

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2397
ANSWERED ON:25.07.2014
PROBLEMS FACED BY TEA GROWERS
Gohain Shri Rajen

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

- (a) the details of small tea growers in the country, area of land cultivated and annual production during the last three years and the current year, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has taken note that due to non purchasing of green tea leaves by the big size tea producers from small tea growers, lakhs of tonnes of green leaves had to be destroyed by small tea growers in North Eastern Region;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to protect the small tea growers from such unexpected problems faced by them?

Answer

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

(a): Based on feedback received in course of the baseline survey being conducted by the Tea Board for enumeration of small tea growers in the country, the number of small tea growers in the country is estimated to be around 2 lakhs. The estimated area under cultivation by small tea growers is 1,60,000 hectares approximately. The estimated number of growers, area under cultivation and production by small tea growers in the major tea growing states is as under:

State	Production in Million Kgs.						
	Esti 2011-	Esti 2012-	2013-	2014-	(provisional)		
	mated	mated	12	13	14	15	April-May-2014
No. of Area							
Growers under							
cultiv							
ation							
Assam	100000	75000	165.02	189.62	196.45	20.94	
West Bengal	35000	36000	76.49	92.63	97.47	10.86	
Tamil Nadu	50000	40000	46.22	55.43	54.56	8.81	
Kerala	10000	5000	17.49	20.56	19.82	3.80	
Other States	5000	4000	4.23	5.78	7.47	1.10	
All India	200000	160000	309.45	364.02	375.78	45.51	

(b)&(c): No report has been received from any part of the country regarding forced destruction of green leaf by small tea growers due to refusal by big-size tea producers to purchase green leaves.

(d): Government has set up a separate Directorate with effect from April 1, 2013 to look after the developmental needs of small growers. Growers are encouraged to form collectives in order to sell their produce (green tea leaves) to the processing factories. A price sharing formula has been notified for ensuring equitable sharing of sale proceeds between factories and growers. Growers are also encouraged to set up their own micro or mini tea factories either individually or collectively for which capital subsidy is available. Subsidy is also provided by the Government to small growers at enhanced rates for new planting, purchase of field inputs, irrigation infrastructure and purchase of transport vehicles for transporting green leaf to the factory. Three big factories have already been set up in Jalpaiguri District of West Bengal by the collective groups of small tea growers.