

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4033
ANSWERED ON:20.03.2015
PROBLEMS FACED BY SMALL TEA GROWERS
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Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has explored the potential of small tea growers in the industrial growth of the North-East region including Assam and Arunachal Pradesh;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the measures taken by the Government to tap it;
- (c) whether the Government has taken note of problems being faced by small tea growers in production and marketing of their produce, including agricultural practices and lack of processing facilities and has conducted any study in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and
- (e) the further measures taken including the plans/schemes being implemented to promote the small tea growers and remove the constraints being faced by them?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SMT. NIRMALA SITHARAMAN)

(a) & (b): Small tea growers contribute in substantial measure to the industrial growth of the North Eastern Region including Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. The production of tea from small sector accounts for nearly one-third of the total tea produced in North Eastern Region as detailed below:

(Qty. In M.Kgs)

State	2014-15 (Apr-Jan)	Contribution in %	2013-14 (Apr-Jan)	Contribution in %							
Big Growers	Small Growers	Total	Big Growers	Small Growers	Total	Big Growers	Small Growers	Total	Big Growers	Small Growers	Total
Assam	422.51	150.75	573.26	73.70	26.30	458.57	154.50	613.07	74.80	25.20	
Arunachal	3.76	7.06	10.82	34.75	65.25	3.68	6.83	10.51	35.01	64.99	
Others	5.48	3.14	8.62	63.57	36.43	5.66	3.42	9.08	62.33	37.67	
(Tripura, Meghalaya, Nagaland)											
North Eastern Region	436.88	163.94	600.82	72.71	27.29	473.56	168.10	641.66	73.80	26.20	

Provisional, subject to revision.

A separate Directorate, headquartered at Dibrugarh, Assam with adequate field officers has been set up for looking after the developmental needs of small tea growers. The Directorate has taken steps to enumerate small tea growers in each tea growing state and maintain a closer interface with growers to organize themselves into Producers Societies. Such societies are expected to serve as focal points for the Directorates extension activities aimed at improving quality, consistency and price realization.

(c) & (d): Small growers have emerged as important sector contributing nearly one third of the countrys production of made tea. Following a study commissioned by the Tea Board in course of evaluation of the XI Plan Scheme for development of tea sector, the level of registration of small growers with the Tea Board was found to be only around 20%, thus limiting the access of small growers to the benefits and support provided by Tea Board. The report recommended increased attention to this sector, consolidation of various schemes under one umbrella scheme, relaxed eligibility norms for Small Help Groups (SHGs) and increased levels of assistance.

Based on the evaluation study report, a separate component for small growers development has been duly included in the 12th Plan Scheme of the Tea Board. Tea Board has initiated the process of enumeration/identification of small tea growers under the Scheme and has registered so far 67992 number of small tea growers in the North Eastern Region.

(e): Financial outlay of Rs.200 Cr. has been provided under the XII Plan for development of tea for promoting small tea growers and addressing the special needs of this sector, particularly in the area of improving production and productivity through new planting;

establishing processing factories with special focus on enhancement of quality; organizational management of primary producer societies/Self Help Groups and entrepreneurship; imparting training, study tours, demonstration plots, workshops, seminars etc; implementation of regulatory provisions of Tea Act and its control orders, especially the price sharing formula notified under Tea Marketing Control Order and other measures aimed at safeguarding the quality of tea; and special assistance to growers in the non-traditional states in North Eastern Region, Himachal Pradesh and Idukki District in Kerala.