

Title: Need to review the decision to suspend registration and release of plantation subsidy to tea growers of Arunachal Pradesh - Laid.

SHRI RAJMUKAR WANGCHA (ARUNACHAL EAST): Sir, the Tea Board has suspended registration, release of plantation subsidy etc. to the tea growers in Arunachal Pradesh on specific directives from the Ministry of Environment and Forests. This action, without consulting the State Government, is derogatory to the interests of Arunachal Pradesh whose forest cover is around 75 per cent of the total geographical area, besides the protected Area Network (PAN) and Biosphere Reserve percentage being much above the national and international average. Moreover, the cultivation of tea was taken up initially in 1976 by the State Forest Department itself. The present cultivation is executed mostly in contiguous non-forest areas including private/community land. Cultivation of tea for all practical purposes is a forestry operation considering the green cover, soil conservation, tree planting besides its medicinal value.

Therefore, there is urgent need for the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests to immediately rescind the order in the interests of farmers of this under-developed State.

* Treated as laid on the Table of the House.