You are not supposed to stir your sugar cubes. You don't get a spoon unlike Turkish tea, which is served with a spoon and sugar cubes. You need to place the sugar cube in your mouth and suck on it with every sip of tea. Some Iranians especially seniors dip the cubes first into the tea before placing in the mouth. Some Iranians pour their tea on a nalbeki (saucer) to let it cool off before drinking straight from the nalbeki.

As a guest, if you let your tea sit for too long your host will tell you 'Drink your tea. Yakh kard'.

If you have loved your tea, just say 'chasbid': it hit the spot, literally-it stuck.

Tea sweetened with sugar (shekar) is called 'chai shirin' or 'sweet tea'. It is only acceptable to drink chai shirin with breakfast. It is delightful to pair chai shirin with noon panir (bread with cheese).

Ritual

Most meetings and formal occasions

begin with offering of tea and most meals end with it. Some chaikhans have takhts or low-rise platforms covered in rugs and pillows that you recline on. You should remove your shoes before doing so; most meals are served on a tablecloth laid at your feet.

Tea house art and culture

Chaikhans are a mixed bag. They may be kitchen turned into tea rooms in vilages, ornate venues in town, underground or at touristy spots. The Azari tea house in Tehran is one of the most famous and in business since 14th century. This tea house contains iconic teahouse paintings. The teahouse paintings have their origin in the royal paintings from the Qajar era. The paintings have reference to religious and mythical themes with Hakim abu'l Qasim Firdowsi's poetic epic "Shahnameh".

I hope you have enjoyed the Persian tea. Please do drop us a line for any queries and suggestion. Keep well until next time and keep drinking tea.



100 years ago

Tea Garden Recruiter and a Pony



A rather interesting case was decided by Mr. J. N. Mitra, Deputy Magistrate, in which a sardar of the Samabeong Tea Estate stood charged with the theft of a pony belonging to the Lepchoo Tea Estate. It transpired in evidence that the sardar came to recruit coolies from other gardens for his own, among them the Lepchoo Tea Estate, as is the custom in this district on payment of the coolies' debts. The complainant, a cooly of Lepchoo, alleged that the accused made no payments to him but snatched away his pony. The defence was that the complainant wanted to shift to Samabeong, was paid and himself left the horse with the accused as security. The prosecution witnesses included Mr. Languore of the Lepchoo Tea Estate. Mr. G. Mitra, for the defence, argued that in any event not dishonest motive had been proved. The court, agreeing, acquitted the accused.

Darjeeling tea suffers price erosion



Binod Mohan, President DTA

Tepid demand from overseas buyers and a lukewarm response from local blenders have hit Darjeeling tea prices this season, with at least one planter describing the situation as a "crisis".

The industry feels the impact of the 108-day political strike that crippled the hills, including 89 gardens in 2017, is being felt now as some of the international buyers, especially from Japan, stopped blending Darjeeling tea because of uncertainty over availability.

"There is hardly any demand this year from Japan. Prices are low too. I have not seen such a situation in a decade," Prateek Poddar, director of Poddar HMP Group, owner of Namring garden said.

Japan is mainly a consumer of first flush tea. The country, a large market for ready-to-drink tea, used to procure around one million kg of tea. Export to that market has now been halved. Garden owners say many blenders who used Darjeeling tea in their blend, have shifted to tea from Nepal or Indonesia.

Given that Darjeeling production is about 8.5 million kg annually, unless domestic consumption rises or new export markets emerge, prices will remain under pressure, industry players said.

Binod Mohan, owner of Tea promoters India, blamed the influx of Nepal tea. "There is no official estimate how much of Nepal tea is seeping in. But it is flooding the local market. You can say that Darjeeling is in crisis," Mohan, who is also the president of the DTA, said.

While good quality Darjeeling tea, especially whole leaf, barely comes to auction as it is picked up by buyers privately, the auction still gives an indication of market health. More tea has come to auction this year than 2018, indicating a lack of private sale. Moreover, close to 40% of tea remained unsold in the auction, a sign of tepid dem.



Tea Tales |



Co-founders and tea aficionados Bhuman Dani (left) and Shariq Ashraf

TGL Co plans to launch a wellness range as well as a premium single estate first-flush white tea at affordable pricing

Gourmet Brew on offer

One of the fastest growing hot beverages start-up TGL Co, is the story of co-founders Bhuman Dani and Shariq Ashraf coming together to brew their passion for tea and coffee into a business idea. A management graduate from INSEAD, Dani walked into London's East India Company store one day and soon his interest led him to take up an apprenticeship with master tea blender Jane Pettigrew. At the same time, Shariq Ashraf, an Oxford University management graduate and a tea aficionado, came across 'Tealosophy' – a specialty tea boutique and the founder, Ines Berton's tea knowledge inspired him to think of it as a business idea. Soon he quit his work at The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and moved back to India to follow his passion. Bhuman and Shariq met at a BCG alumni event where the idea for The Good Life Company of TGL Co was born.



The Chai Story

IT WAS his longing for chai while studying abroad that made him think of expanding his family's 50-year-old tea business. "I had great exposure to some very good teas. But in all the time I spent outside India, I never got the same kind of tea. I realised that by the time the tea reached the end consumer, its quality deteriorated," says Kausshal Dugarr, founder and CEO of Teabox.

(Above) Kausshal Dugarr, founder & CEO of Teabox, created the company to ensure that tea consumers get access to the freshest teas. Also, the brand is betting big on the offline space (right).



The loopholes in the obsolete supply chain, middlemen involved and inferior-quality teas that was exported was what inspired Sarda to start his home-grown tea brand named Vahdam Teas.



Bala Sarda, founder & CEO, Vahdam Teas

Oprah's Cup of Joy

VAHDAM Teas has made it to the prestigious list of Oprah Winfrey's Favorite Things for 2018. "Oprah, an inspiration for millions around the globe, is a tea connoisseur and a huge chai lover. Being a tea company from India, we were thrilled to know that she has found her favourite Chai tea blends in our collection," says Bala Sarda, founder and CEO, Vahdam Teas, who entered the business in 2015.



BREAKING STEREOTYPES

Female entrepreneurs came together for a session organised by Indian Chamber of commerce to discuss the one way to be creative in this digital world

The Indian Chamber of Commerce premises recently hosted an interactive session on Women in Business. It was organised by the Expert Committee for Women Development & Empowerment. The session witnessed



the participation of women from all walks of the corporate world, ranging from young entrepreneurs to seasoned businesswomen in the fields of public relations and management.

Tea QSR chain eyes pan-India foray



Parthiv Neotia, owner of Tea Junction



Tea Junction Kolkata

50 NEW OUTLETS

City-based quick service restaurant (QSR) brand Tea Junction is planning to venture out of West Bengal by setting up at least 20 stores outside the state.

The director of the Ambuja Neotia group, which owns Tea Junction,

Parthiv Neotia, told TOI: "We plan to open 50 new outlets this fiscal. Of these, 10-15 will be in Delhi, 10-15 in Kolkata and the rest in Chhattisgarh and Odisha. We shall invest around Rs 10 crore for the expansion."

Mjunction ties up with Tea Board



Guwahati >mjunction, the e-commerce joint venture of SAIL and Tata Steel, has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Tea Board of India to design, implement and maintain an e-auction platform. The auction centre will be set up at Jorhat, the second such centre in Assam after Guwahati.

Tea Board officials said it was introducing the new platform through mjunction for a fair price discovery. The new system will be in place in three months and would handle up to 200 million kg tea annually.



Tea Tasting I

The entire process of buying tea is based on the subjective evaluation of taste and flavour. Prices are indicated by the tea broker after he has tasted every batch. A tea broker is first and foremost a tea taster and plays a pivotal role in the total scheme of tea marketing. Every batch, every lot of tea from the tea estates is tasted and prices are indicated against quality. There is no other benchmark and no fixed standard price. The same tea from the same garden will be valued higher in a rising market and lower in a falling market. In coffee, there are the Arabica and Robusta types where visual inspection and moisture of the raw coffee bean gives a

'Do they have to observe a special diet? Do they have to refrain from smoking?' are some of the other queries raised. "Since tasting is an art and calls for special organoleptic skill, the profession attracts more than ordinary interest. Tea tasters have so far succeeded in maintaining a closed-door approach to their profession. They have resisted all change and attempts to put science and standardisation into their skills. Whereas, in all other sensory areas, the computer and chromatograph have taken over, tea tasters still talk in antiquated expressions coined a century ago by the British."

How is it that when there are so many professional

The Tea Board is conducting a Tea Tasting seminar during the first week of August 2019, for TEA Tasters. Whether or not things have changed since T. S. Nagarajan days is a moot point to be considered.



ART or SCIENCE?

T. S. Nagarajan writes about the unique activity which determines tea quality and price

good initial idea of the price and taste. Not so in tea. A very heavy burden, therefore, rests with the tea taster.

Writing in my book *The Executive Whirl* fifteen years ago about tea tasters, I had said: "A lot of myth and mystique surrounds tea tasting. The tea tasting fraternity themselves have contributed quite a bit to these legends. 'Are tea tasters paid fabulous salaries?' is a question frequently asked of those connected with the tea trade.

bodies from accountants to zoologists, we have not heard of a Tea Tasters Guild? Other disciplines based on the palate such as wine, cheese and some special spices are highly professionalised bodies. They hold regular seminars, training programmes and blind tasting sessions to update their knowledge and skill. The tea tasting fraternity would be well advised to take a cue from such other disciplines-if they are to continue to play their





Tea tasters have so far succeeded in maintaining a closed-door approach to their profession

In the Tea Time issue of September 2000, T. S. Nagarajan a retired Director of Brooke Bond, and a member of the Tea Board, said there was great need to examine the whole system of tea quality evaluation and a serious effort made by the specialists to reduce the imponderable. I believe it is possible. What is required is the information technology route.

present pivotal role. Having said this, we must, however, understand and appreciate the basic problems and inconsistencies in tea as an agro-based product. Tea is an agricultural crop where the end product of black tea

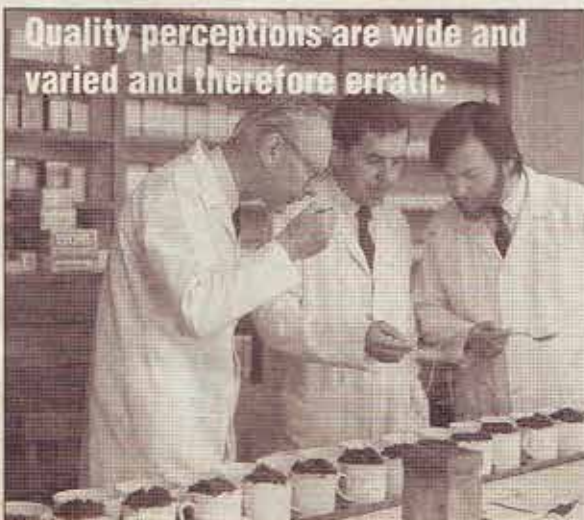
of a processed product.

In a comparable crop like coffee it is the seed which is the basic traded commodity. Mother Nature aided by human ingenuity and skill regulates quality. However,

THERE IS A GREAT NEED TO EXAMINE THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF TEA QUALITY EVALUATION

is a factory product and undergoes several unit operations such as withering, fermentation, drying and sorting. Quality perceptions are wide and varied and therefore erratic. Tea has not only to conform to the requirements of an agricultural crop, but is also subject to the variations

in tea, at every stage from plucking to processing, the human element plays a key role in the final quality. The varieties in quality standards are so vast and unpredictable that the only safe way of judging quality and price is through tasting it as a beverage. This is not a satisfactory situation to be in for all time. In the recent Nilgiri tea crisis, questions were already being raised by growers about the valuation system of tea only through tasting and the mood was defiant.



Quality perceptions are wide and varied and therefore erratic

There is a great need to examine the whole system of tea quality evaluation and a serious effort made by the specialists to reduce the imponderables. I believe it is possible. What is required is the information technology route. It is possible to reduce and standardise the thousands of grades which are put through auction centres, into more manageable groupings through formula blending. I am confident the profession is capable of rising to the occasion. ■

The writer is a retired director of Brooke Bond and has been a member of the Tea Board. He now lives in Bangalore

Courtesy : The Economic Times

The Dhunseri Men's Treatment Centre



Men's Treatment Centre



Royal Residential Suites

The Dhunseri Men's Treatment Centre is a state-of-the-art facility that has been fitted with the latest equipment to help us provide top-quality natural treatments in a pristine environment.

The 2500 sq. ft. two-bedroom Royal Suites are the most luxurious of our residential hospitality options.

The ladies treatment Centre is a modern facility for the exclusive use for our female guests. The Deluxe and Super Deluxe rooms are also available for use.

These facilities will allow its residents to make full use of all the treatments available at NCYC while enjoying all the comforts and conveniences of their own homes.



TATA Fruski



Tata Fruski, a pilot launch in the Delhi NCR region, was our first step into the Indian RTD beverages market. Riding on the back of the perceptible shift in consumer preferences, particularly the younger audience, towards natural alternatives to soft drinks, Fruski reinvented the iced

tea category with a unique, green tea-based refreshing offering containing herbal ingredients and added benefits. Available in Orange and Mango variants.





By **Errol O'Brien**

Two Bruces and Two Leaves and a Bud

It takes foresight and instinct to liberalize an evolutionary process. These fundamentals seemed to have been ingrained in the character and talents of the Bruce siblings. It was in their recognition of the futuristic potential of a particular green leaf that opened the gateway to Assam's Tea Industries.

Scotland is famous for the soothing amber liquid brewed for centuries from the waters of the Lochs and intoxicatingly craved for as 'Scotch'.

The Bruce brothers of rugged Scots origin born in Edinburgh introduced to the world 'the golden cup that cheers but does not intoxicate'.

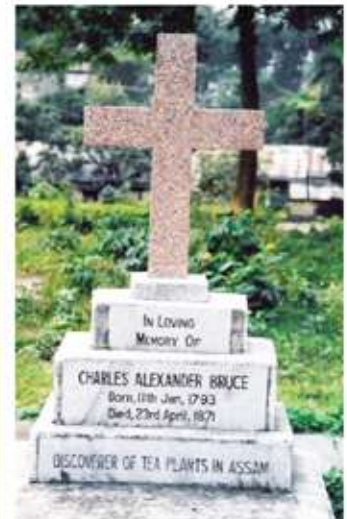
Both left Scotland at a young age to seek adventure with the fascination of the ever extending British Empire before them.

They found themselves in warfare in the upper realms of North East India subduing the Ahom kings and driving out Burmese insurgents from Assam to secure the territory of the Raj using a gunboat in the Brahmaputra. This valley from Goalpara up to Sadiya in the North East corner of India was absorbed under the umbrella of British administration.

It was into this area that Robert Bruce with a view to British expansionism strove. He was a persistent pioneer, ingenious and versatile. He had a gift for making friends among primitive people.

Bruce learned from Maniram Datta Barua, a native nobleman that the principal tribe in Assam, the Singpho grew a variety of Tea unknown to the rest of the world. The tribe also ate the leaves as a vegetable with garlic and drank a brew made after dipping the leaves into boiled water.

Bruce on tasting the liquor realized that the tea was good and could rival the Chinese trade which at that moment was seemingly closed to the Brits due to the Opium war. He could have obtained his findings by force but diplomatically he wanted friendship as then he could have a long time access to tea. He met Bessagaum, the Singpho Tribe chief and was allowed to take away samples of seeds and plants in 1823. A year later he died but before that he divulged the secret of his findings to his brother Charles.



It was into this area that Robert Bruce with a view to British expansionism strove. He was a persistent pioneer, ingenious and versatile.





*He sent a sample
of his
manufactured tea
to the Tea
Committee in
Delhi where it was
approved by
Experts as 'of
good quality'*

Charles Bruce had great strength that carried him through the jungles of Assam at the most malarious season. He won the trust of the wild mountain tribes. He found vast tracts of wild tea the leaves of which the hill people picked. A man of great skill, he took on the task of tea planting in spite of the harsh conditions, remote and hostile cold in winter and steamy hot in summer. Tigers, leopards and wolves constantly threatened the lives of workers and primitive settlements of the tea workers were subjected to regular attacks by local hill tribes but they persevered and gradually the jungle was opened and the best tea tracts cultivated under the light shade of surrounding tree shades.

Charles planted a nursery that consisted of indigenous plants ignoring the Chinese tea plant imports. Here was a pioneer of extraordinary ability possessing more than adequate skills to take on a task of creating an embryo Tea industry supported with limited funds. He continued with his project gardens with the help of Chinese advisors.

He sent a sample of his manufactured tea to the Tea Committee in Delhi where it was approved by Experts as 'of good quality'.

Next he sent a consignment of 46 chests to be auctioned in London on 10 Jan, 1839. It travelled by boat down the Brahmaputra on to the Sunderbans and finally to the Hooghly River to be berthed on an English vessel for London.

Charles Bruce received the Gold Medal from the British Royal Society of Arts for cultivation of the indigenous tea plants in Assam.

He died aged, 78 in Assam where he was buried in the Christian Graveyard at Tezpur. His cottage on an elevated juncture is kept in memoriam by his forbears.

Tezpur town is delightfully cradled among low hills descending down to the Brahmaputra River meeting the waters at its widest point with the scenic visuals of fishing craft under tiny sails.





Compiled by Soumen Bagchi

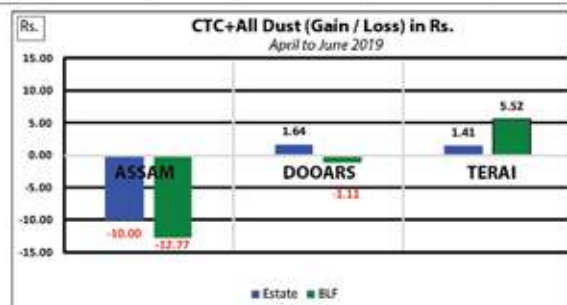


Highlights : Auction Average

India : April to June (in INR per Kg)

CTC + All Dust	ALL Sector			Estate			BLF		
	2019-20	2018-19	+/-	2019-20	2018-19	+/-	2019-20	2018-19	+/-
Assam	154.63	166.39	-11.76	169.34	179.34	-10.00	126.89	139.66	-12.77
Cachar	124.32	137.57	-13.25						
Doors	159.01	158.10	0.91	178.78	177.14	1.64	120.09	121.20	-1.11
Terai	132.64	127.28	5.36	152.15	150.74	1.41	115.42	109.90	5.52
N.India	150.52	156.30	-5.78						
S.India	105.76	95.81	9.95						
Orthodox									
N.India	258.01	221.33	36.68						
S.India	146.36	138.72	7.64						

CTC+All Dust (Gain / Loss) in Rs. April to June 2019		
	Estate	BLF
Assam	-10.00	-12.77
Doors	1.64	-1.11
Terai	1.41	5.52



World Average Tea Auction Prices

January to May (per Kg)

CENTRE	Currency	In Countrywise Currency			In INR (Approx)			In US \$ (Approx)		
		2019	2018	+/-	2019	2018	+/-	2019	2018	+/-
N. India (CTC + All Dust)	INR	132.97	127.96	5.01	132.97	127.96	5.01			
S. India (CTC + All Dust)	INR	107.82	99.64	8.18	107.82	99.64	8.18			
N. India (Orthodox)	INR	223.79	189.52	34.27	223.79	189.52	34.27			
S. India (Orthodox)	INR	146.58	135.92	10.66	146.58	135.92	10.66			
Chittagong	BDT	223.68	208.95	14.73	186.64	163.07	23.57	2.66	2.51	0.15
Mombasa (Kenya)	US Cents	222.00	281.00	-59.00	155.69	182.79	-27.10	2.22	2.81	-0.59
Limbe	US Cents	150.67	184.70	-34.03	105.66	120.15	-14.49	1.51	1.85	-0.34
Colombo (Mainly Orthodox)	SL Rs	574.84	617.16	-42.32	237.66	258.54	-20.88	3.39	3.97	-0.58

Source : ITA

Exchange Rate: January to May (Approximate)	US\$ 1=				
		2019	India	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka
		2018	70.13	84.05	169.63
		65.05	83.35	155.28	





North India CTC Auction Averages

Month	2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)
Apr	90.2	156.80	81.5	157.68	68.0	147.99	110.7	148.71	60.9	150.80
May	227.9	144.95	196.1	148.38	196.7	138.90	158.5	138.46	123.0	143.00
Jun	228.0	154.68	212.7	156.77	205.4	149.46	169.3	149.36	181.1	143.82
July			268.3	156.11	264.4	143.42	265.6	149.94	274.0	144.42
Aug			397.0	150.53	370.6	141.54	344.6	141.00	262.6	143.51
Sep			350.5	145.72	298.2	140.00	306.8	137.97	347.3	140.61
Oct			384.8	145.31	335.0	141.92	212.0	137.32	288.9	132.92
Nov			362.8	148.75	461.6	140.71	390.1	138.30	325.8	140.28
Dec			375.8	144.48	386.5	137.72	329.5	132.64	464.6	135.61
Jan			384.8	132.81	321.3	124.49	318.2	122.16	280.3	124.36
Feb			184.7	115.97	276.4	105.11	228.3	110.49	135.8	111.03
Mar			48.6	115.52	38.1	94.77	116.3	106.87	32.8	115.40
April to Jun	546.1	150.97	490.4	153.57	470.1	144.83	438.5	145.26	365.0	144.71
April to March			3247.6	144.82	3222.2	136.12	2949.9	134.83	2777.0	136.74



North India All Dust Auction Averages

Month	2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)
Apr	18.2	152.75	16.5	161.77	14.5	148.82	28.8	149.97	13.3	155.65
May	75.9	141.18	69.5	160.22	67.2	140.95	57.1	140.39	35.1	144.22
Jun	74.7	156.24	74.7	169.39	73.7	156.54	65.4	155.06	60.9	152.87
July			97.7	176.58	94.3	160.67	114.7	157.41	104.0	158.62
Aug			146.8	169.81	122.5	161.54	135.4	146.35	95.7	157.50
Sep			123.4	161.40	96.2	162.61	116.3	144.20	127.8	152.44
Oct			131.0	160.66	111.9	165.44	79.4	145.46	87.3	143.43
Nov			117.1	158.13	138.3	159.66	124.2	145.51	110.7	148.46
Dec			112.1	147.99	110.6	152.65	94.2	138.03	147.3	142.72
Jan			111.9	130.19	100.6	132.71	93.5	128.46	91.8	127.78
Feb			61.7	114.17	67.7	114.50	85.1	113.81	38.0	113.63
Mar			16.9	111.64	5.8	108.74	32.8	108.50	5.9	116.65
April to Jun	168.8	149.09	160.7	164.64	155.4	149.08	151.2	148.55	109.2	150.43
April to March			1079.4	155.84	1003.3	152.46	1026.8	141.20	917.9	146.23





South India CTC Auction Averages

Month	2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)
Apr	25.0	97.13	25.2	89.49	26.2	96.26	32.5	91.01	29.6	74.76
May	37.4	95.48	47.4	77.60	45.5	83.43	21.0	93.06	49.8	67.28
Jun	39.8	90.32	43.0	76.46	52.5	73.37	26.7	96.11	45.3	63.04
July			44.2	78.67	29.6	69.43	34.4	88.47	39.8	64.26
Aug			37.2	83.08	55.2	64.45	37.0	86.58	45.6	62.04
Sep			41.0	90.72	40.6	69.56	41.4	95.18	34.1	63.43
Oct			39.2	88.93	29.3	76.49	27.0	95.49	46.3	67.17
Nov			34.1	96.50	54.9	73.93	35.7	97.05	34.1	70.06
Dec			40.9	97.47	27.8	79.37	27.5	102.55	31.4	77.71
Jan			39.3	97.18	33.5	87.23	27.4	105.55	29.4	92.73
Feb			27.0	96.72	23.9	92.56	28.2	103.92	24.7	105.19
Mar			28.9	97.72	29.5	91.31	29.2	104.77	26.3	91.56
April to Jun	102.3	93.88	115.5	79.77	124.2	81.89	80.2	93.24	124.7	67.51
April to March			447.3	88.35	448.5	77.91	368.0	96.23	436.4	72.51



South India All Dust Auction Averages

Month	2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)
Apr	40.5	115.65	52.3	115.33	37.9	121.31	56.4	109.75	52.5	92.18
May	63.9	114.82	79.8	103.15	68.7	106.91	49.9	110.88	82.0	85.07
Jun	69.3	109.17	69.1	99.38	78.0	98.14	49.5	108.76	71.3	81.48
July			65.8	101.78	46.3	96.54	44.5	101.94	61.7	82.46
Aug			45.3	108.51	77.6	95.51	55.7	105.14	60.7	81.35
Sep			54.7	120.44	47.1	93.22	60.7	108.79	59.6	87.08
Oct			62.3	116.27	53.1	102.96	42.0	108.36	74.4	95.38
Nov			66.7	116.96	76.4	100.28	55.8	108.26	57.0	92.96
Dec			61.6	117.08	46.3	97.66	59.8	108.86	47.0	98.70
Jan			67.3	116.64	60.1	107.72	60.0	114.16	55.5	111.48
Feb			50.0	116.61	45.1	114.82	44.9	124.25	50.0	117.11
Mar			61.7	116.63	54.3	115.74	52.2	127.59	45.4	105.10
April to Jun	173.7	112.76	201.1	105.02	184.5	106.16	155.8	109.80	205.8	85.64
April to March			736.4	111.95	690.8	103.42	631.4	111.33	717.1	93.00





North India Orthodox Auction Averages

Month	2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)
Apr	90.3	156.75	4.1	228.30	3.0	218.30	7.7	228.44	2.6	217.59
May	227.9	144.95	29.6	218.71	24.6	214.46	14.2	214.30	10.7	188.85
Jun	228.0	154.68	23.6	223.41	24.4	222.09	15.0	244.11	16.1	222.05
July			27.0	225.22	25.3	231.87	23.9	242.49	21.0	246.26
Aug			36.4	206.64	39.0	228.26	33.3	227.28	20.2	238.89
Sep			34.6	191.26	23.3	211.77	24.9	213.57	21.2	215.42
Oct			31.6	200.42	33.0	213.32	21.2	208.88	10.7	214.98
Nov			28.4	210.85	39.9	213.55	33.7	209.18	24.8	209.21
Dec			37.3	217.24	25.7	197.09	21.3	207.88	21.6	204.01
Jan			26.7	185.38	23.2	169.31	24.6	180.89	5.6	181.89
Feb			3.9	164.54	13.4	152.73	16.4	158.28	2.4	164.81
Mar			0.9	161.68	3.1	170.01	3.6	164.26	0.6	164.47
April to Jun	546.2	150.97	57.4	221.33	52.0	218.27	36.9	229.38	29.4	209.60
April to March			284.2	207.89	277.8	209.36	239.8	211.37	157.5	216.72



South India Orthodox Auction Averages

Month	2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17		2015-16	
	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)	Qty. (L. Kgs)	Avg. (Rs.)
Apr	5.5	145.66	6.2	138.24	4.2	149.91	6.1	132.67	4.8	118.35
May	8.3	145.77	11.4	138.19	8.9	141.32	5.6	136.00	8.8	118.74
Jun	9.5	147.29	9.6	139.67	11.2	127.50	6.5	141.53	8.2	118.26
July			9.2	128.06	6.8	125.74	5.1	131.16	8.7	113.95
Aug			5.3	126.32	11.4	127.96	8.3	138.48	8.7	112.72
Sep			6.9	136.35	7.0	120.57	9.8	142.84	9.1	120.67
Oct			7.7	139.94	10.0	129.32	6.4	138.25	10.3	116.44
Nov			9.0	135.17	11.6	121.64	8.7	134.53	9.3	120.25
Dec			8.1	138.50	6.8	121.33	8.6	134.57	7.0	125.47
Jan			9.9	144.28	8.7	133.10	7.5	134.68	8.5	129.68
Feb			7.3	147.98	5.5	130.05	5.5	137.66	7.1	127.95
Mar			8.1	148.79	6.6	133.02	6.6	143.52	5.2	119.13
April to Jun	23.3	146.36	27.2	138.72	24.3	136.43	18.3	136.85	21.8	118.47
April to March			98.7	138.70	98.8	129.22	84.8	137.38	95.7	119.95



Auction Average of Estate : April to June

Assam

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
Large Brokens	177.81	180.81	165.61	161.77	166.21
Medium Brokens	180.15	185.24	172.06	158.39	170.50
Small Brokens	180.74	189.68	175.53	165.33	173.69
Fannings	168.87	179.08	163.94	160.29	162.42
PD	167.90	185.50	163.11	161.47	170.56
Dust	175.48	194.27	176.23	171.79	180.48
All Secondaries	131.41	138.57	128.50	122.46	121.65

Doors

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
Large Brokens	160.69	150.86	147.57	141.70	147.68
Medium Brokens	179.83	175.32	168.13	164.72	167.37
Small Brokens	194.44	191.40	189.30	178.55	179.76
Fannings	182.78	185.82	180.56	172.83	170.23
PD	165.93	172.53	160.65	158.79	153.81
Dust	157.25	160.60	149.18	149.21	144.95
All Secondaries	146.13	143.28	139.89	137.10	129.22

Terai

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
Large Brokens	142.62	134.31	124.37	125.37	125.06
Medium Brokens	147.07	145.55	130.90	138.76	140.50
Small Brokens	162.76	163.32	147.65	149.48	155.18
Fannings	158.18	162.40	146.76	147.22	151.62
PD	148.18	158.72	134.77	138.18	136.32
Dust	147.89	152.09	139.63	136.79	136.18
All Secondaries	129.40	119.37	114.77	122.73	106.98

Cachar

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
Large Brokens	123.04	129.55	118.05	114.29	115.02
Medium Brokens	124.13	134.02	127.49	118.44	121.35
Small Brokens	126.91	141.98	131.33	126.93	133.03
Fannings	127.27	136.16	122.71	119.97	123.58
PD	123.74	140.16	123.85	121.25	122.16
Dust	122.64	142.12	124.66	115.65	121.29
All Secondaries	111.57	123.34	107.72	110.11	97.83





Auction Average of Estate : April to June Tripura

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
Large Brokens	139.36	140.34	125.31	122.00	127.95
Medium Brokens	133.47	139.96	122.54	123.37	123.48
Small Brokens	139.07	137.39	121.45	130.09	131.03
Fannings	125.16	127.60	118.50	123.43	113.09
PD	127.76	132.54	112.77	117.40	113.03
Dust	136.65	148.02	121.87	121.78	126.10
All Secondaries	119.65	128.80	97.37	100.79	105.63

Highest selling grades are in bold font

Category-wise percentage of Tea sold in Auction under different price range April to June

ASSAM : Estate		Below Rs.140	Rs.140-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. 171-180	Rs. 181-190	Rs. 191-200	Above Rs.200	Total %
Primary CTC	2019 %	26	9	8	9	8	7	6	28	100
	2018 %	16	9	9	10	10	8	8	30	100
Primary Dust	2019 %	23	9	10	11	10	8	6	22	100
	2018 %	6	6	7	8	10	12	14	37	100
Secondaries	2019 %	68	9	7	6	4	2	1	2	100
	2018 %	59	12	8	7	5	4	2	4	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 %	30	9	9	9	8	6	5	23	100
	2018 %	18	8	8	9	9	8	9	29	100

Dooars & Terai : Estate		Below Rs.140	Rs.140-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. 171-180	Rs. 181-190	Rs. 191-200	Above Rs.200	Total %
Primary CTC	2019 %	24	4	5	7	9	10	10	30	100
	2018 %	20	5	6	8	10	11	11	29	100
Primary Dust	2019 %	31	9	9	12	11	10	8	8	100
	2018 %	25	9	9	9	14	13	8	13	100
Secondaries	2019 %	56	9	9	9	6	5	3	4	100
	2018 %	59	10	8	7	7	5	3	3	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 %	29	5	6	8	9	9	9	24	100
	2018 %	26	6	6	8	10	10	10	23	100

ASSAM : BLF		Below Rs.110	Rs.111-120	Rs. 121-130	Rs. 131-140	Rs. 141-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Above Rs.170	Total %
Primary CTC	2019 %	19	21	21	14	8	6	5	5	100
	2018 %	12	10	14	17	18	12	7	11	100
Primary Dust	2019 %	14	21	32	14	7	5	4	4	100
	2018 %	3	4	13	16	17	13	9	25	100
Secondaries	2019 %	67	19	8	3	1	0	0	2	100
	2018 %	52	17	15	9	4	2	1	1	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 %	24	21	22	13	7	5	4	4	100
	2018 %	15	9	14	16	16	11	7	13	100

Dooars & Terai : BLF		Below Rs.110	Rs.111-120	Rs. 121-130	Rs. 131-140	Rs. 141-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Above Rs.170	Total %
Primary CTC	2019 %	31	34	20	7	3	2	1	2	100
	2018 %	39	25	16	9	5	2	1	2	100
Primary Dust	2019 %	40	32	18	5	3	1	1	1	100
	2018 %	29	19	20	15	7	4	2	4	100
Secondaries	2019 %	65	21	6	3	1	1	1	1	100
	2018 %	69	14	7	4	2	2	1	0	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 %	35	33	19	7	3	2	1	2	100
	2018 %	42	23	15	9	5	2	1	2	100



Mangra Oraon Man of Many parts



By **Alope Mookerjee**



The turbulent politics of West Bengal in the '60s, with the entry of the CPM (Communist Party Marxist) supported United Front Government, greatly impacted the labour movement in the Dooars. In many estates, the CPM affiliated labour unions were gathering strength and getting aggressive. Jyoti Basu, then Labour Minister of the UF Government, on his first official visit to the Dooars, addressed the tea garden workers in a massive rally organized by the CPM party of West Bengal. In his speech Jyoti Basu roused the workers to a mass movement against the management for their 'tyrannical' ways and 'profiteering' through the sweat, blood and tears of the 'down trodden' workers. Following this, reports of gross indiscipline, manhandling of Managers, Assistant Managers, and illegal strikes with demands started pouring in. A new trend began with the belligerent workers surrounding the Management staff for long hourstill their demands, often unreasonable, were met. 'Gherao', as this new tactic got to be known as, was soon added to the lexicon of the English language.

In this state of labour turmoil, it would seem incredulous that Ghatia should remain unaffected. But that was a fact. The workers of Ghatia believed good and sincere work paid for their livelihood and welfare ever so much more than union movements and strikes. Work, therefore, continued peacefully for us.

Then, sometime in the month of April of 1968, a state-wide 'hartal'* was declared by the CPM unions of the Dooars. Characteristically, the workers of Ghatia were not in favour of the strike. They approached the management with a wish to continue work. We decided to keep the estate open, blissfully unaware that the consequences of this decision would be the cause of a great deal of anxiety bordering on tragedy.

We decided to continue with our crop protection sprays, on the strike declared day, using the usual battery of power sprayers close to the estate entry point. It was a serious lapse and exposed our naïveté; for a squad of fifteen motorised sprayers in operation together could cause an enormous din and be heard for miles in that tranquil country air.

Work started early as usual and without an incident. After the morning field work, I returned at around 10.00 o'clock for a late breakfast laid out in the veranda of my bungalow. The height of the bungalow on stilts allowed a good view into the distance. Looking out during the relaxed breakfast, I suddenly noticed six trucks crammed with men driving in to the estate. The leaders of the mob had evidently heard the sound of our working sprayers and gathered enough supporters to enter the estate with the intention of stopping work-forcefully if required.

I also noticed, with some apprehension, the estate manager walking towards the vicinity of the parked trucks and all the men jumping off the vehicles to surround him. The scene appeared ominous. I left my half eaten breakfast and hastened to join the manager.





He appeared suddenly in our midst like manna from heaven and with his personality and persuasive talk succeeded in pacifying the crowd and stemming the physical blows.

On reaching the spot, the mob parted menacingly allowing just enough space for me to enter their midst. Swallowed up amongst them, I found myself next to the Manager surrounded by at least two hundred scruffy men armed with bows and arrows, axes, 'lathis'* and long bush knives. I could not spot a single worker from our estate amongst this mob. These men were strangers from outside who had now begun to scream obscenities with raucous demands to stop all work immediately while threateningly brandishing their weapons.

With the mood of the mob turning uglier by the minute, I realised quickly that prudence must prevail over valour. I whispered this to my manager and we announced our decision loudly enough for the crowd to hear that all estate work would be stopped forthwith as per their demands. However, even while making this announcement, we began to receive the first body blows from their lathis*. To say I was not scared would be untrue. I felt our end was near and we would soon be destined to memory. And we would have been but for the courage and quick thinking of our moustachioed Mangra Driver.

He appeared suddenly in our midst like manna from heaven and with his personality and persuasive talk succeeded in pacifying the crowd and stemming the physical blows.

As with most mobs in a similar situation, confusion followed Mangra's intrusion.

Arguments for and against lynching us could be heard all around. In this ensuing melee Mangra furtively succeeded in opening up a way to escort us out from the centre. He turned to me and whispered that I should follow him, very quietly – no rush no heroics! I passed on the message to the Manager and got him to move ahead of me very quietly. With Mangra leading and our heads lowered, we walked slowly out of the unruly crowd. Still busy with their furious arguments, no one seemed to notice our quiet exit. The factory being just around the corner, we managed to reach safety within its high fencing and locked gates.

The incident would have certainly ended in tragedy had Mangra Driver not appeared at that dangerously critical moment. I shall always remember him with a great deal of respect and affection that a brave and loyal person deserves.

During my usual field duties, the following day, each and every worker I met expressed his or her anguish at our harrowing experience. I could sense their genuine concern as also their happiness at seeing me unharmed. Their kind thoughts for my welfare were indeed very touching.

For me, the five years as an assistant manager in Ghatia was a unique experience. The workers there deserve the best.

PS: Today Ghatia Tea Estate is considered as one of the very best in the Dooars for its high quality teas as well as its high yields.



Batting Order (Top 4 Gardens) - Dooars & Terai

(Cut Off Quantity 3,00,000 Kgs.)

01-04-2018 TO 26-03-19

Sl. No.	TRADE MARK	CTC+DUST	
		Kgs.	Avg. Pr.
1	GHATIAROYAL	576443	225.5
2	PAHARGOOMIAH	1101659	215.21
3	GULMA	1145430	209.07
4	DALGAON	983362	203.45



Contemporary pays homage

In Memory



Brij Mohan Khaitan

(August 14, 1927- June 01, 2019), a veteran industrialist and Williamson Magor Group (WGM) patriarch died in Kolkata at the age of 92. Considered a doyen of the tea

industry in independent India, Khaitan is survived by his younger son, Aditya and daughter Divya Jalan.

Fondly called "Evergreen tea man of India" in business circles, Khaitan had recently retired as non-executive chairman from the boards of Eveready Industries and McLeod Russel – both WGM companies – owing to old age. He continued to serve as chairman emeritus in both these firms. A winner of the ICC Calcutta Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award in 2013, Khaitan has served as the ICC president in 1973. His demise marks the end of an era and loss of a leader and guide for the Indian tea industry. May his soul rest in peace.

"An old friend remembers"

SIR, India, particularly its tea Industry, engineering services and the dry-cell battery business, lost a tycoon, when Brij Mohan Khaitan passed away on Saturday 1st June. Born on 14 August, 1927, he spent his childhood in the Burrabazar area. He rose to head what became Kolkata-based Williamson Magor Group which incorporated McLeod Russel India Ltd (tea and engineering services) and Eveready Industries India Ltd (batteries). Unlike many of his ilk, he led, rather than drove, his diverse flock. Humility was a hallmark with him in his own business and his dealings at the general commercial / industrial level. He was a personal friend from 1936 when we both joined the 1st Standard in St. Xavier's College (School-section), 30 Park Street, Kolkata. His mercurial rise to the top was an example for many of us in the tea industry which both of us served. The Royal Calcutta Turf Club was patronised by him, later by his elder son, Deepak, who revived the ailing horse-racing in Kolkata. Golf at The Royal Calcutta Golf Club was another favourite which he patronised and led during terrorism days. As Captain of the Club, much later, I had to work hard at maintaining the high standards set by him.

Yours, etc., **Saroj K Mehera,**

From Statesman, 2nd June, Kolkata

Basant Kumar Birla

(12 January 1921 – 3 July 2019) was an Indian businessman of the Birla family. He was Chairman of the Krishnarpan Charity Trust, BK Birla Institute of Engineering & Technology (BKBIET) and various educational trusts and institutes.



Birla, the youngest son of philanthropist Ghanshyam Das Birla. By fifteen years of age, he was already actively associated with a large number of companies and

eventually became the chairman of Kesoram Industries.

In 1959, established the Indo Ethiopian Textiles Share Company, which was the first major joint venture by any Indian industrialist. In response, the Emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I, awarded him the medal of the Order of Menelik II, the highest Ethiopian award.

In April 1941, he married Sarla, the daughter of activist and writer Brijlal Biyani, after having been introduced to each other by Jamnalal Bajaj and Mahatma Gandhi. They had a son, Aditya Vikram Birla, and two daughters, Jayashree Mohta and Manjushree Khaitan.



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