

NT>

Title: Need to declare minimum support price for Tea.

***SHRI P. MOHAN (MADURAI):** Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to bring to your notice the plight of tea growers in Tamil Nadu who are hard hit by the meagre procurement price for tea leaves. It needs to be enhanced to Rs 15 per kg from Rs 5 that is paid now. One kilo of tea dust is obtained from four kilos of tea leaves. Even this tea dust is procured at the auction centres at a cost of Rs 40 to 45 per kg. The syndicate formed by big tea companies like Lipton, Brooke Bond, Hindustan Lever, etc. put spoke in the expectations and prevent small tea growers from getting remunerative prices that are due to them. The United Plantation Association of South India – UPASI has estimated that a minimum of Rs 8.45 is required to produce one kg of tea leaves. So to produce one kg of tea dust, Rs 35 to 40 worth of tea leaves have to be produced. When small tea growers are not assured of even Rs 40 r 45 per kg of tea dust as procurement price, it is sold in the open market for a minimum of Rs 90 up to a maximum of Rs 240 per kg. Tea growers are left in the lurch while big whales make money. So it is necessary to ensure a minimum procurement price of Rs 15 per kg of tea leaves which alone can be remunerative. In Nilgiris District alone, there are about 43,000 tonns of tea leaves produced by small tea growers and they are all thus exploited and deprived of what is due to them. So I urge upon the Government to take steps to ensure minimum procurement price of Rs 15 per kg of tea leaves which would justifiably benefit the small tea growers.

* Translation of the speech originally
delivered in Tamil.

MR. SPEAKER: May I bring it to the notice of the House that such notices are not to be read in the House? Hon. Members have to speak extempore. Such matters will not be allowed to be read in the House. Please sit down.â€¦ (Interruptions)