

Regarding problems being faced by the small tea growers in Assam- Laid

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI (JORHAT): More than 3,000 small tea growers in Assam are facing acute economic distress due to a steep fall in green tea leaf prices. Rates have dropped to ₹15 per kilogram, while production costs remain close to ₹25 per kilogram, causing daily losses and threatening the long-term viability of small growers. Grower groups report that several Bought Leaf Factories (BLFs) are keeping prices artificially low, citing oversupply and quality issues, while also sourcing raw tea leaves from Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland, further depressing local price realisation and undermining Assams producers. There are also widespread reports of non-compliance with the Minimum Benchmark Price set by District Green Leaf Price Monitoring Committees, leading to further erosion of farmer incomes. In response, the All Assam Small Tea Growers Association has sought corrective steps, including fixation of a Minimum Support Price, strict enforcement and upward revision of the Minimum Benchmark Price, limits on low-priced tea imports, regulation of inter-state leaf movement, and a scientific grading system to ensure fair price discovery. Given the severity of the crisis and the sectors importance to rural livelihoods, the Government must act immediately to stabilise prices, enforce regulations, and protect the economic security of Assams small tea growers.