

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:765
ANSWERED ON:24.07.2015
Promotion of Organic Tea Farming
Sarmah Shri Ram Prasad

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

- a) whether the Government proposes to accord priority for the promotion and development of organic tea farming in North-Eastern (NE) region of the country particularly in the State of Assam;
- b) if so, the details thereof along with the progress made in this regard so far;
- c) the funds allocated for promotion of organic tea farming in NE region during the last three years and the current year;
- d) whether any central institute for research and development work for organic tea farming is proposed to be set up in NE region; and
- e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b): To encourage organic tea production in the country, including in North-Eastern (NE) region, the XII Plan Scheme "Tea Development and Promotion Scheme" of the Tea Board provides for financial support by way of capital subsidy on the investment for new planting/replanting or conversion from conventional to organic cultivation under the 'Plantation Development' and 'Small Growers Development' components. The subsidy to be provided is 25% more than the subsidy applicable for conventional new planting/replanting etc. Besides this, organic certification is also eligible for the subsidy at the rate of 50% of the certification fee subject to a ceiling of Rs.1.00 lakh per certificate including renewals per annum.

In case of Self Help Groups (SHGs)/Cooperative of SHGs setting up organic tea factory, 75% of the cost of organic certifications is paid subject to ceiling of Rs.1.5 Lakh per certification including renewal per annum.

In North East region, financial incentive has been provided for 3 organic certifications amounting to Rs.1.08 lakh during the Financial Year 2014-15.

(c): There is no separate allocation for organic tea. The expenditure for organic tea is made from the components viz. Plantation Development, Quality Up-gradation and Small Growers Development under "Tea Development and Promotion Scheme" of the Tea Board.

(d) & (e): There is no provision to set up a separate institute for research and development for organic tea in North East. However, Tea Research Association (TRA), Tocklai, United Planters Association of Southern India –Tea Research Institute (UPASI- TRI) and Darjeeling Tea Research and Development Centre (DTR&DC) had undertaken a project funded by Common Fund For Commodities namely "Development, Production and Trade of Organic Tea" in Assam, South India and Darjeeling, respectively. The above three institutes are sufficiently equipped to address the immediate and future issues/problems related to organic Tea production.
