

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2004

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PRODUCTION OF TEA

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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) the total hectare of yield areas of tea in Eastern Region, North India and South India, till 1999;
- (b) whether the production of tea has decreased sharply in various regions during the last three years;
- (c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (d) whether prices of tea have also fallen during the above period;
- (e) if so, the details thereof;
- (f) the reasons for the decline in the tea production and its prices in various regions; and
- (g) the steps taken to increase the areas under tea plantation, its production to stable its prices and protection of overseas market for Indian tea?

Answer

MINISTER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN)

(a) The area under tea cultivation in Eastern Region, North India and South India till 1999 was 344608, 3393 and 89856 ha. Respectively.

(b) & (c) The production of tea registered an increase of 60.37 M.Kgs. in 1998 over 1997. However, there was a decline of 64.79 M. Kgs. in production of tea in 1999 over 1998. The decline has been mainly in the tea producing states such as Assam, West Bengal, Kerala etc.

(d) & (e) Yes Sir. The annual average auction price during 1999 also registered a decline. The annual average auction price in 1999 was Rs.72.79 per Kg as compared to Rs.76.43 per Kg in 1998.

(f) Decline in production in 1999 was mainly due to severe drought during the first quarter followed by floods in the later part of the year in some of the tea growing areas. The reasons for decline in prices is attributed mainly to lower off take by CIS countries, lower production of orthodox tea and deterioration of quality of tea, lower demand in the domestic market etc.

(g) Tea Board has introduced a New Area Development Scheme to encourage setting up of new plantations in non-traditional tea growing areas. Tea Board has also implemented various other developmental schemes in order to increase production and productivity of tea under which financial assistance to the industry is provided for encouraging extension planting re-planting , rejuvenation pruning, infilling, creation of irrigation facilities and drainage etc. The Tea Board has taken up Quality Upgradation Scheme and is also encouraging production of orthodox tea.

In order to promote Indian Teas in the overseas markets, Tea Board has initiated action towards registration of Tea Board Logo and Speciality Tea Logo in major tea importing countries. Tea Board also acts to remove bottlenecks in exports to individual markets whenever these are noticed. Other steps taken to increase exports of India tea includ

- (i) participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad;
- (ii) field sampling at speciality stores and in principle markets;
- (iii) media campaign to increase consumer awareness of speciality Indian teas and to popularise the Tea Board marketing symbol;
- (iv) exchange of tea delegation etc.