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Official International
TEA DAY is 21st
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Nothing Official About It!
After all tea day is 365 x 24 x 7

The United Nations General Assembly has designated May 21 as International Tea Day based on a proposal moved by India at the FAO Intergovernmental Group (IGG) on Tea in October 2015



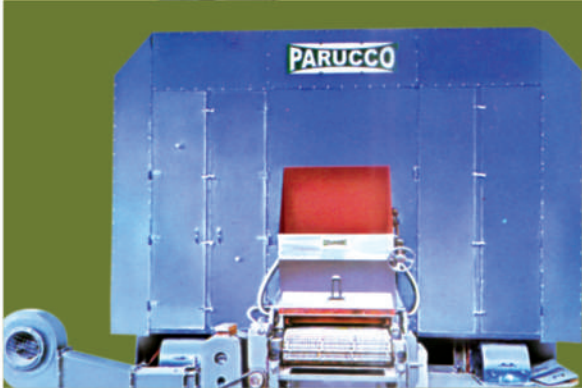
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TEA TIME



Errol O'Brien

1. A Hundred and twenty six years ago. Babington tea Room in Rome opened Tea houses called Via Dua Macelli. What type of Tea did they serve to entertain their guests?
2. Which Tea Plantation was established by Baron John Von Rosenberg in 1879 in the Hugh Range, Munnar and now hosts a Museum?
3. Alex Morgan of the US women's football team benefits. A particular mushroom is steeped into the tea, aging back to Chinese medicine.
7. The term a Tea taster uses to describe a flat tea through age.
8. The infused leaf of which area in India has a Black Currant aroma emitted from the teas grown near a surrounding of black currant bushes.



4. Name the non alcoholic elixir drink that gives strong energy and tastes of herbal tea grown cold.
5. Which Company making white and smoked Tea in Scotland was handed the top gong at the Paris prestigious Tea awards making it for that particular year officially the best tea on the planet?
6. Name a fermented slightly alcoholic light effervescent sweetened black or green tea which is a functional beverage with health supposed
9. Which Darjeeling Garden's name when translated from Nepali means ' Fountain Head'?
10. 'Wild Masheer' named after the Game Fish is the Heritage Bungalow in the Balipara Division of which Estate?

1)	Darjeeling	4)	Amazon!
2)	Lockhart T.E.	5)	Wee Tea Farm
3)	A Tea sipping celebration, not a digression, referring to the Boston Tea Party but an expression: 'that's the tea' / away of spreading news	6)	Kombucha Tea
		7)	Tired
		8)	Darjeeling
		9)	Jungpana
		10)	Addabarie Tea Estate

ANSWERS



PUBLISHERS NOTE

"Packaged Tea too has become a commodity" – is what a distraught marketer was overheard telling a colleague. It is true that a plethora of 'brands' with or without any equity have sprung up all over, our country with MRP as low as Rs 140 per kilogram. In our next issue we shall investigate the story behind this unique phenomenon. Is it a fact?

Artificial intelligence is here for all to experience. Each time we Google something of interest we are inundated with advertisements of similar products or offers. And hand in hand follows the power and speed of quantum computing, which is making data analysis so quick that, the day is not far when very accurate predictive algorithms will be available in real time models. No doubt, there will be an immense first mover advantage for those who venture into this area. How can these technological advances be useful to us in the tea Trade is what we will be asking knowledgeable sources in the next issue. Together with our regular features.

Wishing all our readers the compliments of the season.

A Nandkeolyar





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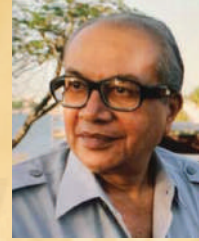
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THE PRIDE AND PRESTIGE OF INDIAN TEA

Prafull Goradia

Extracts from Prafull Goradia's book published in 1978 by Oxford Book Profiles of Tea" Price. Rs. 40.00. **PROFILES OF TEA** by Prafull Goradia



The Champagne of Tea

Darjeeling is the champagne of Indian tea. In the world market, without the name Darjeeling, Indian tea would be like French wine without the prestige of champagne. This wine of wines forms only 3 per cent of the total production in France but its prestige-value is incalculable.

Other countries like Italy, Germany, Portugal and Spain produce just as good wine as France does. In fact, certain varieties like Moselle and Riesling from Germany and Chianti from Italy are far better than their French comparables. And yet, France experiences a unique pride and enjoys an unusual prestige in the realm of wine. In fact, in the mind of the average person, especially outside Europe, good wine is synonymous with French wine.

Today, Darjeeling tea is the thick of adversity and on the threshold of tragedy. If there is ONE reason for this faltering, for this stagnation, it is the triple combination of Darjeeling's altitude, its proximity to the snowy Himalayas and its bushes whose number belong to the small, slow-growing China substantial, China-hybrid varieties. Ironically, it is this same triple combination that has given Darjeeling tea its unique flavour and has made it the champagne of tea.

Marketing

The marketing problem of Darjeeling tea is a paradoxical one. On the one hand, there are plenty of tea-lovers in many parts of the world who thirst for the liquid aroma of Darjeeling. On the other hand, there are few agencies dedicated to carrying Darjeeling tea to its anxious consumers. The difficulty is that the seekers of the champagne of tea are scattered and agencies engaged in the blending, packing and distribution of tea the world over, have found the size of Darjeeling business so limited as to inevitably give it a low priority.

Self-Reliance and Unity

If those in the regular business of blending, packing and distribution cannot afford to provide Darjeeling tea

the pipelines it needs, the industry must develop its own network. In other-words, the industry should prepare itself to blend, pack and, as far as practicable, distribute its produce for its many consumers. This is a task which no individual garden or producer is likely to be equal to. The entire Darjeeling industry needs to join hands and then undertake the task in a professional, business like manner. We might recall that we did say that we should have Rs. 25 lakhs a year available to us.

A co-operative CONCERN with all Darjeeling gardens participating should be formed. A token capital (say Rs. 1,80,000 or Rs. 10 per hectare under tea) might be issued and each garden-shareholder (in the event a garden changes hands, the share goes with it) would have one share for every hectare under tea it has. The board of directors (11 members in all?) would be representative of the shareholders but the managing director should be a fully paid professional with a successful record in consumer marketing as well as business organisation. Such a person might be difficult to get or attract initially, in which case the services -of someone from the trade could be obtained on deputation for three to five years. The concern would do well





DARJEELING

to have a chairman (honorary) who also has a great deal of marketing experience. Such a chairman could be invaluable to the managing director for guidance, for verifying his ideas and for helping him interpret his plans to a board otherwise comprising planting, rather than marketing, experience.

This scheme would have to be sold to the Government of India who must be persuaded to reduce the Darjeeling (Zone III) excise duty by 25 paise per kilogram for this specific purpose. These 25 paise per kilogram (based on the previous two years average crop) should be contributed/donated to the CONCERN by ALL Darjeeling gardens. It has to be ensured that this contribution is an allowable expense in the hands of the gardens and is not a taxable income in the hands of the CONCERN.

The CONCERN should have a blending-cum-packing unit (initially manual, later progressively mechanised) at a convenient location at the foot of the Darjeeling hills. It should treat the whole world as its market but confine its supply of packs (of any size, shape or design required by the various markets) to tea produced in the Darjeeling district.

The CONCERN, through its panel of at least two blender / tasters, could purchase tea from the gardens strictly on merit and on the basis of requirements and availability. The containers could be returnable (to save the gardens packing costs) and payment cash on delivery. The CONCERN must have its options open as to which tea to buy or not and, if so, at what price.



On the other hand, gardens should be free to offer, sell or not according to their individual economies. What needs to be stressed here is that having established the CONCERN, let it grow naturally and function independently. If it happens to buy tea cheap, it would ultimately come back to the gardens in terms of the CONCERN'S profits/dividends. After the first few years when the CONCERN'S blends, brands and business are well-set and profitable, a change in policy might be made. Based on the previous year's

profitability and the current year's projection, the CONCERN could begin to offer a cash bonus (in addition to price paid on merit of the tea) at a flat rate for every kilogram of tea purchased by it. This would have two advantages: one, early extra payment to the gardens and two, avoiding unnecessary double taxation (the gardens paying tax on dividends which would already be after-tax in the hands of the CONCERN). This is the stage at which the mission of the CONCERN could be said to have begun to be fulfilled. The chances of the CONCERN fulfilling its mission would be higher than those of any similar new marketing enterprise.

The basis of this optimism is that the CONCERN'S raison d'être (reason for existence) would be the marketing of only Darjeeling tea to willing consumers who are many but scattered. The fact that they are scattered makes the task difficult but for which there is the annual subsidy of say Rs. 25 lakhs. Only crass dissensions amongst shareholders or gross incompetence could lead to failure.

This is the only way of solving the marketing problem of Darjeeling tea on a fair, sound and long-term basis without, in any way, disturbing the present pattern of sale of interfering with natural market forces. Create a co-operative of gardens, invest say Rs. 25 lakhs (to

come from a reduction in excise duty) annually for a number of years to build up a marketing organisation, a blending business and a battery of consumer brands, both for overseas as well as for the home market. Apart from helping itself, Darjeeling tea would be performing a unique service to the

nation: by promoting the sale overseas of expensive tea in value-added packets: by taking the pride and prestige of Indian tea to more and more homes the world over: by ultimately offering itself as the spearhead of India's entire tea promotion overseas.

Darjeeling would then be not only the pride and prestige of Indian tea but also the pilot of its exports! What all this could achieve for the hill people, we should leave for economists to assess!! What tea could do for tourism, we might leave for experts to judge!!





Chamong Tee

Finest Organic Teas

An interview with an Innovative optimistic Entrepreneur

Tea Time met with Mr Askok Lohia and Mr Ajay Kichloo the powerhouse behind Brand Chamong. In the intense couple of hours, which was a truly an educative experience, a possible road map for a prestigious but troubled Darjeeling Tea Industry emerged.

Going back 4 decades, since the quantity was small, Darjeeling was never marketed domestically, though there were people who could afford high end teas. Today too there are people who can afford high priced teas-after all Ferrari's and Mercedes Benz have huge sales in India. World brands are coming to India in all forms. But the domestic consumers have only tasted medium quality teas and its only Bengali consumers who developed a taste for these flavours from Darjeeling.

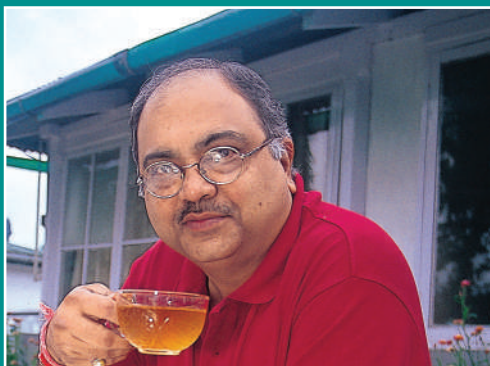
During Mr. Lohia's Chairmanship of the DTA for 3 terms 2000-3, the problems of Darjeeling were highlighted. We fought for the GI. (Geographical Indication) But sadly we are in the hands of an international cartel which operates globally. To be sustainable it is necessary that the global buyers compete with the domestic consumers. Our exports have lived on devaluations! A suggestion that the tea be auctioned in dollars in the days of Chairman Ahuja was shot down by the domestic traders.

With the GI, now in existence

some national packer should take up the challenge to develop and market domestically a brand of pure Darjeeling Tea- call it a Darjeeling drink and promote it for its richness in terms of health and particularly as a hot beverage after meals as a satisfying, flavoury digestive.

Darjeeling teas are not commodities and therefore the auctions of it in bulk cannot possibly be the proper or preferred way of sale. Take for instance Champagne-the sparkling wine is sold only in bottles (not barrels) and at prices and quantities decided by the producers, only once a year. Champagne the bubbly is only 15% of what is sold as similar wine globally but carries its prestige.

Fair trade proponents say that \$2 US per kilo is a fair price BUT is that in any way fair? When the cost of production more than \$2 US , then is a below cost of production purchase a FAIR PRICE??



Ashok Lohia, Directors of Chamong Tee Exports Pvt Ltd





DARJEELING

Coming back to specifics, 8m kg of Darjeeling are produced. 50% is whole leaf and 50% is broken and fanning grades. Say 70% of the 4m WL is exported directly by the producers, which leaves 1.2 m kg in the domestic markets. Fanning are exported largely due to changing trends and the growth of the Tea bag market . The prices have been higher-but for the rest the export market has survived, and I repeat only due to the devaluation of the rupee

There are only 7 major Companies who produce 80% of Darjeeling teas. The rest are smaller estates. What if, nothing was available loose? For those teas which the producers could not or did not export directly, if there were a panel of tasters who evaluated these into 4 categories, with each category having a fixed price. This can be done in a fair manner, with representation of 2 or 3 tea tasters who have a life time experience with the product and have recognition worldwide . Would that not give a boost to the market? As well get people to make quality? With a GI stamp there could not be any adulteration without heavy consequences for the deviant trader .And since it's only through the generation of demand can prices ever go up, we must focus on that.

India consumes 1000mg of teas and I am sure that 3-4 m.kg of Darjeeling can find a good home.

Most of Darjeeling is Organic, and it is truly a herbal healthy brew. And the world wants Organic today. There is synergy in this selling proposition.

Large funds are required for modern Organic cultivation. Neither, the TRA or the Government is doing anything much for organic tea. It is expensive to grow organic teas in the hills. Not all inputs can be sourced locally and more often than not inputs need to travel long kilometers before reaching us.

Rising workers aspirations are a challenge. With 35% absenteeism, and all the welfare and social burden, which can be over 20% of the COP, heaped on the

There are 4 aspects if we look at the big picture they opined

- 1 Plantations
- 2 Workers and the their Productivity
- 3 Quality
- 4 Marketing-as opposed to disposal

Producers it is also necessary for us to focus on skill development and modern machines and discover ways and means to motivate the workers.

In conclusion the focus must be on marketing domestically. As the consumer is willing to pay if the product is good and the branding appropriate.

Let India get the taste of good Darjeeling Tea.





GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATOR ACT

Protection & Opportunities



Sanjay Bansal

Tea planting in India started in the early part of the nineteenth century around the 1830s. Tea saplings were planted along the Himalayan foothills, the Terai regions and the Brahmaputra Valley from the North east to the North West. The result was that in some locations the plants thrived whilst in some others they did not. Where the plants did well was because of the friendly soil, climate and husbandry.

Over the years some of these regions expanded their tea plantations and these are still successfully producing whereas in many others they just faded away.

The Indian model of commercial tea cultivation incorporates agricultural practices as well as processing within the tea estate as an integrated unit. The scales of operations were economical because the primary factors of production viz. land and labour were available in abundance.

In Darjeeling, Planting started in 1840s and the plants thrived owing to the friendly soil, climate and agronomical practices. The Tea from Dar-

jeeling developed a unique aroma for which it became famous. This unique aroma became the main attribute of the Darjeeling Tea.

In the contemporary scenario, especially in the last forty years, the WTO has recognised the intellectual property rights of agriculture products. In the early 1980s the need for a “Darjeeling” protection was felt and therefore the Tea Board of India came up with a Darjeeling logo (the lady with the basket). At that time because of the trade realities, this Darjeeling tea logo could be used on packaging which contained blends.

In the early 1990s, the law allowed only packages containing 100% Darjeeling teas. This upset many exporters and importers of Darjeeling teas abroad, particularly brand owners in Europe and other parts of the world.

Subsequent to that in 1997 the Tea Board organised an intellectual property rights seminar. Attended by producers and Traders where the WTO compliant intellectual property rights for agri-products, was presented. The unique aroma of Darjeeling teas made it eligible for protection under the WTO’s IPR regime. This discernible quality was fundamentally connected to the geographical area where the product was grown i.e. the District of Darjeeling. In the list of first such products in the world, to be protected was Champagne and subsequent to that the other generic products such as Scotch whisky, to the extent that a Scotch whisky act was passed. The difference between the Scotch whisky act and Champagne Protection is that champagne has to be bottled in consumer packs within the champagne district and not outside. It therefore enjoys the status that is now called PDO, “Protected Designated Origin”. Scotch whisky on the other hand is labelled PGI, “Protected Geographical Indication”. This is because Scotch whisky is allowed to be packed into consumer packages outside of Scotland (ie outside of its geographical area) under the supervision of inspectors duly appointed by the Scotch whisky authorities.

In our case the propriety rights of Darjeeling Teas are with the Tea Board of India. In 1999 the GI registry was established in India, passed its own act of GI (The Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration & Protection), Act 1999 with the Registry’s office at Chennai.

In the meantime, in preparation of the protections, one needed to demonstrate how the product can be protected from adulteration. Therefore, a Trade Chain Integrity system was developed and released by The Tea Board of India in February 2000. The 87 tea estates of the Darjeeling District were included as licensed. Producers of Darjeeling Tea, all exporters of Darjeeling Tea would need to be registered under the CTM scheme, as it was called. The CTM scheme i.e. “Darjeeling Protected Certified Trade Mark Scheme” was based on the organic traceability and integrity system.

The Tea Board of India applied to the G.I. registry at Chennai for Darjeeling Tea and Logo, the application was accepted and in 2002, Darjeeling tea



DARJEELING

and Darjeeling logo became serial number 1 and 2 of GI registry of India. So Darjeeling Tea was the first product to be registered in India. Subsequent to that there were applications made as a community mark, collective mark and the Darjeeling tea industry was involved in different platforms including WIPO, (World Intellectual Property Organisation in Geneva).

The Tea Board of India and Darjeeling Tea Association (DTA) became founder members of the organization called "ORIGIN", which was conceived and supported by the European Nations. This was meant for all G.I. products all over the world, who came together to protect, promote and develop G.I. Products worldwide.

In Europe there was an amendment in 2006 with the introduction of European Commission Regulation 510 / 2006 wherein for the first time the EU would protect products produced outside of the EU and consumed in the EU for their intellectual property rights, provided they were registered under this regulation. So Darjeeling tea applied in November 2007 to be registered in the EU as a PGI. The delegation led by the Chairman Tea Board of India and the Chairman of DTA, which was me at that time, comprised of the District Magistrate of Darjeeling, and other members. An application was made on 12th November 2007. Our application was accepted and processed by the European Commission.

This is a long drawn process because it has to be translated into several languages pass through the governments of each member state and thereafter brought back and voted on. It takes years. In 2009, the European Commission

came back to us and said that the Darjeeling tea was an ideal case for upgrading as a "PDO", similar to Cham-

pagne. But we sadly declined as we did not have the infrastructure to pack all the teas on the tea estates of Darjeeling at that time.

The objective was to ultimately make Darjeeling tea a "PDO".

Our application was opposed by the German Tea Association, Austrian Tea Association, Intellectual Property Rights Office of France, Italian Tea Association, UK Tea Association and European Tea Association and also one Indian lawyer from Delhi, Mr. S. K. Jain. However we overcame all the opposition and were eventually granted the PGI status on 21st October 2011, but with a caveat, which we agreed to, that those teas which are blended / and ready with the European traders would be allowed time till October 2016. We did not want to kill the trade. We wanted to facilitate it.

Since Oct 2016, in Europe, it is a criminal act to sell any product by the name of Darjeeling Tea without it being 100% Darjeeling tea. The European Union has done a review of our registration of the traceability system and found it to be satisfactory.

The new strategy of the Ministry of Commerce and Tea Board of India is to form clusters for value addition near the tea growing areas. Once the clusters are formed together with the common facilities of packaging, we would be able to go to the next level of protection which is "PDO".

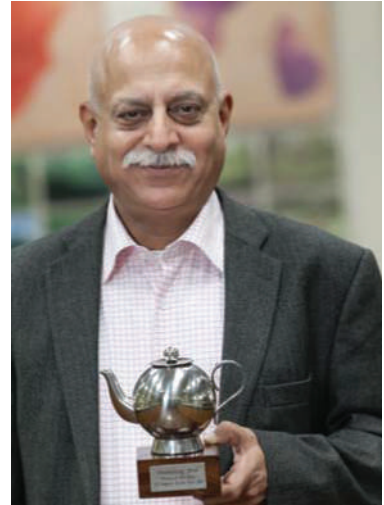
Clusters in North Bengal which would be funded from State Government ASIDE funds, Ministry of Commerce Funds, NITI Ayog funds and the Darjeeling Tea Association, ensuring that all packaging is done with the district of Darjeeling.

Only those who believe in intellectual property rights are the ones who have put their money where their mouth is and have sustained development of the Darjeeling tea industry.

Darjeeling has a very bright future and will overcome all the economic challenges and meet the aspiration of the workers as well.



WORLD'S BEST TEA SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR 2013



Ajay Kichlu with the Award



Chamong Tee Exports – An Indian Tea Company, gets World's Best - "Tea Supplier of the Year" award, from Taylors of Harrogate, U.K., who are currently the third largest packers in the U.K., and growing rapidly. Chamong Tee Exports Pvt. Ltd., is the leading tea producer/ exporter of Darjeeling and Assam Organic Teas and a market leader in the world of organic teas. Mr. Ian Brabbin, Head of Tea Buying at "Taylors" says, "There is genuine warmth in the relationship. Ajay is like a friend to us and Chamong Tee do make the best tea in Darjeeling and some of the best teas in the world. The service they give us is exceptional and they consistently go over and above our expectations". Chamong Tee Exports Pvt. Ltd. is a professionally managed family owned company, owned by the "Lohias". The company is under the

stewardship of Mr. Ashok Lohia, the current Chairman. Mr. Ashok Lohia added that we believe in what we do and are passionate about our business, and this perhaps, leads us to being exceptional and different from the others. Mr. Ajay Kichlu, Director Marketing, of Chamong, who visited Harrogate recently to receive the award, says that he was delighted to accept the award on behalf of the company. It speaks volumes for the team, as we have been chosen by 'Taylors' as the best tea suppliers, and 'Taylors' do purchase their requirements from leading quality tea growers, across the globe. He added that "we always knew we were amongst the best, and when our customers appreciate and endorse our efforts, we feel on top of the world, as we then know we are undoubtedly the best."



With Taylors Team at Harrogate with Award



QUESTIONS FOR TEEKAMPAGNE



Prof. Günter Faltn

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



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

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

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

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

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

True, it can be compared with hillsides in vineyards.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Arun N. Singh
founder member of
Tea Vision, writing
for Tea Time, has
come up with some
out of the box
suggestion to add
some bizz to the
Champagne of Teas

We all know that Darjeeling produces only 8 million Kgs of Tea and has a turn over of roughly 500 crores, however we have not been able to create a demand for such a niche tea. There are some very fundamental problems that inflict Darjeeling Tea Industry and it would be necessary to list them:

1. There is no land to extend the tea area. Hence reduction in cost of production is not possible.
2. Mechanisation is very limited and virtually non-existent due to terrain.
3. Due to high literacy it is unlikely the gen-next will be interested in picking green leaf. This will lead to scarcity of worker and subsequent loss of crop.
4. More than 30% production coming from low elevation tea area which is neither making money but spoiling the image of Darjeeling tea and quality.
5. Darjeeling tea continues to be a commodity and prices are determined by demand /supply. Efforts to have a GI marker has failed to increase sale or demand due to poor implementation and monitoring.
6. Even if we take the salary increase by 5% for workers, the cost escalation will be 3% which translates to 15/- to 18/- per year. The market is unable to meet this increase and hence more trouble.
7. Darjeeling gardens faces other problems such as connectivity, transportation, lack of water source for irrigation.
8. It is also a fact that internationally Darjeeling tea sells at astonishing prices.

To start with we would suggest to treat Darjeeling as a Guinea pig in all aspect when it comes to major policy changes. Here are some suggestions which we will need to experiment with and implement to get results.

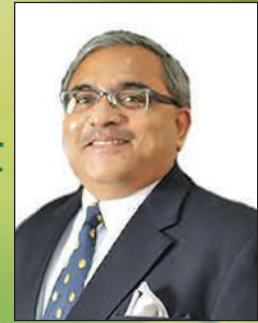
1. Only consider Darjeeling tea which is grown over 3000' elevation and above. This will remove 2 million Kgs from production.
2. Allow below 3000' areas for cultivation of other horticulture products. DTRC the Tea Board research arm should join hands with premier research agencies who work on horticulture and floriculture crops to advise owners on way forward. Oranges/Avocado/KIWI or Rubber can be interplanted immediately by removing one tea bush. Once full orchard status is obtained the tea can be removed/discarded. Government should

assist with subsidy during these transition.

3. India imports 80% of its requirement of edible oil – Can these sustain palm oil production or sunflower which grows very well in these areas.
 4. To sustain the production of these crops and also to protect it from theft, it should ideally be handed over to workers and their produce should be purchased/ marketed by the owners.
 5. The remaining area, above 3000' will be of fairly high quality. This tea depending on quality should be purchased by an marketing arm floated to deal with marketing of this tea. Alternately a marketing company can be floated with shareholding by producers/exporter/Tea Board/APEDA to add further value. This will ensure one point of sale and help monitoring the GI. Currently there is no record of buyers registered with GI and hence monitoring is appalling.
 6. All purchased tea to be blended and sold as FIRST FLUSH/SECOND FLUSH ONLY. MARCH TO MID MAY AS FIRST FLUSH AND MID MAY TO END OCTOBER AS SECOND FLUSH OR AN AUTUMNAL FLUSH COULD BE ADDED AS THIRD BRAND. Only 1-2% crop can be left for making speciality tea. Procurement of teas to be made under three categories at different price point depending on quality, to be monitored by a broker under strict confidentiality. This will ensure interest to produce the best quality to enable highest price.
 7. Purchase price to be fixed in such a way so that producer is able to pay reasonably good wages and has a reasonable return on investment.
 8. By having 30-35% area under different cash crop will insulate the economics of estates and will enhance the turnover and better profitability. Most of the alternate crops should bring in forex revenue as it could be exported.
 9. Hand over houses to workers at a consideration. Govt. to provide long term lease.
 10. Is it possible to have a flexi time for workers, to see any alternate source of Income to increase their earnings.
 11. Dairy does exceedingly well at mid to high elevation. A homestead concept will do very well to increase the income and also provide enough input for organic cultivation.
 12. Dedicated areas to be allotted to each worker who will tend this on a regular basis.
 13. To promote the Darjeeling tea the owners of garden should pool in good quality tea that can be served on all the trains and Airplanes originating from Bagdogra/Siliguri. this may involve maximum 7-10 kgs everyday but will greatly popularise this beverage.
- We know these are very difficult and outward looking reforms and would not find ready takers as it requires concurrence of all stakeholders. Since the old methods are not working anymore should we not look at alternatives and a debate is necessary to kick start above initiatives. We may have to add more or discard some of above listed initiative once a consensus is built. It will also meet the aspirations of new India which is willing to change.



DARJEELING



Atul Astana
Managing Director GGL



Jayanta Majumder
Teesta Valley Exports Ltd.

Few points on the marketing aspects of Darjeeling tea in India and Overseas

1. At present the largest buyer of Darjeeling tea is using Darjeeling tea in a CTC blend and marketing in Indian domestic market with no mention of Darjeeling at all.
2. Due to strike in 2017, many global tea bag packers became uncertain of future availability of Darjeeling TGBOP and fannings and reduced Darjeeling proportion in their blends considerably.
3. Domestic wholesalers and retailers are flooded with cheaper Nepal (Darjeeling type) tea which slowly consumers are getting accustomed with due to lower prices (economic slowdown also a factor)
4. Unfortunately the EU Darjeeling importers who actually popularized this ceremonious beverage in the first world, are annoyed due to the Certification bindings and refrain from experimenting with Darjeeling tea any more, as this variety is to be sold with 100% CTM. This is causing low demand of high quality Darjeelings.

GI adds to the authenticity of Darjeeling and the fact importers insist on GI and certificate of origin is demonstrative of that. With growing consumer awareness and concern. In the developed countries, the credibility of the growers can be tracked back via cryptographs and through the application of the block chain technology.

The main issues facing the industry is the lack of labour. Mechanization may be a solution but the terrain is difficult. It is being tried out by several firms. There is a high absenteeism. The staff vs labour ratio is skewed too.

Weather patterns have been erratic. There is declining rainfall . Crops too are declining as there has been little or no replanting.

Threats

There is a threat from Nepal's orthodox teas, namely HIMALAYANS. But since these teas are neither MRL complaint nor FSSAI registered, they will find it difficult to make a dent on Indian markets. Only small quantities are available, so no real threat is seen to the true Darjeeling drinker.

Political stability a must for Companies to invest on a long term basis.

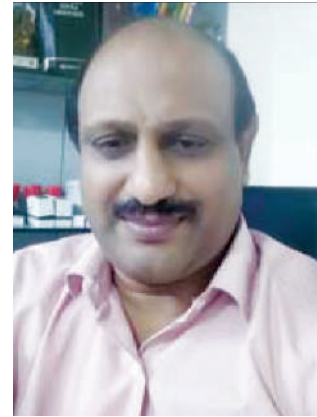
Contrary to popular perceptions Japan has been buying Darjeeling teas, regularly while they buy Himalayans for extraction purposes?

By and large the cost of production can range widely for the industry. The range can be as wide as Rs 500- Rs 800 per kilogram.

The social costs borne by the Planters is way too high. It ranges between WW12-13% of the COP

Opportunity

The future is for focused research to improve quality clones. Infilling and an increase of land productivity must be pursued earnestly.



Sanjay Choudhry
Director Ringtong Tea Co. (P) Ltd.

A MARKETING SUGGESTION

The other issue is that the present marketing module is not in sync with the present times. It has now become necessary to ensure that Darjeeling teas are sold directly to consumers. It is proposed that Tea Board should design Darjeeling tea packets and register them with the Patents and Trade Mark. Hence Tea Board becomes the owner of the proposed design, patent/ trade mark. It is also proposed that only the producers registered under Darjeeling CTM should be entitled to obtain the license from Tea Board to use the said packets, clearly displaying the Tea Board logo and the Darjeeling CTM logo. The design and specification should be uniform, with the only exception being that each producer would be able



to display the name of his garden together with a short description. It is further suggested that the respective Producers should be allowed to fix the maximum retail price since the quality; grade etc would differ from garden to garden.

Another difficulty which we can envisage is that in

order to sell the teas under this brand Tea Board must support the proposed brand by advertising the product in National TV and elsewhere. It is also suggested that Tea Board must highlight the advantages of this concept to the consumers, viz. Origin and genuine Darjeeling tea, fssai and EU compliant, proceeds to be used for providing sustained livelihood to the workers etc.

Tea Board should be allowed to claim a fixed remuneration for each kg of tea sold in these packets which would be patented and registered under the Trade Mark Act in favour of Tea Board, just like the CTM logo.

The Tea Board must also provide/facilitate soft loans to the Producers and/or a suitable mechanism has to be formulated for the producers to be able to hold on to their stock of packet teas since it is expected that initially the holding period would be quite high.

Lopchu tea estate in Darjeeling is able to sell its entire produce in packets and can be stated to be one of the only gardens in Darjeeling which is somewhat insulated from the present crisis.

The proposed arrangement should be in force for the teas which the producers are unable to sell abroad at remunerative prices. The option of availing the license from Tea Board for use of such packets would also vest with each producer and may not be made mandatory.





DARJEELING



Binod Mohan
Chairman Darjeeling Tea Association

The Darjeeling Tea Industry is going through a deep crisis with record low prices in 2019. All stakeholders; the tea garden owners, workers, labour unions and the government need to urgently take steps to halt the decline of the Darjeeling Tea Industry if we are to preserve its over 150 year old heritage.

There are several matters which plague the industry. High absenteeism, low productivity, wage increases, unviable staff structures, poor yields, dropping quality, a disunited ownership, below

cost sales price of over 50% of the production, are some of the core issues that need all stakeholders inputs and immediate resolution.

The government had introduced the G.I. protection and certification Trade Mark worldwide for Darjeeling Tea in 2004. These measures controlled the international adulteration of Darjeeling Tea and ensured only pure Darjeeling tea can be sold. We need to follow the protection systems of Champagne which has so

successfully succeeded in adding high value to the Champagne brand.

The industry is at the threshold of impending change. In order to achieve a sustainable future for Darjeeling Tea it is imperative that the small group of tea garden owners must unitedly



The industry is at the threshold of impending change. In order to achieve a sustainable future for Darjeeling Tea it is imperative that the small group of tea garden owners must unitedly take the lead and drive this change.

take the lead and drive this change. Livelihoods of thousands of tea workers and their families are dependent on the decisions of all the stakeholders and it is their duty and responsibility to unitedly herald the changes which Darjeeling so desperately needs to survive and flourish once again.



MARCUS WULF

*A German tea importer and
Managing Director of Hamburg Tea*

Respond to the question of Tea Time



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

MARCUS WULF

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Absolutely! However, we have basically eight/nine major points which make a great cup of quality Darjeeling tea.

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

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

See above. It could be more detailed of course, if required.



DARJEELING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

-Make less but good/great tea

-Darjeeling must have fame otherwise it will die

-Work together with your competitors - in joint effort

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

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

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

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

NAMRING TEA ESTATE OF DARJEELING

Before beginning of commercial cultivation of tea in the year 1852 in Darjeeling, the hills were covered by thick evergreen natural forest. In subsequent years, around 80 different tea gardens came up across different hills of Darjeeling after large scale deforestation.

Profile of Namring Tea Estate :

Namring is one among the high yielding quality tea producing large tea estates of Darjeeling and located in the Teesta valley region. Namring tea estate was established in the year 1864 by the British planters with the help of the local peoples majority of which belonged to Lepcha tribes. The name Namring was derived from the Lepcha word nam-long which means 'Picnic Spot'.

Elevation	Area Under Tea	Production	Workers		
			Permanent	Temporary	Total
2400 to 5200	448.34 hac	3,00,000 Kgs.	1398	300	1698

Species of forest trees planted

The names of some of the forest species planted are Uttis (*Alanus nepaulensis*), Januna (*Syzygium jambos*), Labsi (*Pallensk. Sch/M. composita Willd*), Kapase (*Acer thomsium*), Chilau (*Schima wallichi*), Malata (*Macaranga denticulata*), Panisas (*Terminalim myriocarpa*), Lampate (*Duabanger sonneratiodes*) etc. Most of these species used to regrow after cutting at 2 to 3 ft above ground. Now some of such trees are growing naturally following seed fall.

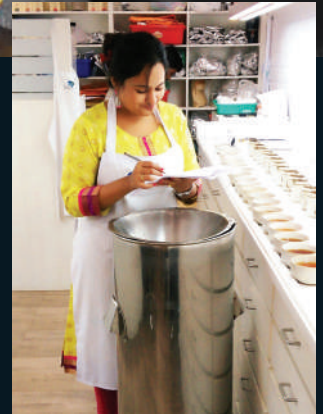


Silvi culture became a matter of mass awareness later on after witnessing the beneficial effects of silvi culture in Namring, the inhabitants of adjoining villages started to plant forest trees along the side of the road and periphery of the villages to create a shelter belt to keep the micro climate of the village as cool with increased bio-diversity of flora and fauna.



FEEDBACK

Susmita Poddar



Susmita Poddar from Namring, a relative new comer to tea, states the world's most aromatic variety of tea is the outcome of soil, location, climate, altitude their meticulous processing, and quality seeds. However, over the last few years, the severe climate change has affected quality and growing conditions adversely.

The industry took a massive hit in 2017 when the Gorkhaland Agitation strike compelled the closure of all estates for a prolonged period. Meanwhile the neighbouring country Nepal started spreading their wings high elevation similar kind of steeping quality, the "Poor Man's Darjeeling" was becoming popular. North America, Europe welcomed Nepal teas for economy and their availability. Through the quality can never match that of good Darjeeling teas.

There is a lack of local demand too, as what is required is not readily available, and what is, available is not what the local market enjoys.

Lopchu is one popular brand as it has accomplished a place globally for its authentic roasted, china flavour with full bodied muscatel cup.

To popularise this drink boutique tea companies and hotel chains, and cafes across the globe can be a doorway to promote Darjeeling tea as a fancy beverage.

Lastly, I think with better understanding among the producers can improve the situation at the ground level. But promotion is the only way to ensure growth of this legendary cup of Darjeeling.



**BUYERS
OPINE**

- ❖ As a trader in Darjeeling teas, please go down memory lane and tell us how trading and popularity of Darjeeling teas has transformed over the last 5 decades.
- ❖ Can you think about any two Darjeeling brands and comment on them ?
- ❖ As a Darjeeling Trader and Exporter and Blender what are the problems being faced by you and what could be the solutions?
- ❖ What is the future of Darjeeling and what is the way forward to promote its prestige?

**Tea Time
interviewed
a few local
retailers of
Darjeeling
tea and this
is what they
have to say**



Partha S Dutta
from Mahabodhi Tea House

There has been no transformation in the popularity of Darjeeling teas except that it has diminished year after year. Now trading in Darjeeling teas without taking Nepal teas in consideration is nearly impossible. It is not because of price alone but only Darjeeling teas without Nepal blends find very few takers. Only the premium Darjeeling teas sell well but to very few customers.

There has been lot of teas but without any quality, this year. Only GI (Government Issue) indication and legacy can't save the industry if quality is absent. To obtain a high percentage of whole leaf, teas are not hard withered which hardly matches the local palate. The industry is oblivious to the needs of the local market and when exports suffer they look for local support.

The industry has to decide what to do and we as traders will surely follow the path to cater to the masses.

If Darjeeling has a future in exports I don't mind if the industry goes all out in that direction. But if it wants a local support it has to improve upon its quality the way we like it and mere taste without aroma won't help. Darjeeling is famous for its delicate flavour and it has to be there. A CTC tea without much quality will have some taker but that won't happen in Darjeeling. High production without quality will be a complete failure.



Tapan Dutt
from Subodh Brothers

Tea retailers and whole-sellers since 1923, opine that producers must make sincere and honest efforts to make good quality Darjeeling teas. This is the only answer to move ahead.

Water is a very special part of a cup of tea, and Lopchu is one brand which has gained global recognition because it brews well in all varieties of water. This he says is due to the little high fire given to this tea.





COVER STORY



Sumon Majumdar from Darjeeling Impex Ltd.

to say...

Darjeeling tea was considered as a very fancy and unique item worldwide when I joined this trade in 1987. It was not as popular in Germany but Soviet Russia used to buy in quantities respecting the barter policy with Indian Government. Russians preferred Black, stylish, fermented with nice coloury cup which turned out to be rosy when added with milk.

Surprisingly in India, Bengalis used to appreciate the unique taste of Darjeeling tea and normally they were fond of buying the smaller grade, fanning and broken from local popular tea shops, and I still remember that in my childhood days Tosh and Subodh Brothers were amongst the top retail stores Bengalis looked forward to Happy Valley and Makaibari tea.

With the division of Soviet Russia, the manufacturing pattern of Darjeeling tea industry has changed from 1993. The Germans were quite specific about this unique beverage. Germans started introducing Darjeeling tea in different parts of Europe specific man-

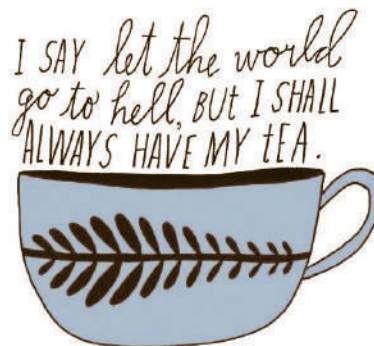
ufacture during first flush, second flush and Autumn. Recently Nepal teas which are called poor man's Darjeeling, captured a big share in Domestic market and Local trader's engulfed these to earn more profit as a substitute for Darjeeling.

Darjeeling tea went beyond Bengal over the last fifteen years but pure Darjeeling Tea is available only with producers and few esteemed old retail shops.

Lopchu is a mark established 90 years ago has it's unique fully fired china muscatel flavour throughout the year.

The quality of pure Darjeeling Tea has deteriorated since last four years and the price is relatively high irrespective of quality. Now a day's only few Darjeeling gardens make consistent quality and others make average teas with prominent seasonal flavour.

Darjeeling tea Industry now have a competitor which is Nepal tea. Nepal looks similar to Darjeeling but has no keeping quality. Darjeeling tea producers should improve yield and quality by replacing Assam Bushes with flavour clones and to improve the flavour they must improve the garden soil more in a organic way.



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Ashwini-9900272282
ashwini@teaforest.in

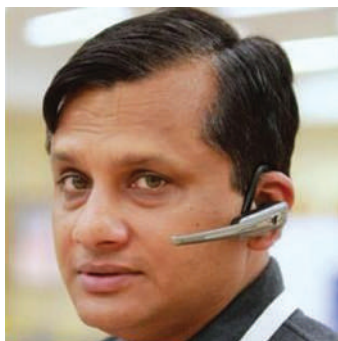


Lipton Darjeeling is still the only single largest Darjeeling Brand in India and no company could build a competing brand in last so many years. It's still the best option this industry has in this country. Another successful brand is LOPCHU. Its been marketed as a single estate brand and had been maintaining a standard consistently for so many years. Consumers have acquired the taste of Lopchu over generations and now it's been accepted as such. Anyone trying to compete will also have to be consistent over a period of time. Godricke has taken the path and have met with some success.

While there are many problems that an exporter/ Blender/Trader face the most prominent ones that really affects the image of Darjeeling are :

i) The quality of Darjeeling tea - the producer lobby should clearly think for whom do they produce the tea for profit or for consumer or for a brand. Not many have the clarity nor do they have any long term strategy for maintaining a quality of tea.

ii) Planned agricultural /farming standards as per international market requirements - it's a know fact that Darjeeling gets the premium prices only from the overseas markets but do we have a strategy to see that its maintained by the industry with firm assurances. More that 60% of the Darjeeling estates are Organic but we still get gardens with MRL issues. We have various excuses to by pass the commitments but is that a good example to set by an industry which produces the only available niche tea brand in the world? Some introspection is required by the industry instead of looking for Govt, support every year without performing.



Sudeep Banerjee
Ex HUL,
now a consultant

iii) There are no set standards of grading by the industry, which makes a blenders job extremely complicated. The industry does not produce teas for the blenders or the packers and hence if one buys 10 lots from 5 /6 different tea gardens of the same grade then there is no guarantee that the teas will have same volume. An industry which produces teas for blenders and packers should have some standards in place so that they can demand some premium during lean periods.

As for the future of Darjeeling - I am an optimist hence would see the brighter side. The obvious questions would be why and How? – The simple answers are:


i) Reduce Crop by defining quality standards. Non quality teas should not get Darjeeling name or logo.

ii) The Darjeeling tea industry should start looking at Indian market & consumers who have Money to spend for good products.

iii) Highly regulated and interventionist attitude of the Govt. needs to be reduced. It has not helped over the years nor it's going to do in future.

iv) The industry will have to seriously look for good recruits with incentive to grow like new industries or start ups.

FEEDBACK



Nilanjan Chowdhury, *incharge of the Contemporary Brokers, Darjeeling catalog* feels, that the domestic market offers great scope for the Darjeeling producers. If only they could persuade local packers to use 5% of fannings and Broken in the CTC blends, not only would it help the taste BUT would make the Industry benefit. He also feels that for the Bengal buyer a few green particles are a MUST for the tea to be appreciated as a Darjeeling.





A SOLUTION FOR THE *Darjeeling Marketing Dilemma*

Krishan Katyal

Darjeeling tea is intrinsically a unique product. Its uniqueness stems from the fact that it is not and should not be uniform. Each pedigree of bush, each season of flush, change of weather, each elevation and each tea maker throws up wonderful and valued attributes resulting in every individual invoice possessing different characteristics, each representing a standalone vintage in its own right.

The origin of Darjeeling Teas began over a century and a half ago. And the name, very quickly became a house hold word. Synonymous with exclusivity and unmatched flavours. How did this happen? It was the importers of this amazing beverage who presented it to the world, waxed eloquently of its quality and taste profiles, priced it high and build a story around its very real and tangible status. These importers in essence have always been the marketing and distribution wing of the Darjeeling Tea Industry.

Each marketer created his own speciality blend comprising either all or majority of Darjeeling teas or prompted “single estate” or “single flush” offerings. Germany, probably the most important of world markets had norms allowing teas to be sold as “DARJEELING” provided that the majority of the blend emanated from Darjeeling District. This was the pattern followed virtually from inception.

In the year 1990, India took proprietorship of the name Darjeeling under the Geographical Indications Act, which stated that no entity could market Darjeeling unless the product contained 100% Darjeeling tea. Armed with legal teeth, this implied that which blends were in use for decades, would necessarily need to be changed. The GI Act permitted audit and prosecution, if the brands did not comply with the new laws.

This ruffled the feathers of many traditional importers, who saw this as an imposition and hindrance to the markets they had developed.

Perhaps it would have been more prudent to take these marketeers on board as partners in the process of GI implementation, rather than leaving them with the impression that they were being treated as adversaries, instead of friends of Darjeeling. It is hoped that their considerable marketing muscle does stay focused on Darjeeling, and does not result in their actively promoting teas from other origins instead.

Given that India wishes that all teas marketed as Darjeeling tea comprise 100% Darjeeling tea only, some suggestions should be as follows:

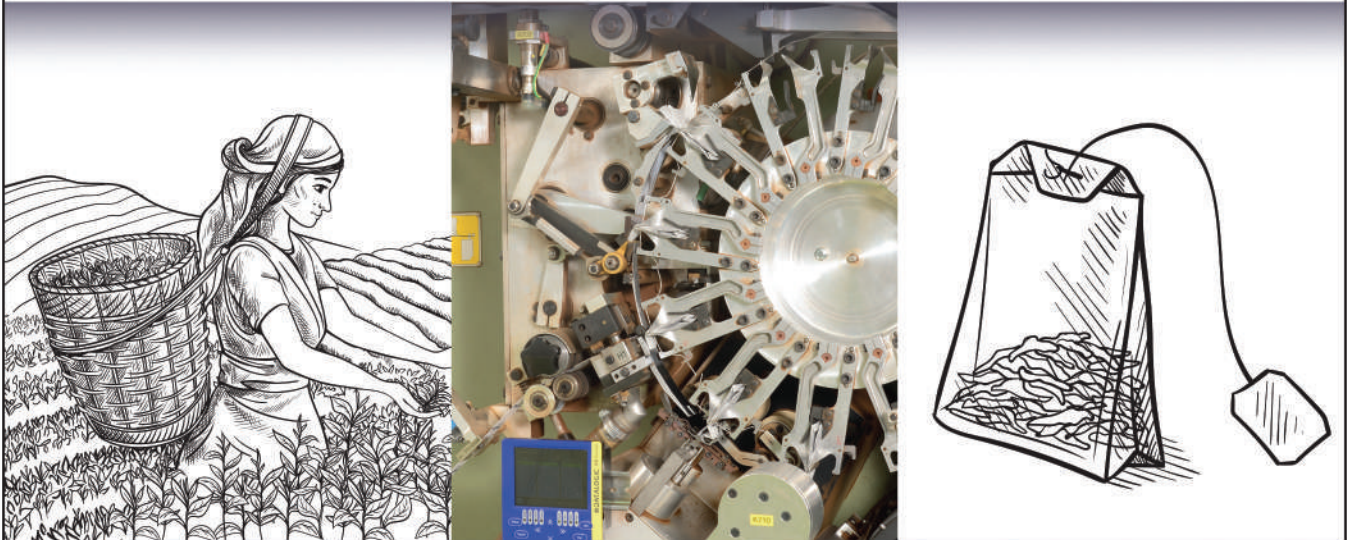
1 Darjeeling tea should be sold only in sold public auctions to recognised entities with full tracking and traceability. All that needs to be publicised is that authenticity is guaranteed only if purchased in the auction. Pricing will be discovered by magnetising all demand and competition into a single source.

2 Optionally Producers take full control of their own sales by forming a ‘cooperative’ which will produce ,negotiate prices of each invoice or customised blends and value add by setting up a state of the art blending and packaging facilities to supply the finished product to all the world.

In the above scenarios many purposes will served.

- a) The sanctity of the Darjeeling name will be preserved.
- b) All the supplies from the district will be authenticated with full traceability.
- c) Both options will result in ability to monitoring all sales and demand by creating a single supply source.

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TURKEY

TEA MARKET REPORT

Turkish government is applying high taxes on importation of tea in order to protect domestic production. With the actual high import duty of 160% it is not so feasible to import value added teas comparing to bulk tea importation. Companies which are importing tea are generally looking for low invoicing from the tea traders in order to avoid the high taxes. Almost all Sri Lankan tea traders are offering low invoicing and most offer long payment credit terms to Turkish importers. There are some illegal tea trading (importation) also happening in south (from Iraq) and southeast border (Iran). Most of the Sri Lankan companies here have burnt their fingers but it is a 35 m kg market for Sri Lanka teas & hence very critical for them. Indian teas hardly has any presence here & the figure would be less than 10% of the Sri Lankan teas share

Recently AHMAD TEA have entered to the market with direct import but then they have changed the strategy and agreed with a local packer in order to pack their

Turkey is consuming around 300 Million kg of tea per year and with this consumption Turkey is the leader of annual consumption of tea per capita comparing to the rest of the world. Tea consumption per capita is around 2.2 kg annually one of the highest in the world. A Turkish person consumes an average of 1,300 cups of tea every year, according to the head of a coffeehouse association. Turks consume around 3-5 cups of tea daily while this number increases to 10 cups during winter. Tea-making in Turkey is different than rest of the world as it has to be brewed for around 20 minutes. top three nations which buy Turkish tea are Germany, the Turkish -Cyprus and the United States.





Turkey is a huge pot teabag market and large no. of machines are dedicated to pot teabags. consumers in Turkey do not prefer stapled teabag machines any longer. Even small Turkish teabag companies have high speed staple less teabag machines like HST, IMA, MD 20 etc.

in Turkey. Supermarket chains like Migros, Carrefour, Metro, Bim, A101 have more than 70% share of the retail market in Turkey for the packed tea sales.

Private owned brands are much aggressive on marketing and their sales and market share is increasing every year. LIPTON is the leader in tea bag segment with its capacity and machine range. DOGUS tea and DOGADAN (COCA COLA) is following them. Follow-

discarded five years back itself.

Turkey is a huge pot teabag market and large no. of machines are dedicated to pot teabags. consumers in Turkey do not prefer stapled teabag machines any longer. Even small Turkish teabag companies have high speed staple less teabag machines like HST, IMA, MD 20 etc.

Very recently in Sep,19 in the WORLD FOOD EX-



ing these 3 brands OFCAY is coming which is recently sold to KRAFT FOODS and looking forward increasing their market share and enter in coffee business as well. There are other brands like HANCI CAY, OKUMUS CAY, BETA TEA and others but their market share is low comparing to top 3. CHAYKUR has around 55% market share in black tea market. It is a government company and incurred last year a loss of euro 150 m as it sells teas at a very low controlled price and this affects the Industry as a whole.

Turkey is a big value added tea market and annual consumption is over 8000 tons of teabags. There are around 50 high speed stapleless teabag machines in Turkey. All old stapled teabag machines have been

discarded five years back itself. HIBITION, ISTANBUL in addition to J.V.Gokal there were few Sri Lankan tea companies which participated at the exhibition. The Lankan companies were MJF Exports (Dilmah), Stassens, Green Horizon and Anverally Exports. Whilst majority tea buyers were from Turkey, there were visitors from Palestine, Libya, Syria, Oman, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Kosovo and Chile. India needs to focus on the Turkey market where it is far behind Sri Lanka. A country which is importing around 50000 ton teas annually needs to be focused upon with new strategy to penetrate the market which Indian teas can do successfully if the government, tea board, Exporters plan out a long term sustainable plan for Turkish market.

Kombucha Tea

Dummy's guide to Kombucha



By **Dr Kallol K Dey**

Humans love tea since antiquity and it is no wonder they have been quite creative with teas all the time. Say hello to kombucha tea, the new brew for the millennial. Don't worry if you have not heard the term before. You are not only one and the whole point of this article is to get familiar with the drink made from the tea so that you can enjoy the taste as well as the host of health benefits it confer.

Kombucha is the effervescent fermented tea, sweet and tart, probiotic and fizzy. It is an acquired taste. The word 'Kombucha' is probably derived from misapplication of Japanese konbucha which is tea made from kelp or konbu and cha (tea).

The most famous legend of kombucha's origin dates back to the Qin dynasty. The emperor Qin Shi Huang is said to have drunk this tea to lengthen his life by drinking 'tea of immortality' or 'Divine Tische'. There are many stories about its origin and many countries have claimed it as their drink but it is difficult to verify the facts. Whatever be the origin of kombucha tea, it is here to stay.

At the first sip, you may not like it. For example, one writer for the New York Times thought it to be 'made with rotten fruits and a tincture of sweepings from the floor of a health food store.' However, a wine taster has given a more promising description: vinegary on the nose, afternotes of



pond water, acid, fire. For me, I like the refreshing taste which has a surprising twist of sourness. It awakens your taste bud unexpectedly and gives you a healthy kick.

The rise in kombucha's popularity is part of a larger trend in "probiotic" foods containing bacteria. The kombucha tea may be considered a health-boosting drink. It has many benefits to the body. Here is a quick list :

- Promotes healthy bacteria in the gut
- Rebalances homeostasis in the body
- Supports healthy liver function
- Improves digestion and bowel function
- Boosts energy
- Prevents atherosclerosis (fat deposition along the blood vessels)
- Helps healing of ulcers

Kombucha tea has a different name across disparate cultures. It is called Elixir de longue vie or elixir of long life. In Russian it is called 'Caj Kvass' (tea kvass). In Romanian it is 'Ceaiulkvass'. It has a graphic name in Czech: 'Cajovahoubakombucha' which means 'kombucha mushroom tea'. It is also known as 'Cajovajaponskahouba' or 'Japanese mushroom tea'. In Dutch it is 'Komboecha drank' and 'theebier' (tea beer). Germans call it 'algentee' or algae tea. In Armenia it is known as 'Teyisaki' or tea wine. In English it has other names too: booch, buch, fungus tea, medusa tea and mushroom tea.

This tea's namesake ingredient, kombucha, is a mixed culture of yeasts and bacteria, often incorrectly called a mushroom. You need SCOBY to make kombucha tea. SCOBY is the acronym of Symbiotic Culture Of Bacteria and Yeast. Len Porzio, a long distance runner and a kombucha tea pioneer

'It is better to go three days without oil and salt than to go one day without tea.'

A tibetan Proverb.



coined the term SCOBY. You need to add in SCOBY to sweet black tea and wait for the tea to come to life. SCOBY is a gelatinous mass of symbiotic bacteria (as *Acetobacter xylinum*) and yeasts (as of the genera *Brettanomyces* and *Saccharomyces*). SCOBY is a live culture and it looks like a mushroom. It is like a piece of rubbery and slimy cellulose mat, almost like a silicone implant that smells of vinegar.

The SCOBY has many interesting and colourful names, for example in German it is 'Kargasok Teepliz' (kargasoktea fungus) and 'Kargasok Schwamm' (Kargasok sponge). In Czech it is 'Zazracnahoubakombucha' (Kombucha wonder mushroom). In Japanese it known as 'Kochakinoko' or read tea mushroom. The French call it 'Champignon de la charite' or 'charitable mushroom'.

What you need

Before you start, get things ready. For every gallon of kombucha you brew use a cup of refined sugar and 3 tablespoons of loose leaf caffeinated tea or 6-8 caffeinated tea bags. You can brew kombucha using black, oolong, or green tea—a blend of these would also work nicely.

- Water : use best quality filtered or spring water.
- Sugar : use plain white sugar or evaporated cane juice. Do not use honey, stevia, coconut sugar, brown sugar, turbinado, or sugar in the raw.
- SCOBY and starter liquid.
- Temperature gauge
- PH paper
- Pipette



Step by step

There are two ways of brewing kombucha tea. You may brew continuously in a big vessel with spigot or in a glass jar. The glass jar is the most convenient for home brewers.

- 1 In a medium sized pot, bring 4 cups of filtered water to boil, then turn off heat.
- 2 Pour 3 tbsp of loose leaf tea in a cotton tea bag and add to the pot.
- 3 Let the tea steep for 5-7 minutes, then remove the tea bag and discard tea. Rinse and air dry the cotton bag for next use.
- 4 Add 1 cup of white refined sugar into the pot and stir.
- 5 Once the sugar has dissolved, pour your newly made sweet tea mixture into 1-gallon brew jar.
- 6 Fill the brew jar with 8 cups of cold, filtered water—jar should be 3/4th full now.
- 7 Adhere the temp gauge to the side of the jar and ensure the temp reads 68-86 degree F.
- 8 Add your SCOBY and starter liquid into the jar. Stir ever so gently.
- 9 Use the pH test strips to make sure it reads 4.5 or below. You need to look at the colour of the pH paper corresponding to the range.
- 10 cover the jar with a cotton cloth and seal with a rubber band. The kombucha brew needs airflow for aerobic fermentation but you have to protect it from dust, fruit flies and other contaminants.
- 11 Write the brew notes with details of tea, date of brewing etc on the side of the jar with a wet marker.
- 12 Place your brew jar in a warm place out of direct sunlight with plenty of air flow. Don't put it inside a closed cupboard. If the brew jar is sitting on cold countertop or on top of your fridge, place a small towel or a cutting board underneath for insulation. I put mine near window but away from direct sunlight.
- 13 By day 7-9 you will see a new cream coloured layer has grown on top. This is your new culture or SCOBY. While trying not to disturb the layer, place a pipette down the side of the jar and into the brew. Pull out a sip of kombucha to taste.
- 14 Taste every few days. Too tart? simply sweeten during bottling and brew for fewer days next time. Too sweet? put the cloth back on and let it brew a little longer. Once it is to your liking, put the pH papers and verify that it is now between 2.5 and 3.5. This is the ideal pH range for the finished kombucha.

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INTERNATIONAL AWARDS AND INNOVATION IN SOUTHERN TEA



By P S Sundar



Pooja Singh Yohan, the current titleholder of 'Mrs Nilgiris' and the finalist of 'Haut Monde Mrs India Worldwide 2019' honouring Dr K S Pothi.

Three international awards in the last three months and an innovative attempt to promote tea consumption brought laurels to the tea plantation industry in South India.

A notable happening was that some enthusiasts promoting family welfare among the tea plantation workers and the lower stratum of the society have vowed to follow the path shown by the celebrated physician Dr K S Pothi (72) hailed as 'Family Planning Doctor'.

"We will create awareness among the cross-sections of the society, especially the migrant workers in tea estates in The Nilgiris on the ideals preached and followed by Dr Pothi", Pooja Singh Yohan, the current titleholder of 'Mrs Nilgiris' and the finalist of 'Haut Monde Mrs India Worldwide 2019' to be held in Greece told me.

She honoured Dr Pothi with the coveted recognition

of Management And Research Group Think Tank (MARG-TT).

"This is to recognise his over four decades of contribution to family planning and family welfare especially among the marginalised sections of the society as part of India's national mission", said Pooja who is working on the welfare of orphaned females from 'maturity to menopause'.

"Dr Pothi has succeeded in following a two-pronged approach for family welfare – sustained awareness creation and fulfilling the family planning needs of the marginalised sections – free of cost", Pooja noted.

These helped to bring about healthy planned families among the workers in tea plantations at a time the country was worried of unbridled rise in population.

Another recognition worth mentioning was the international jury acknowledging the supremacy of the quality of tea produced by a bought-leaf factory in The Nilgiris.

At the ceremony to distribute trophies to the prize winners of the 15th edition of The Golden Leaf India Awards (TGLIA) during the 126th Annual Conference of the United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI) in Coonoor, Vigneshwar Estate Tea Factory, a bought-leaf factory, located in Aravenu, a tiny hamlet in Kotagiri taluk, bagged titles in all the six applicable categories.

TGLIA is a joint initiative of the Tea Board of India (Union Commerce Ministry) and UPASI.

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

"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

TEA TIME

“

“We bought this tea to be sold in retail outlets by our clients in The Nilgiris. Some volume will be sold in Karnataka as well”,

”

had to compete 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.

“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.

The UPASI President Joseph, Vice President Nagappan and TGLIA Convener Arun Kumar were present.

In the third event, the producer, buyer and auctioneer of the tea which has fetched the highest price in the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association (CTTA) so far this year have been honoured.

“At the AGM of CTTA, we were honoured with a memento certifying us for creating a price record”, Rajesh Gupta, Managing Director, Global Tea Brokers,



RAMESH TO RAMESH:

Ramesh Bhojarajan (right extreme) receiving six awards from Ramesh Chand, NITI Aayog member (left extreme) in the presence of UPASI President Joseph (second left) and TGLIA Convener Arun Kumar (Second right).

who auctioned the record-price fetching tea, told me.

“This recognition has come for the tea manufactured by Home dale Tea Factory, a small-scale bought-leaf factory, which was bought by Oswal Tea Traders at Rs 301 per kg at Sale No: 37 of CTTA auctions”, he said.

“This was the highest price fetched by any tea, CTC or orthodox, manufactured by any factory, bought leaf or corporate, in any auction of CTTA held so far this year”, he explained.

“We bought this tea to be sold in retail outlets by our clients in The Nilgiris. Some volume will be sold in Karnataka as well”, said Harsh Bararia, Proprietor of Oswal Tea Traders.

“Besides, this tea gives high cup-page – as much as 350 cups per kg and so, is economical even as it is of top quality”, he noted.

The innovative marketing initiative has come from the house of speciality



TEA PLAYERS HONOURED (l-r): Raman Menon, Prashant Menon, Rajesh Gupta and Harsh Bararia who were honoured by CTTA in Coonoor.





SOUTH INDIA COLUMN

teas major Avataa Beverages ahead of the festive season.

Titled 'Avataa Festive Collection', the company whose teas had won many awards and had been distributed by Tea Board at Olympics in the past, has now announced four options of top quality tea packs for those looking for innovative gifts to be made to their dear and near in business and personal life to make this year's festive season memorable forever.

"The first choice is 'Mandala Festive Box' in which any four types of our teas including dip teas can be packed as per the choice of the customer wanting to gift them", Avataa Director G Udayakumar told me.

"The choice of the teas can be Speciality teas – white, long ding, swirl green, virgin green, oolong or green tea. The choice can also be from our Fruits and Flower Teas – strawberry, mango, orange, hibiscus, rose or jasmine", he listed.

"We also have Herb green teas – cinnamon, tulsi,



Dignitaries being received at the Tea Board stall at the industrial exhibition during the 126th UPASI Annual Conference.

turmeric and vanilla. Our Detox teas include Chamomile, peppermint and chocolate. And, we also have ethnic Indian tea variants – Saffron, Gujarat Kawa, Masala and badam", he disclosed.

So, it is a wide range of teas for the customers to choose to gift during the festive season.

"Besides, most such teas are grown in our own Billimalai tea estate at nearly 6,000 feet above sea level in the western Ghats of The Nilgiris. The leaves are carefully plucked from earmarked portions of the garden suitable for their quality. The crux is that we reduce the time gap between the crop and the cup so that the consumers enjoy the garden freshness of the

teas", Udayakumar detailed.

The second choice is to go for Floral Speciality Tins in which two pouches of different colours of customers' choice can be packed with teas chosen from the wide range and make into a gift hamper.

The third choice is to customise dip tea and present as corporate gift. "We have a choice of lemon and honey, Early Grey, English Breakfast and Green Tea with 10 sachet each which can be packed into this", Udayakumar said.

The fourth choice is to mix the box of tea with packets of chocolate or nuts. All these can be had through www.avataatea.com, he added.

"Our objective is to begin this innovation in tea gift right from Diwali but make it a festive event throughout the year", he noted.

While gifting is a common practice during festive season, gifting tea is rare. Avataa had introduced Valentine's Day gift packs in the past and these had been a mentionable hit.

Efforts of this nature elevate the status of The Nilgiri teas

Such innovation and diversification in marketing are the requirement of the day and in line with the thrust given by Ramesh Chand, NITI Aayog Member at the UPASI Annual Conference.

WHY THIS VILLAGE TEA SHOP IN KERALA ATTRACTS FAMOUS AUTHORS

A School dropout with an immense love for literature, Shukkur hosts a popular book club at his tea stall. Not only does it draw visitors from nearby villages but also writers like Perumal Murugan and Vivek Shanbhag. Like most authors in this country, Kannada writer Vivek Shanbhag is used to addressing various shades of grey hair at literary events. So, the sheer number of young faces in his audience itself would have been enough to make Kerala's Pedayangode village stick in his recent memory. Added to that was the a shamiana plonked



behind a nondescript tea shop where a bunch of women passionately dissected his 2015 novel 'Ghachar Ghochar' this February. Though he doesn't understand Malayalam, the ardent tone telegraphed Kerala's open embrace of literature.



Fifty-eight-year-old Shukkur welcoming his audience to discuss a novel at his tea shop veranda book club in the presence of Malayalam author N Prabhakaran (extreme right)

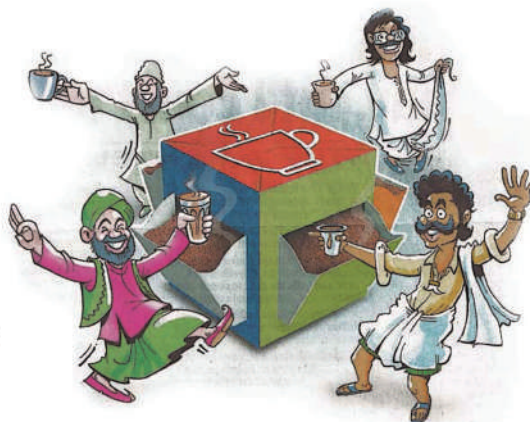
Shukkur, the 58-year-old tea shop owner who hosted the event and pursued Shanbhag for months for a visit, is the "one-man army" behind 'Veranda Chayappedika' or 'The Tea Shop Veranda Book Club'. It is a monthly literary gathering in which this Left-leaning father of four, invites various eminent Malayalam, Kannada and Tamil authors to discuss their books with around 70-odd rustic readers for close to two hours, during which tapioca chips, biscuits and "chukku kappi" (dried-ginger tea) supplement the flow of ideas. Before each discussion, Shukkur announces the title of the book on Facebook and sells its copies in the neighborhood so that people come prepared.

Finally, companies wake up to a million Indians

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- 2** Red Label available as both leaf and dust teas in **Odisha** and **Kerala**
- 3** Red Label tea sold in **Mumbai** is different from what is sold other states





CHAI CHUN TEA SHARES EXPANSION PLANS, POISED TO BE MARKET LEADER



Rajeev Baid



Chai Chun was established in 2016 with a focus on bringing next-generation tea products that feature sorted tea leaves by proficient in-house tea masters...



Drinking tea could help reduce the risk of heart attack. Improved muscle endurance...

Founded by tea connoisseur and iconic tea industrialist Rajeev Baid, Chai Chun the first organized segregated tea boutique is on its way to expanding its retail footprint across India.

The brand is successfully running more than 11 retail stores and is in the process of adding 25 more stores across the country in 2019.

Chai Chun was established in 2016 with a focus on bringing next-generation tea products that feature sorted tea leaves by proficient in-house tea masters, highest quality ingredients, storage in temperature controlled warehouses, and ethical sourcing to improve health and well-being.

Head-quartered in Siliguri, Darjeeling District, West Bengal, Chai Chun is a division of Evergreen Group, one of the largest tea producers in India, with an annual production of 12.5 million kilograms.

Rajeev aspires, and is working towards realizing the dream of bringing a 'Chai Movement' in the nation, in an attempt to create a healthier India. Not just a movement, Rajeev aims to transform tea into the national drink of India, where every story starts not with Coffee, but a Cup of Tea.

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FAITTA's 5th AGM



Viren Shah - Chairman of FAITTA addressing the AGM

TEA Production & Exports

Mr Viren Shah Chairman FAITTA touched on the continued growth of the Small Grower segment which currently represents around 50 % of total Indian Tea Production.. FAITTA has however noted the warning signals sounded by Tea Producer Associations that uncontrolled production growth has grave implications for the tea sector which is showing mismatch between Supply & Demand with adverse consequences on the market.

Tea Consumption

FAITTA Chairman stated that loose tea consumption has been giving way to packet tea. Broadly the packet segment can be segregated into three main components: Lower, Medium & Top-end packets. At the lower end competition is seen at two levels – between Sellers and amongst Buyers who are ultimate Sellers at the retail level. The Medium category is dominated by Regional packers who are intensely competing against each other and at the Top-end buyers /retailers are also in strong competition. In this scenario the ability of packers to bear price increases is severely limited.

One fallout of the EMI driven purchase is a shift in favour of Consumer Durables, White Goods and aspirational branded items from so called essentials and normal grocery items. It is but natural that Tea will feature fairly low in the consumption ladder in such a scenario.

Staple Pin Tea Bags

Regular meetings were held with FSSAI and pursuant to our last

interaction it was clarified that individual applications would be considered for extension of the date for changing over to Staple-less Tea Bags to 31/12/2021 and sale of Staple pin Tea Bags would be allowed up to 1/12/2013

MRL

FAITTA apprised FSSAI on the problem that had suffered pursuant to the FSSAI Notification dated 24th December, 2018.

Presently there are 36 Chemicals prescribed for use in Tea plantations by the Tea Board whereas the FSSAI MRL list as per their last Notification has a list of 29 Chemicals. CEO FSSAI assured that the balance would get approved very soon or those Chemicals without CIB approval could be removed from the list.

FAITTA submitted to FSSAI that in addition to the FSSAI's list of 33 Chemicals with MRLs or even the 46 compounds in the Tea Board's prescribed Plant Protection Code, several additional Chemicals are in use in Tea plantations. The examples of Acetamiprid, Imidacloprid, Monocrotophos which was permitted for Rice cultivation was cited. Furthermore, currently 7 Chemicals in the Tea Board's PPC list are not in the FSSAI list.

Bulk Packaging Standards

Although the IIP research on Bulk Tea packages had mentioned shelf life of 315 days, FAITTA felt that most of the trade particularly packeters need to carry tea stock for more than one / extended tea crop cycle for consistency of blending. Therefore it is important to have packaging designed for 18 months shelf life for all types of Bulk packages.



FAITTA 5th AGM Taj Bengal Kolkata on 2.8.2019

Kirana Stores

India's ubiquitous kirana stores are finding themselves in great demand as a slew of companies across payments, ecommerce and supply-chain tech vie of their loyalty and customers

The Kirana Pie

12mm kirana stores across India

90% retail market is unorganised

\$700 bn

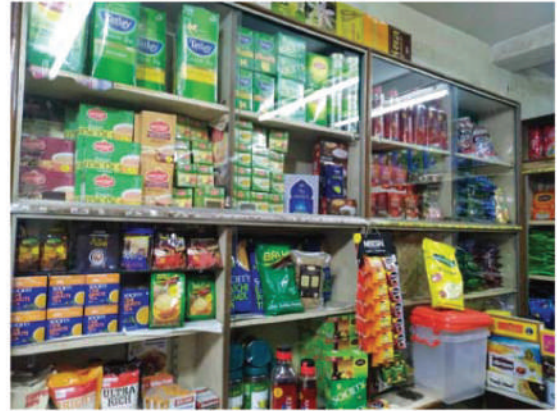
Current size of India's retail market

\$1 tn

Projectewd size of market by 2020

350 - 400 mm

Retail consumers likely to be digitally influenced by 2020



Source : Assocham and MRFS India

Five Change-makers



Reliance Industries

Core business : Retail, Telecom and Oil & Gas
Plan : Low -Cost PoS solutions to small retailers (target in 5 million)
Progress : 1,200 PoS being set up in stores in Gujarat
Purpose : Dominate Indian retail, counter Walmart, Amazon & Metro

"We shall create this (technology platform) by integrating and synergising the power of Reliance Retail's physical marketplace with the fabulous strengths of Jio's digital infrastructure and services..."

Mukesh Ambani, Chairman (in his AGM speech on July 5, 2018)



BharatPe

Core business : Digital payments & Lending
Plan : Start with free payments for small retailers, monetise base by offering loans
Progress : Working with 8,00,000 retailers in 13 cities
Purpose : Provide a range of fintech solutions for small business

"We expect 3-4 times growth in all our metrics in 12 months as digitisation waves rises"

Ashneer Grover, CEO



Metro Cash & Carry

Core business : B2B retail
Plan : Modernise small retail stores, digitise PoS to track sales
Progress : Working with 500 kirana stores
Purpose : German retail giant plans 50 stores in India by 2020

"We understand the needs of kiranas and know the existential dilemmas they are facing in the current environment"

Arvind Mediratta, CEO



Walmart India

Core business : Consumer goods
Plan : Store and PoS modernisation of 200-300 kiranas in cities
Progress : Pilot project in Lucknow, to be expanded to 100 stores
Purpose : Deals with small retailers to better understand consumers

"With our knowledge of the country, retail expertise and our decade-long work with kiranas, we are in unique position to understand their pain points"

Krish Iyer, CEO



PhonePe

Core business : Digital Payments
Plan : App for retailers to manage inventory
Progress : Working with 5 mn small business
Purpose : Push digital payments into semi-urban areas

"We plan to work with 7 million small business by the end of the year and retailers are key target as they become tech-savvy"

Yuvraj Singh Shekhawat
 Head-offline business growth



INTERNATIONAL



TIDINGS FROM BANGLADESH

The Success Stories of Tea Companies Operating Outside The Box in *Bangladesh*

Monjur Hossain

Thinking outside the box can mean challenging long-held beliefs. It's about answering "these are our best practices" not with a nod but with a raised eyebrow. In the case of Companies/corporate houses, they often avoid risks that could have a negative effect on their profits, even when there are plenty of success stories to illustrate that some risks not only pay off, they pay off big..

Today I would like tell about the stories such three tea companies of Bangladesh who are operating their tea concern out side the box and became successful. These concern are Halda Valley Tea Estate, Tetulia Tea Co and Kazi and Kazi Tea Estate.

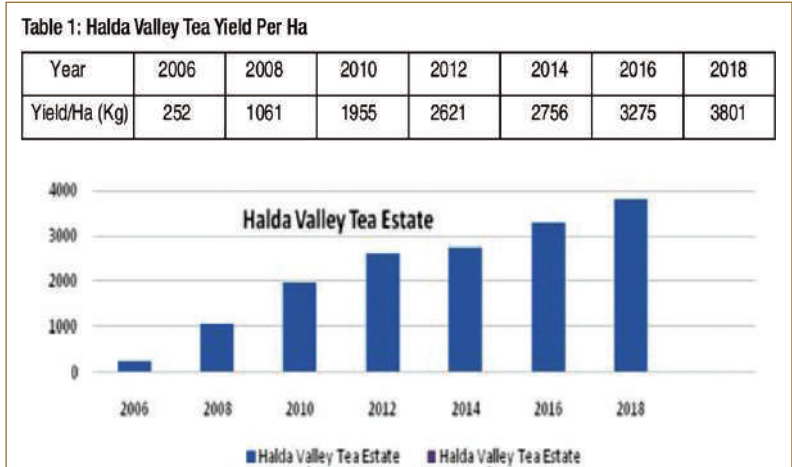
Halda Valley Tea Estate: The story begin when in 2003, PNL Holdings Limited, one of the prominent

corporate houses of Bangladesh acquired derelict Halda Valley Tea Estate with vision to produce high quality tea. Today they are privileged to grow exceptional quality of tea for the tea lovers. This tea estate situated at Fatikchhari upazila, 61 kms away from the port city of Chittagong.

For the first time in Bangladesh they have introduced modernized equipment. They use excavator, dumper truck, earth auger for land preparation and planting tea. They use plucking machine, electric power spray, electric looping machine, electric weeding machine etc. that are not yet been used in any other gardens in Bangladesh. The estate has 100% permanent irrigation system and 99% of their tea are of clone varieties. After 15 years of inception the estate is

the highest yielding property in Bangladesh. In 2018 Halda Valley Tea Estate produced 3,801 kg tea per hectare when the average production in the country was 1,529 kg. Total production of the estate was 900,000 kg during the year. It has also been awarded as the highest yielding estate in 2018 by Bangladesh Tea Board.

In respect of the tea produce the estate put their highest efforts in branding top labels in the countries



TEA TIME

The various flavours of herbal teas include Ginger, Tulsi & Lemongrass. Their other brands are Oolong tea, Peppermint tea, Neem Necter Tea, While tea and Jasmin Green tea.

and marketing tea brand like, Golden Eyebrow Black Tea, Silver Needle White Tea, Grandeur Collection and Inspiration Collection. Halda Valley Tea Estate for the first time in Bangladesh has also started producing the Dragon Well Variety Green Tea.

Tetulia Tea Co: Commercial tea plantation in present Bangladesh started in 1854 with the establishment of

166 tea estates spreaded over Sylhet, Maulvibazar, Habiganj, Chittagong, Chittagong Hill Tracts districts and Panchagar.



Kazi and Kazi tea bar



Panchagar Tea Ceremony

Malnicherra Tea Estate near Sylhet town. Currently Bangladesh has

In Bangladesh, tea industry has directly employed 1,50,000 workers on permanent pay roll. Besides the permanent workers, the industry employs about 80,000 casual workers mostly in plucking. More than 50% of the total workers are female.

From 2nd April 2000 tea plantation started developing under a new



Kazi and Kazi White tea



TTCL Tea Branded & Marketed in USA

management concept called “Tea for Poverty Alleviation” where direct link between tea plantation and livelihood could be seen addressing multiple problems of the poor farmers. A group of tea professionals took the initiative and formed Tetulia Tea Company Ltd. to open new area for tea cultivation under the concept of “Tea for Poverty Alleviation” through smallholding tea cultivation in the non-traditional areas of Panchagarh district in the northern part of Bangladesh.

The Directors of pioneering Tetulia Tea Co thought outside the box and felt that, the emergence of small holding tea plantation would an exciting, new phenomenon in this area. Panchagarh region, situated



INTERNATIONAL

at the extreme north of Bangladesh, bordering with Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal, which had also emerged as the small holding Tea Zone in India.

Kazi and Kazi Tea Estate: Kazi and Kazi Tea Estate is a pioneer of internationally certified organic tea plantation in Bangladesh. They use only natural resources to control agricultural pests and weeds. Extensive soil testing was used to grow tea plant in barren flat land in Tetulia, the Northern Bangladesh. In order to keep natural organic process the Estate management of Kazi and Kazi Tea use Neem based bio-pesticide and cow dung based fertilizers in their farming practice. In this way they are restoring the environment and conserving bio-diversity of the nature in the area.

There is almost no weeding; the soil is built up with cover crops and mulch; water bodies are utilized & herbal shade trees such as neem restores the eco-balance to the area; only natural pest & weed controls are used; the land is nourished with bio-fertilizers and bio-compost; cow dung and vermi-compost are used as natural fertilizers.

The wildlife is protected



Kazi Factory

Compliance with Fair Trade Standards

KKTE manufactures both orthodox and CTC organic teas for overseas and local markets. They prefer marketing their produces as branded value added packet teas. KKTE also make herbal tea, in which all the essence and ingredients also come from their own garden which are organically grown as well. The



Kazi and Kazi tea brands

Halda Valley Tea Brands

in KKTE. The juices of herbal trees are extracted, and sprayed on to remove pests on the garden.

KKTE's key global achievements are; Compliance with National Organic Program (NOP, USDA)

LACON Organic Standard for operators in Non-EU countries Certificate of Compliance with Organic JAS Compliance with Rainforest Alliance

various flavours of herbal teas include Ginger, Tulsi & Lemongrass. Their other brands are Oolong tea, Peppermint tea, Neem Nectar Tea, While tea and Jasmin Green tea.

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

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Small Tea Growers

– Mechanical Harvesting - the answer to Improving Quality & Reducing Cost

By **Pompy Ghosh**



Mr. Bijoy Gopal Chakraborty, the President of the Confederation of Indian Small Tea-growers Association (CISTA), had had a discussion with Harki Sidhu, Tea Technologies Outsourcing, on the poor quality of Small Tea Grower's (STG) leaf. It was explained to him that in the current scenario Mechanical Harvesting was the only way to improve quality and also reduce cost. Ever since, he has been requesting Harki Sidhu for a workshop on Mechanical Harvesting, for his CISTA members. Tea Board of India & National Tea Research Foundation came forward to fund the workshop and participate in it.

On the 13th of August 2019, at a Small tea garden called 'Green View Tea Plantation', Jalpaiguri District of North Bengal a one day, classroom cum field training, was organized on MH (including the importance of FSSAI compliance. The topic of this workshop was, 'Mechanical Harvesting'. Around 50 small tea growers from the district attended this program.

Mr. B.G. Chakarvorty, the president of CISTA, the man behind organizing this workshop, addressed the growers - Mechanical harvesting is not just necessary but has become an inevitable part in today's tea Industry.

Mr. Harkirat Singh Sidhu was the resource person of this workshop. On top of the resource persons, several Tea Board Officials from Siliguri as well as Jalpaiguri office helped organize and participate in

the meeting. Dr. Sudipto Mukherjee, from NTRF, made a presentation on IPM & FSSAI compliance.

Mr. Sidhu had invited Ochai and Kawasaki to attend and demonstrate their machines. In spite of repeated requests Ochai did not attend. Two Engineer of Kawasaki company, came to India to attend this workshop and demonstrate their machines.

A Presentation on Plant Protection Code was given by Dr. Sudipto Mukherjee of NTRF, who spoke on many important aspects of tea farming, like importance of good planting pits, never mixing different chemicals, not spraying against the wind, Low PH soil,.... Building healthy soils, thus growing healthy plants and so mitigating the problems from diseases & pests. The information was very important for small tea growers and much appreciated by the STGs present in the workshop.

Mr. Sidhu's presentation was a detailed one on Mechanical Harvesting and how it could be a game-changer for the STG sector. He spoke in his usual animated way and kept the attention of all participants attending. His presentation contained many important topics and he answered all queries of STG's regarding use of Mechanical Harvesting, in a very practical way, citing examples of where he had done this. Below are some points that the resource person covered.



Farmers at the workshop

- Agronomical Requirements
- Productivity, Cost, Return on Investment
- Bush Health & Sustainability
- Mechanical Harvesting & Key Concerns
- System to be adopted by STGs for Mechanical Harvesting.

This was a very useful and informative session for the STG as scarcity of pluckers, increasing wages of pluckers, quality of Green Leaf have become major challenges for the industry. One of the very interesting & innovative suggestion was that the harvesters must be paid by the area coverage and NEVER by the kilograms harvested. The working of this wage structure should have the incentive for the worker to have the opportunity of earning atleast double his wage in 6 to 7 hours of work.



Not one to be left behind Mr.CS Mitra (Dy Director) does a great job at harvesting, as everyone watches with great interest.



Kawasaki team with Harki Sidhu



Harki Sidhu demonstrating how to level & fill up gaps on the harvesting surface to ensure adequate Maintenance Foliage in preparation of a field for Mechanisation.

Tea color sorter (Multilayer infrared)

Product description

- It is mainly applied in green tea, oolong tea, yellow tea, black tea, white tea, dark green tea, flowering tea, etc.
- It can remove the malignant impurities from tea such as glass and stone.

6CSX-378IIIH2



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Towards strengthening trustea's mandate on sustainability, 'trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation' has been incorporated. The Foundation will be managing the trustea Program independently. The main focus for the Program has been to develop and implement a cost effective and practical sustainability code based on Indian realities without compromising on globally accepted sustainability principles. The India specific sustainability tea code, trustea has been developed from the industry, by the industry and for the industry.

The first meeting of 'trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation Council' (a multi-stakeholder committee whose role is to advise and make recommendations to the Foundation on matters pertaining to trustea and the trustea Code) took place on 12th September 2019 that had representation from various sections of tea fraternity and it exhibited an exchange of great ideas.

The initiative will facilitate in upholding the mission and the long-term objectives of the trustea Program. With the expertise brought into by the new implementation partners Viz. 'Tea Research Association (TRA)', 'Tata Trust' and 'Action for Food Production (AFPRO)', the Program is set to deliver higher value to the community, enabled with enhanced outreach.

A tea trade dinner was hosted by trustea on the evening



of 12th September 2019. The chief guest for the evening was Mr. Prabhat Kamal Bezbaruah, Chairman, Tea Board of India who shared his tacit knowledge on how to take the Program to new heights. An eminent speaker from the tea industry, Mr. Gautam Beria, senior office-bearer of the Assam Bought

Leaf Tea Manufacturers' Association shared his experience on how the program has made an impact on the ground. Mr. Rajesh Bhuyan, Director, trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation shared an update on the Program and the future plans. A thought provoking panel discussion was the key highlight of the event, where in the panel lists exchanged their insights on the sector. The panel comprise:

- Mr. Jagjeet Kandal, Managing Director, Amalgamated Plantations Pvt. Ltd.
- Mr. Jordy Van Honk, Program Director at IDH -The Sustainable Trade Initiative
- Mr. Sandip Ghosh, Secretary (Sustainability), Indian Tea Association
- Mr. Rajdeep Sikand, Director of Blending & Commercial Support, Tata Global Beverages Ltd.
- Mr. Rajesh Bhuyan, Director, trustea Sustainable Tea Foundation

The event was a great success with unprecedented participation and knowledge sharing of the tea fraternity!





Tea Board

Indian Tea Industry – At a Glance



By **Arun Kr. Ray, IPS**
Deputy Chairman, Tea Board

- India is the 2nd largest tea producer after China and a leading Black Tea Producer with yield rate of 2103 kgs per hectare.
 - India ranks 4th in World export market after Kenya, China and Sri Lanka.
 - Some of the world's finest teas like Assam, Darjeeling, Nilgiris and Kangra which are famous for their delicate flavor, strength and brightness are produced in India.
 - The major States of Tea Producing in India are Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala, which constitute around 98% of the total tea produce.
 - There are 1569 tea estates and an estimated 210225 Small Tea Growers all over India.
 - This is a labour intensive industry, employing 11, 65,815 workers in organized sector of whom more than 50% are women.
 - India consumes nearly 80% of tea produced domestically- however, the per capita consumption is low at 786 grams per annum;
 - Board is taking continuous steps to improve domestic consumption by using social media, participation in domestic fairs, extending financial assistance to Domestic Tea Boutiques etc.
 - To improve and retain export markets, various export measures including participation of overseas exhibitions, fairs, B2B, B2C assistance is provided.
 - Board is taking various steps to improve and impress producers for quality right from maintaining plucking standards, PPC, and improving value chain and ensure traceability.
- Production:**
- India tea achieved its highest ever tea production during 2018-19 at 1350.04 M.Kgs with an increase of 33.56 m.kg over 2017-18. Out of the total tea production, CTC contributes 90% while the Orthodox and Green Tea at 10%.
 - During the FY 2019-20(April to Aug), tea production stood at 718.03 M.Kgs as against 712.21 M.Kgs., an increase of 5.82 M.Kgs.
 - Tea production (in CTC category) has declined marginally while Orthodox tea production has improved – which is at present giving better price in export market;
 - The organized sector tea production is showing a decline trend while the Small Growers, an emerging sector tea production is increasing YoY.
- Exports:**
- During 2018-19, India exported 254.50 M.Kgs with record year of higher value realization in exports of Rs. 5506.84 Crs.
 - During 2019-20 (Apr-Aug), tea exports stood at 98.52 M.Kgs., with FOB value of Rs. 2273.14 Crs, an increase of 1.59 M.Kgs and Rs. 275.11 Crs over corresponding period.
 - Tea Exports in Orthodox increased by 10 M.Kgs with improved value of Rs. 295.06 Crs.,
 - The increase of tea exports is mainly seen in Iran – Exports to Iran during FY 2019-20 (Apr-Aug) is 23.39 M.Kgs with FOB value of Rs. 667.24 Crs. – increase of 12.75 M.Kgs and Rs. 119.83 Crs.
 - Despite decline in overall export market, tea exports till Aug, 2019 are increased with higher value realization by 12%.
- Prices:**
- The All India Tea Auction price during 2019-20 (Apr-September) is seen at Rs. 148.82 per Kgs., an increase of 3.02% over corresponding period.
 - Orthodox price has gone up 14.67% mainly due to increased demand in export market(Iran);
- Steps toward**
- **“Chai Sahyog” mobile app: Chai Sahyog Mobile App** has been launched in the state of Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and Arunachal Pradesh. This Mobile App facilitate transparent transaction between green leaf producers and tea manufacturing units. Chai Sahyog Apps will ensure traceability and technical support to small tea growers. Till date **67,204 number of QR coded card** has been generated for the small tea growers of N E Region
 - **Quality Checks & Improvement:** In order to improve the quality of made tea, Board through its field offices is in constant touch with stakeholders for improving the quality of the raw materials i.e., fine leaf count, movement of raw materials (green leaf) & PPC compliances. Efforts for proper upkeep & maintenance of manufacturing units, movement & disposal of tea waste, seizure of sub-standard teas, analysis of tea samples against FSSAI & MRL parameters etc.,
 - Introduction of fine leaf count (Agnext Technology) will start from next season.
 - Directives has been issued to stop the manufacturing during winter-months (with effect from 14-12-2019) to support quality tea producers and discourage inferior quality tea manufacturing during dormancy period of the tea bushes in the region of North India.
 - **Agriculture Export Policy:** Based on the guidelines of the Central Sector Scheme and to increase the share of export from the North East Region by creating infrastructure for export three districts of Tinsukia, Dibrugarh and Sivasagar of Assam have been identified through cluster formation. A proposal (of Rs.52.92 Crores) has been submitted to the Ministry for consideration.
 - **Implementation of the recommendation of the Niti Forum for North East:** As per the recommendation of the Niti Forum – Action Plan for Tea in North East, Board has submitted the proposal for different component viz.,

- Assistance for formation of organic value chain development for north east for tea sector,
 - **Tea tourism in North East** – for generating the additional revenue in the tea estate as well as by the small tea growers (home stay), total 37 proposals envisaging an investment of Rs. 265 Crs has been processed and submitted for approval.
 - Linkage of MSME scheme with proposed market promotion for North East Region (NER),
 - Quality enhancement and Orthodox Tea Production, Brand Building of tea from North East India and Continuous chemical and physical withering machine in Temi TE (Sikkim) to the Ministry for consideration.
- Opening of tea lounge in Kolkata and Mumbai of Board's premises has been concluded. There are at present 8 number of Tea Boutiques in India which has been approved under the Domestic Tea Promotion Scheme which covers widely Darjeeling, Guwahati, Delhi, Gangtok, Munnar, Hyderabad, Palampur and Goa. A Special drive has been launched for Tripura and Kangra tea promotion.
 - **Perpetual License:** As part of Government's policy of "Ease of doing business", Board has proposed to do away with renewal of licenses to make the entire process of interaction with the Tea Board approval easier. The proposal is at present with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India and the approval is expected by 15th November, 2019.
 - Allowing export of tea waste by the registered tea manufactures or exporters to help in generation of higher revenue for the industry.
 - Allowing setting of a new factory or expansion of units only in areas having abundant supply of green leaf to maintain the quality of brand image of Indian tea.
 - **Technological upgradation in e-Auction system:**
 - In order to keep pace with the changing technology, Tea Board has upgraded on the e-Auction infrastructure which includes hosting in a cloud environment and making the software is compatible with latest technology.
 - On the operations side, the e-auction platform for Jorhat with value added services is being development to replicate an e-Market place.
 - The Ministry of Commerce has permitted the sale of packet tea in the Government e-Market (GeM) portal, this will allow all the picketers to sell the tea directly to any Government agency without tendering.
 - The system development on recommendations of IIM study on e-Auction procedures is also under progress and will bring fruitful reforms in the auction process with fixed reserve price mechanism. A separate system for small buyers will be implemented to get in to the depth of the market.
- Achievements under Medium Term Framework, 2017-20 (MTF)**
- **Replanting/Replacement Planting:** One of the main factor of the declining productivity (yield/ha) and quality in the tea gardens is the aging of the tea bushes. This also increases the cost of production. To arrest this trend, Board is providing financial assistance to the tea industry for uprooting & replanting/replacement of old tea bushes. An area 3,325.72 Ha. has been uprooted & replanted/replacement planting during the MTF period (2017-20 - up to September,19)
 - **Rejuvenation & Consolidation:** To revive the existing bushes and to get the quality leaves that are old but not due for uprooting in another 10 year, Board is providing assistance for rejuvenation and consolidation of the tea bushes. This scheme operates in hilly regions only. An area 1,161.13 Ha. has been rejuvenated & consolidated during the MTF period (2017-20) - up to September,19
 - **Irrigation:** In order to mitigate the climate change and to bring tea area under irrigation, an area 6,807.08 Ha. has been brought under irrigation during the MTF period (up to September,19). The Tea Board is associating with Global Green Growth Institute (IGGI), New Delhi for getting fund from EU to the tune of Rs.125 Crs over 3 year period.
 - **QU & PDS:** 66 numbers of manufacturing unit has been brought under different component of modernization, value addition, setting up of specialty tea and quality certification
 - **Field Mechanization:** 772 units of different field mechanization equipment viz., pruning machine, mechanical harvester etc., were provided to the Industry under MTF period.
 - **Orthodox Tea Production:** In order to boost the production of Orthodox teas for a better product mix and to meet the export demand, Board is providing financial assistance towards production of Orthodox Teas. Financial support for 137.23 M.Kgs of orthodox teas production were provided during the MTF period (up to Sep 2019).
 - **Small Growers / SHGs / FPOs / Training / Workshop:** Considering the importance of small tea growers, their contribution and to organize them for sustainability and value chain, Board is providing financial assistance under various activity/components. Board has provided financial assistance to 51,090 numbers of beneficiaries under MTF period (till September, 2019)
 - **HRD Scheme:** For the welfare of the Workers and the ward of the workers that were not covered under the PLA, Board is providing financial assistance towards Health, Education and Training activity. Board has provided financial assistance to 20,151 beneficiaries under this component during the MTF Period (up to September, 2019).
 - **SCSP & TASP:** In order to provide the benefits of the existing PDS under MTF to the weaker section of the society, financial assistance to 3,22,803 numbers of beneficiaries belonging to scheduled caste and scheduled tribe have been provided under SCSP and TASP scheme during MTF period (up to September, 2019).

Credit Card Facility to the buyers

Tea Board conducts auctioning of teas through electronic mode to facilitate sale of tea in a transparent manner. As per the principles of auction, the buyers are mandated to pay the deal amount of auction to the sellers within 13 days from the date of sale (prompt payment), which will further facilitate delivery of teas to the buyers.

Although 99% of the prompt payments are remitted by the buyers within the specified time limit of 13 days, there are few instances where the buyers fail to clear the dues on time or make delayed payments due to various reasons mainly financial shortage.

Therefore, in order to facilitate smooth remittance of auction proceeds, Board has proposed to extend credit facility to the buyers in the form of "Corporate Credit Card" of ICICI Bank with assessed credit limits. By using this card, the buyers can settle the auction payments within the time limit and avail 45 days credit period from the bank. This will ease out the liquidity crunch of the auction buyers, if any and enhance participation in the auction process.

In this regard, it is pertinent to mention that ICICI Bank is the Settlement Banker for Tea Board in respect of auction payments. The credit limit of the buyers can be enhanced based on the performance as well as increase in business. The scheme is likely to be implemented by end of November or 1st week of December, 2019.

A similar facility to the sellers in the form of bill discounting is also under consideration to meet the short term financial needs of the sellers.



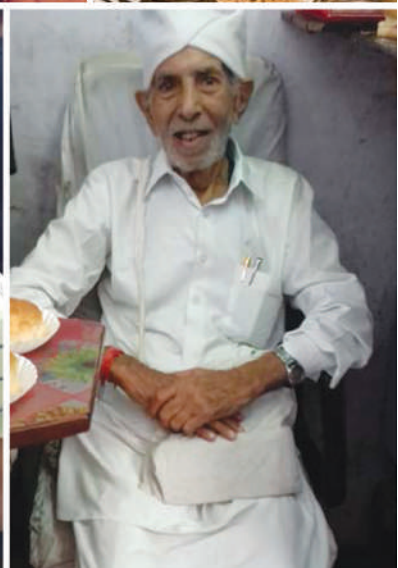
Gulabji Chai Wale



Nihal Mathur visited 'Gulab ji Chai Wale's shop in Jaipur, It is very popular hangout for youngsters and the tea delicious.



A legend in Jaipur, 94-years old Gulab Ji Chaiwala Feeds 200 beggars for free every day, from last 73 years!



TRA HAPPENINGS

The Hon'ble Finance Minister announced on 20th September that India's spending on R&D activities have been less than 1% of the GDP for years. For the Tea industry, it is less than 0.3% of turnover!! The finance ministry has therefore amended the rules governing the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) spending norms to pave the way for greater investment into research. TRA was recognized as one of the CSIR labs from 1964-1989 and currently is a recognized R&D institute by Department of Industrial and Scientific Research, Government of India. If CSR funds can be channeled for research at TRA, it will be a further boost towards attaining financial sustainability.

The 55th Annual General Meeting of the Tea Research Association was held at Kolkata on the 25th September, 2019. Mr P K Bezboruah, Chairman TRA in his address stated that funding from the Government have become very unstable over the years and the Association have made a plan to become fully self sufficient in 5 years through internal



revenue generation. He stated that TRA follows CSIR pay scales and the salary related costs of employees are 88% of it's budget and without proper flow of funds from the Government, it is very difficult to run the organization only on industry funds. He also stated that since Government provides majority funding for R&D of other sectors, Government even after achieving self sufficiency should continue to support R&D. Mr Bezboruah requested the Government to allow the CSR funds for R&D purpose at TRA which will help the organization.

In the 55th AGM, the joint project of TRA and Assam Petrochemicals Ltd on the use of methanol in the tea industry was showcased to all the members of the tea industry Mr Ratul Bordoloi, MD, APL and Dr A K Barooah, Director TRA . It was stated that methanol is a cleaner and non fossil fuel which has higher calorific value than coal to use in the tea factories.

TRA also showcased the new fine leaf count machine based on artificial intelligence called TRA Agnext



Quality Tea Profiler which have been developed jointly with Agnext Technologies. This equipment will be of importance once the Government decides to set the minimum green leaf price based on fine leaf percentage.

Mr. Arun Kumar Ray, Dy Chairman, Tea Board of India stated that instead of depending on subsidies, the tea industry should change its business model on generating more demand through quality and new innovative ideas. He stated that Tea Board itself is becoming lean and have taken numerous measures on it's own revenue generation. He appreciated the steps taken by TRA on becoming self sufficient in the near future.

Mr. Kamakhya Tasa, MP addressed the industry and thanked for paying bonus at higher rates inspite of difficult times. He stated that Government wants all bodies to become self sufficient. He said that Assam Government have come forward to help TRA and will continue to do so.

Dr Vijay Kumar Saraswat, Member of Niti Aayog & Chancellor of JNU addressed the 55th AGM and stated the industry voice from the tea industry have not been heard and he offered to arrange a meeting with the Niti Aayog members soon. Dr. Saraswat stated that the difference between the small grower sector and the big growers need to be bridged. The small holders need to be properly regulated as per the existing laws some of which are applicable to the organized sector. He urged the state Government to study the matter as it has been putting the organized sector in a disadvantaged position. Dr. Saraswat stated that TRA has more expenditure on manpower and salaries which is more than 80%. The optimum ratio of a effective research organization is around 50% salaries and 50 % on R&D. He appreciated the current system of industry funding and assured that he would take up the matter of funding with the Department of Commerce. Dr. Saraswat stressed the importance of the tea industry as a big employment generator and export earner. With a revamp in the industry using technology, the tea industry can contribute well to the export basket. He stressed on the use of new technology like methanol which was tried at his behest by TRA and Assam Petrochemicals Ltd.

The meeting was attended by around 250 participants of the industry in Kolkata.

Lets Process QualiTEA Intellegently

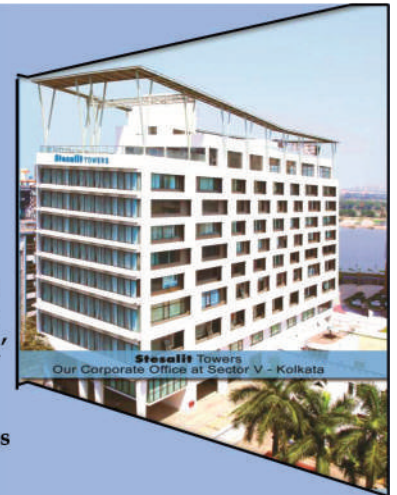
NEX GEN AUTOMATION FOR TEA PROCESSING

Stesalit Introduces Uniquely Designed Microcontroller Based Equipment for Quality Enhancement of Tea

Stesalit Systems Limited is a SEI-CMM-Level3; ISO 9001-2008 and ISO 27001 certified Group Company. Stesalit Systems energies Smart Cities, Internet of Things and Embedded Systems.

Automation division of Stesalit Systems, a pioneer in designing and Manufacturing of the art of Process Automation Systems/Equipment, for over two decades, has developed a large number of Microcontroller-based Process Automation Systems for Tea processing Industry. These systems are being used from Withering to Sorting processes in tea factories, resulting in better quality and higher price realization of 'Made Tea' with substantial saving in energy and manpower for the tea factories.

Over 1000 nos. of our these equipment are running satisfactorily in various tea factories in India and abroad.



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MGWF
(Uniform Feed to Rotorvane)



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(Online Continuous Weighing Systems)
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(Automatic Withering System).



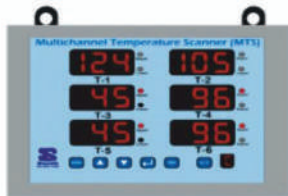
FRMS
(Monorail Flow Rate Monitoring)



CARC-04 (Coal Saving &
Maintaining Constant Inlet
Temperature in Drier)



SDTC
(Dryer
Temperature
Controller).



Wireless MTS
(Multi Channel Temperature Scanner)



HMS
(Humidity Management System)



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Planters talk tea issues in Delhi meet



Use of garden leasehold land for other activities to be decided on by State Governments



Atul Asthana (L) being appointed as Brand Ambassador of Indian Tea by DC Arun Kr. Ray, Tea Board (R)

Kozhikode's Sulaimani Chai



This sweet-sour chai made with lemon and cardamom is so popular that 51 varieties are sold in Kozhikode alone

It is said that Sulaimani Chai is not just a beverage for Malabar Malayalis, but an emotion. The beverage made of tea powder; sugar and lemon – sometimes with a hint of cardamom – comes in many varieties. Brewed to a beautiful shade of amber; this ambrosial tea is made without milk and sometimes served with an invigorating slice of lemon.

At Ikkakka'schayakkada, Sulaimani is sold for ₹ 1 even now! Muhammad Koya, who owns a tea shop that sells Sulaimani, says that the chai's "digestive" property makes it a must-have after heavy meals.

Recipe

Ingredients : Tea leaf : 1-2 tsp (depending on how strong you want the tea to be) | Sugar : to taste | Cardamom Seeds: 1 pinch | Lemon juice : 1 tbsp | Water: 1-2 cups | Cinamom: 1 stick | Saffron: few strands

Method

- Bring water to a boil • Add crushed cardamom seeds • Add tea leaves • Let it steep for a minute, add lemon juice, if you want
- Top with saffron or cinnamon stick (optional) • Serve hot



Private Sales likely to exit on authenticity and price woes

Tea Board eyes e-auction of entire Darjeeling produce

The Tea Board of India will meet the producers of Darjeeling tea to propose 100% mandatory sales of the iconic brew via auction, which, according to it, would make each gram of the India's first Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged product count in terms of traceability or authenticity and real price realisation.

But an appropriate globally marketed e-platform with B to B and B to C product differentiation may be a more lucrative possibility, for the single origin estate teas. This would solicit domestic national interest too. Opines a prominent Darjeeling Single Estate Owner.

A Moot Point

The MSME has been able to secure 30000 crores from the government for its revival. The agriculture ministry provides farm loans and loan waivers to its subject. Why is Tea Board not able to secure even 3000 crores for our Industry which is the 2nd largest employer in the country. Questions a producer.



Ananyabrat Kanoi of Doolahat at The Indian School, with Lal Raisinghani – Flag Hoisting



Dhruba Tea Centre display shelf



Souvari of Dhruba Tea Centre with Nilanjan with the record price certificate of Doolahat Tea Estate

TEA ACADEMY, SILIGURI

Course 1 : Tea Tasting And Tea Management Course
 Duration: 4 Months
 Course Fee: Rs.30,000/-
 (Payable In 2 Instalments)

Course 2 : Crash Course on Tea Tasting, Blending, Marketing and Factory Visits
 Duration : 7 Days
 Course Fee: Rs.20,000/-

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Tea Academy, Shivmandir, Military Road, Halermatha, New Rangia P.O., Darjeeling Dt. 734013
 Email: tea.academy.siliguri@gmail.com | Website : www.teaacademy-siliguri.in



The Kilt and Bagpipe
The famous Scottish Brogue

TEA PLANTATIONS IN *Scotland*



Vintage Scotch renowned the world over, Johnny Walker, Ballantine, Chivas Regal, The Old Grouse. This is how the world knows Scotland but an eye catching phenomenon is spreading over the Highlands. The Wee Tea plantations have opened on the foothills of the Scottish Highlands and are already picking the first teas.



By
Errol O'Brien

This enterprising Company has planted 2000 tea bushes in Perthshire making it one of the largest commercial Tea Plantations in Europe and certainly the only one in Scotland.

To some, the idea of Scotland growing tea successfully might come like the country winning the World Cup in cricket independent of mainland England.

The Wee Tea Company has different ideas and has set their sights of transforming the chilly Perthshire landscape more into the lines of the sloping hillsides of Darjeeling covered with Tea Plants.

The main tea growing areas of the world are found in the warmth of a humid climate, so how can the plants survive the Scottish weather?

Using a mixture of cutting edge technology and a touch of practicality, the answer becomes clear. The reality is that once the plants have matured enough there is no reason why they should not be able to withstand

the coldest winter.

Tam O'Braan, a Director of the Company has developed crop growing systems all over the world and it is the use of these technologies that will nurture the plants and bushes for the first few years

As the Scots become more aware of their carbon footprints and consumers look more closely at where food truly comes from it is clear that they will want home grown products.

Scotland is blessed with clean fresh air, spring water and good soil. The Scots are on a mission to produce truly local teas which are also being packeted and finding their way into UK stores.

Locals and tourists alike will be able to take guided tours of the plantations which will involve learning about tea, seeing the actual shrubs first hand and learning about the growth and the process of manufacture.



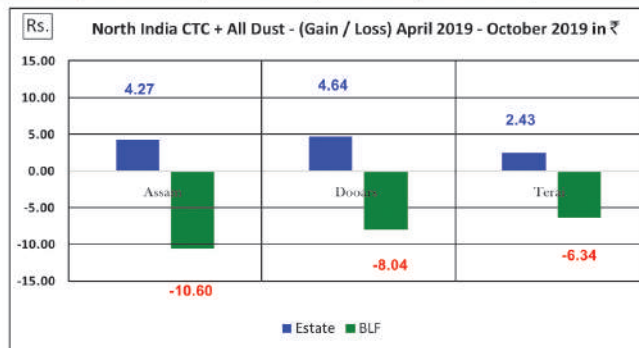
Compiled by
Soumen Bagchi

CONTEMPORARY TEA TRENDS

Highlights : Auction average

India : April to October (in INR per Kg)									
	ALL Sector			Estate			BLF		
CTC + All Dust	2019-20	2018-19	+/-	2019-20	2018-19	+/-	2019-20	2018-19	+/-
Assam	164.98	165.00	-0.02	181.17	176.90	4.27	128.79	139.39	-10.60
Cachar	128.32	134.86	-6.54						
Dooars	149.98	150.07	-0.09	169.37	164.73	4.64	111.63	119.67	-8.04
Terai	124.19	127.15	-2.96	151.62	149.19	2.43	105.53	111.86	-6.34
N.India	152.45	154.29	-1.84						
S.India	97.75	98.47	-0.72						
Orthodox									
N.India	228.81	209.91	18.90						
S.India	140.90	135.69	5.21						

CTC+All Dust (Gain / Loss) in ₹		
	Estate	BLF
Assam	4.27	-10.60
Dooars	4.64	-8.04
Terai	2.43	-6.34



WORLD AVERAGE TEA AUCTION PRICES

January to October (per Kg)

CENTRE	In Countrywise Currency				In INR (Approx)			In US \$ (Approx)		
	Currency	2019	2018	+/-	2019	2018	+/-	2019	2018	+/-
North India (CTC+All Dust)	INR	145.95	145.19	0.76	145.95	145.19	0.76			
South India (CTC+All Dust)	INR	101.42	100.06	1.35	101.42	100.06	1.35			
North India (Orthodox)	INR	224.02	201.88	22.14	224.02	201.88	22.14			
South India (Orthodox)	INR	142.91	134.75	8.17	142.91	134.75	8.17			
Chittagong	BDT	202.17	255.07	-52.90	168.53	205.19	-36.66	2.40	3.05	-0.65
Mombasa (Kenya)	US Cents	219.00	263.00	-44.00	153.85	177.00	-23.15	2.19	2.63	-0.44
Limbe	US Cents	146.51	184.82	-38.31	102.92	124.38	-21.46	1.47	1.85	-0.38
Colombo (Mainly Orthodox)	SL Rs	540.48	582.57	-42.09	217.76	246.07	-28.31	3.10	3.66	-0.56
Exchange Rate:										
January to October (Approximate)	US\$ 1=		India	Bangladesh	Sri Lanka					
		2019	70.25	84.27	174.36					
		2018	67.30	83.66	159.33					

Source: ITA

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	148.01	110.8	148.68	60.9	150.80
May	227.9	144.95	196.1	148.38	196.7	138.90	158.5	138.40	123.0	143.00
Jun	228.0	154.68	212.7	156.77	205.4	149.46	169.3	149.33	181.1	143.82
July	343.3	157.82	268.3	156.11	264.4	143.42	296.6	149.92	273.7	144.42
Aug	309.5	151.67	396.8	150.55	370.6	141.54	344.5	141.00	262.6	143.51
Sep	351.9	146.04	350.4	145.73	298.2	140.00	306.8	137.96	347.3	140.61
Oct	346.9	144.68	384.6	145.32	335.0	141.92	212.1	137.29	296.6	133.02
Nov			362.4	148.77	461.6	140.71	390.1	138.30	325.8	140.29
Dec			375.5	144.50	386.5	137.72	329.5	132.64	463.7	135.69
Jan			383.9	132.85	321.3	124.49	318.2	122.16	279.8	124.39
Feb			184.5	115.99	276.4	105.11	282.3	110.49	135.7	111.03
Mar			48.6	115.52	38.1	94.77	116.3	106.87	32.9	115.34
April to October	1897.6	150.26	1890.5	150.16	1738.3	142.52	1598.7	142.74	1545.1	141.29
April to March			3245.4	144.84	3222.2	136.12	3035.2	134.54	2783.0	136.76

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	121.8	163.21	97.7	176.58	94.3	160.67	114.7	157.41	104.4	158.62
Aug	106.5	166.61	146.8	169.81	122.5	161.54	130.2	146.13	95.7	157.50
Sep	115.3	162.34	123.4	161.10	96.2	162.61	116.3	144.20	127.8	152.44
Oct	105.4	159.73	131.0	160.66	111.9	165.44	79.4	145.46	96.5	144.98
Nov			117.1	158.13	138.3	159.66	124.2	145.51	110.7	148.49
Dec			111.4	148.13	110.6	152.65	94.2	138.06	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	114.53	85.0	113.82	38.0	113.63
Mar			16.9	111.64	5.8	108.74	32.8	108.50	5.9	116.65
April to October	617.8	159.18	659.6	166.11	580.4	158.99	591.9	148.46	533.7	152.80
April to March			1078.6	155.83	1003.3	152.46	1021.6	141.15	927.5	146.37



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	46.9	79.80	44.2	78.67	29.6	69.43	34.4	88.47	39.8	64.26
Aug	36.8	80.88	37.2	83.08	55.2	64.45	37.0	86.58	45.6	62.04
Sep	28.2	83.78	41.0	90.72	40.6	69.56	41.4	95.18	34.1	63.43
Oct	36.7	81.46	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 October	250.9	86.39	277.1	82.95	279.0	74.75	219.9	92.02	290.5	65.67
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	62.8	97.50	65.8	101.78	46.3	96.54	44.5	101.94	61.7	82.46
Aug	51.2	98.08	45.3	108.51	77.6	95.51	55.7	105.14	60.7	81.35
Sep	43.0	95.35	54.7	120.44	47.1	93.22	60.7	108.79	59.6	87.08
Oct	51.4	104.45	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 October	382.2	105.21	429.1	108.49	408.6	101.14	358.8	107.76	462.2	86.41
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	6.3	264.04	4.1	228.19	3.0	218.30	7.7	228.04	2.6	217.59
May	33.6	255.56	29.6	218.71	24.5	214.52	14.1	214.02	10.7	188.87
Jun	35.4	259.27	23.6	223.41	24.4	222.21	14.8	244.37	16.1	222.05
July	49.5	241.67	27.9	224.44	25.3	232.13	23.8	242.71	20.7	246.26
Aug	44.4	223.53	36.4	206.67	38.9	228.59	33.2	227.47	20.2	238.89
Sep	56.5	204.11	34.6	191.30	23.1	212.25	24.8	214.00	21.2	215.42
Oct	50.9	205.17	31.6	200.42	32.7	213.89	21.0	209.62	16.2	218.46
Nov			28.4	210.85	39.6	213.96	33.5	209.66	24.7	208.64
Dec			37.3	217.23	25.5	197.75	21.3	207.95	21.6	204.01
Jan			26.7	185.37	22.7	168.69	24.5	181.05	5.6	181.89
Feb			3.9	164.54	13.4	152.68	16.2	158.71	2.4	164.82
Mar			0.9	161.68	3.1	169.93	3.6	165.10	0.6	164.47
April to October	276.6	228.81	187.9	209.91	171.8	221.02	139.3	225.45	107.7	224.60
April to March			285.2	207.88	276.1	209.68	238.5	211.65	162.6	216.87

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	7.4	135.72	9.2	128.06	6.8	125.74	5.1	131.16	8.7	113.95
Aug	6.3	133.37	5.3	126.32	11.4	127.96	8.3	138.48	8.7	112.72
Sep	4.3	127.75	6.9	136.35	7.0	120.57	9.8	142.84	9.1	120.67
Oct	7.3	142.90	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 October	48.5	140.90	56.4	135.69	59.6	130.53	47.9	137.93	58.5	116.93
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 October

ASSAM

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
LARGE BROKENS	187.68	179.51	172.96	162.64	172.21
MEDIUM BROKENS	189.65	180.17	179.86	162.32	176.92
SMALL BROKENS	193.52	183.09	182.54	168.27	181.73
FANNINGS	180.21	174.34	172.25	159.53	169.71
PD	190.25	190.05	184.61	166.27	187.00
DUST	199.29	199.56	195.22	174.55	199.55
All Secondaries	134.59	138.70	133.79	123.22	113.52

DOOARS

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
LARGE BROKENS	152.87	146.16	139.51	137.86	133.11
MEDIUM BROKENS	171.98	162.80	159.60	157.28	153.40
SMALL BROKENS	184.17	176.07	173.41	170.17	165.52
FANNINGS	172.77	170.55	169.09	163.14	156.41
PD	158.85	164.12	158.87	150.53	144.40
DUST	151.69	159.93	151.87	141.35	136.47
All Secondaries	137.27	136.74	134.23	131.55	120.85

TERAI

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
LARGE BROKENS	139.77	137.91	118.41	125.19	117.35
MEDIUM BROKENS	149.41	144.04	131.28	136.57	134.39
SMALL BROKENS	164.75	160.33	144.05	146.31	144.73
FANNINGS	158.73	158.03	141.55	140.64	138.17
PD	145.11	153.11	137.13	132.02	127.68
DUST	145.93	155.12	140.82	127.76	125.87
All Secondaries	122.04	122.36	111.76	116.77	105.28

CACHAR

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
LARGE BROKENS	126.35	124.63	115.10	116.65	107.65
MEDIUM BROKENS	128.77	132.87	127.61	124.73	118.98
SMALL BROKENS	130.33	137.37	130.46	128.68	123.48
FANNINGS	129.73	134.43	124.46	122.24	118.25
PD	135.74	145.90	134.25	126.75	119.01
DUST	131.41	144.37	134.79	124.15	116.72
All Secondaries	107.97	120.47	109.04	110.21	94.88

Highest selling grades highlighted

TRIPURA

CTC & DUST	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)	Avg. (Rs.)
LARGE BROKENS	124.04	127.80	114.25	117.47	107.16
MEDIUM BROKENS	119.41	122.75	116.97	121.01	106.66
SMALL BROKENS	121.35	124.12	117.02	123.10	112.02
FANNINGS	111.95	121.73	113.82	116.53	103.32
PD	111.89	126.33	115.58	113.18	96.52
DUST	127.00	136.81	123.02	116.45	103.49
All Secondaries	104.65	120.59	102.12	100.43	88.07

Highest selling grades highlighted

Category wise percentage of Tea sold in Auction under different Price range April to October

ASSAM : Estate		Below Rs.140	Rs.141-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. 171-180	Rs. 181-190	Rs. 191-200	Above Rs.200	Total %
Primary CTC	2019 (%)	17	6	6	8	8	8	8	38	100
	2018 (%)	16	9	10	11	11	9	8	26	100
Primary Dust	2019 (%)	16	6	5	6	6	6	7	48	100
	2018 (%)	9	5	5	6	8	10	12	46	100
Secondaries	2019 (%)	64	9	8	6	5	3	2	3	100
	2018 (%)	60	11	9	7	5	3	2	3	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 (%)	24	6	6	7	7	7	7	36	100
	2018 (%)	21	8	8	9	9	9	8	28	100

Dooars & Terai Estate		Below Rs.140	Rs.141-150	Rs. 151-160	Rs. 161-170	Rs. 171-180	Rs. 181-190	Rs. 191-200	Above Rs.200	Total %
Primary CTC	2019 (%)	21	6	8	10	12	13	10	19	100
	2018 (%)	22	9	10	13	13	11	8	14	100
Primary Dust	2019 (%)	34	12	12	13	10	9	5	4	100
	2018 (%)	26	12	14	13	12	10	7	6	100
Secondaries	2019 (%)	63	9	9	8	6	3	1	2	100
	2018 (%)	66	11	9	7	4	2	1	1	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 (%)	28	7	9	10	11	11	9	15	100
	2018 (%)	29	9	11	12	11	10	7	11	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	20	20	14	9	6	5	7	100
	2018 (%)	8	13	19	20	17	10	6	6	100
Primary Dust	2019 (%)	14	16	26	16	9	5	4	10	100
	2018 (%)	2	4	11	18	17	12	9	28	100
Secondaries	2019 (%)	66	20	9	3	1	1	0	1	100
	2018 (%)	35	27	20	10	4	2	1	1	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 (%)	25	19	20	13	8	5	4	7	100
	2018 (%)	10	12	17	18	15	10	6	11	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 (%)	61	19	10	5	2	1	1	1	100
	2018 (%)	38	35	14	6	3	2	1	1	100
Primary Dust	2019 (%)	58	22	11	5	2	1	0	2	100
	2018 (%)	18	29	24	15	6	3	1	3	100
Secondaries	2019 (%)	80	10	4	3	2	1	1	1	100
	2018 (%)	66	20	7	3	2	2	0	0	100
Total CTC+Dust	2019 (%)	62	18	10	4	2	1	1	1	100
	2018 (%)	39	33	14	6	3	2	1	1	100



Fly me to The Moon



We were married on a tiny plateau of land overlooking the Arabian Sea. The land belonged to the Maharashtra Government Secretariat and some friendly contact had given us access for the afternoon. A makeshift shamiana fluttered gaily in the breeze. The waves pounded on the rocks below, even as the priest droned the marriage litany.

The reason for the skimpy arrangement was my father's vow taken during his student days whereby he had sworn not to attend a wedding where more than Rs. 500 was spent. His own marriage had been a registered ceremony after which he had quietly but firmly escorted out my mother, much to her chagrin,

away from the hall where celebrations and feasting arranged by her father were set to begin. The reason behind this boycott of expensive weddings was that the young men of his caste could not acquire brides unless they put down 10 tolas of gold!

Except for the two Morbi royal family weddings and another two Birla affairs that he was obliged to attend as an employee, my father had hitherto stuck to his vow, not even attending weddings of his younger sisters which he had helped to arrange. Nayana's father was not a very wealthy man but he was a generous host and loved feeding people. When first told about my father's views, he had been filled with dismay. My

TEA TIME

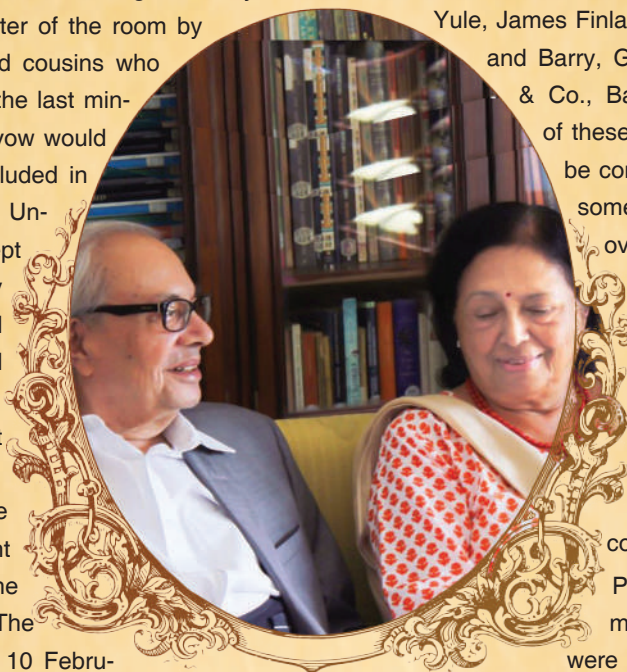
father sportingly told him, 'Dahyabhai, you are welcome to have a feast and I can assure you that my wife and my son will come. But you must count me out.' Nayana's father had hastily retreated.

It was agreed that in view of inflation, the cut-off figure of Rs. 500 could be raised to Rs. 5,000. This allowed for a reception at the Taj Mahal hotel where only soft drinks were served. The total bill came to around Rs. 1,700. The reception was held in what is now the Sea Lounge. There were no floral decorations nor a special dais for the bride and the groom. Nayana was stationed in the center of the room by her somewhat bewildered cousins who had not been certain till the last minute whether my father's vow would stretch to their being included in the marriage party at all. Unused to the protocol, I kept wandering off towards my friends and relatives, and Nayana's cousins had quite a job tactfully bringing me back to stand at my bride's side. Notwithstanding all this, the bride and the groom look radiant in the photographs and the guests in high spirits. The marriage that started on 10 Febru-

ary 1965 has remained unflawed to this day. In the mid-sixties, an imperial hangover continued to hover over Calcutta, and particularly over the world of company executives. It seemed as though the British had converted Calcutta into their home-away-from-home-which-was-forever England. As in London, Calcutta had its open parks, the maidan at its heart; the Hooghly river breeze brought along with the salt air, as did the Thames, the aroma of spice and tea. One could see huge neoclassical mansions standing amid carefully cultivated gardens facing wide boulevards; public buildings, had been created to appear awesome, the grandiloquent style heightened by Palladian facades and columned doorways. The old families lived in imposing mansions in the north of the city. Some of the buildings there were, however, now splitting apart under the hammer blows of taxation and neglect.

But old colonial institutions like the clubs, which had started taking in Indian members, were acquiring a growing momentum. These clubs were now bustling with Calcutta's young, bright, inexhaustible and modern men and women. Everywhere around, one could sense the colonial presence. In the marching file of stately office buildings on Clive Street, now Netaji Subhas Road, and Dalhousie Square, or now BBD Bagh, the commercial hub of the city, feature predominant British names. Emblazoned on brass panels at imposing entrances were names like Andrew Yule, James Finlay, Duncan Bros, Macneill and Barry, Gillanders Arbuthnot, Bird & Co., Balmer Lawrie, etc. Many of these companies continued to be controlled from England but some had begun to be taken over by wealthy Marwaris. They, however, seemed to be happy to keep in the background, maintaining the labels and the trappings of yore, believing that they gave greater prestige to the company.

Presiding over these mammoth mercantile houses were the white burra sahibs who lived in gracious bungalows thoughtfully provided by their companies in the fashionable localities of Ballygunge and Alipore. The memsahibs could be even more imposing. An invitation to tea was an honour not to be lightly taken. Apart from the signal that the husband was in the good books of the company, it carried with it an implicit hint of an exalted role the wife was expected to play in the future. At four o'clock in the afternoon, the lavender-scented memsahib would emerge fresh from her siesta to preside over an exquisitely laid-out tea on a manicured lawn, while liveried servants scuttled in the shrubbery at her bidding, fetching trays of wafer-thin cucumber sandwiches and fruit cake made by the bavarchi in the kitchen. The young wife rendered somewhat breathless by such august attentions was meant to absorb the tradition and carry it forward when her turn came.



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