

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3095

ANSWERED ON:07.08.2015

Protection of Small Tea Growers

Gohain Shri Rajen

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

- a) whether the Government has any information about the number of small tea growers in the country and area of land cultivated by them and if so, the details thereof;
- b) whether the Government has taken note that due to non-purchasing of green tea leaves from small tea growers by the big size tea producers, lakhs of tonnes of green leaves had to be destroyed by small tea growers in North-Eastern Region; and
- c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to protect the small tea growers from such problem being faced by them?

**Answer**

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

(a): The estimated number of small growers in the country is reported to be around 2 lakh covering an area of 1,60,000 hectares (Ha.).

(b): No report has been received by the Tea Board regarding forced destruction of green tea leaves by the small tea growers due to refusal of large tea producers to purchase green tea leaves.

(c): The Tea Board has a network of field offices located in all important tea growing regions, including North-Eastern Region where the small growers are concentrated. A price sharing formula has been notified for ensuring equitable sharing of sale proceeds between factories and growers. District Level Price Monitoring Committees have been formed in the tea growing areas to monitor the green leaf price. The Tea (Marketing) Control Order, 2003 has been amended to ensure transparency in prices paid by tea manufacturers to the small growers by referencing them to the average auction prices of tea in the region. The growers are also being encouraged to set up their own tea factories either individually or collectively.

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