

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4430

ANSWERED ON:08.08.2014

WELFARE SCHEMES FOR TEA GARDEN LABOURERS

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

(a) the number of tea gardens in the country along with the name of the companies operating them and total number of permanent/temporary labourers employed therein, State/UT-wise;

(b) whether a number of tea gardens have fallen sick and have been closed in the country including Assam, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor indicating the number of workers/labourers affected thereby, State/UT-wise along with the measures taken by the Government for revival/reopening of such tea gardens and rehabilitation of the affected workers;

(c) the details of schemes implemented by the Government for welfare and protection of small tea growers and their families and for redressal of their grievances and the funds allocated for the purpose during each of the last three years and the current year, State/UT and scheme-wise;

(d) the structure and function of Tea Board of India indicating its role in welfare of tea gardens labourers along with the funds allocated to it during the said period; and

(e) the mechanism put in place by the Government for effective implementation of the schemes being implemented by the Government for the welfare of tea growers?

**Answer**

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

(a): As per Baseline Survey conducted by the Tea Board, the number of tea gardens in the country and the total number of permanent/temporary labourers employed therein are given in the Table below:

Number of Tea gardens and labour employed		
State	No. of Tea gardens (Permanent and temporary)	No. of labourers
Assam	767	691624
West Bengal	327	327029
Other North	78	13742
Indian States		
Total North India	1172	1032395
Tamil Nadu	140	49226
Kerala	91	43394
Karnataka	18	3443
Total South India	249	96063
All India	1421	1128458

In addition, there are nearly two lakh small holdings owned by small farmers with holdings less than 10.12 hectare each. The details of ownership of the tea gardens are given in Annexure.

(b):Following eight tea gardens in the country are reported to be closed as on 31st July, 2014:

S1.	State	Tea Estate	Month of closure	Workers affected
No.				
1	Kerala	Kottamala	December, 2013	220
2	Achencoil		February, 2010	47
3	West Bengal	Dheklapara	August, 2002 to March, 2006	802 #
4	Bundapani		July, 2013	1283
5	Redbank		December, 2012 to October, 2013	1588 #
6	Surendranagar			451
7	Dharanipur			824
8	Assam	Rani	March, 2010	105
			Total	5320

# indicates closing dates in different phases.

The tea gardens are reported to have been closed due to loss of production and incomes, poor management and financial liabilities. In some cases, ownership disputes, protracted litigation and financial mismanagement have caused the closure of gardens.

Tea Board implements Plan schemes to support the tea gardens and other small growers for improved tea cultivation including replanting, rejuvenation and marketing of produce. Welfare activities for human resource development are also undertaken. Besides, consultations are undertaken by the Government with all stakeholders including the Tea Board, the tea estate owners, workers, State Governments and other relevant agencies to resolve issues pertaining to the tea gardens and workers.

(c): Government has set up a separate Directorate with effect from April 1, 2013 to look after the developmental needs of small growers. Several field offices have been opened to have closer interface with the small growers at grass root level. 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.

Financial assistance given to small tea growers over the last three years are shown below:

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Activity	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	Total
New Planting	691.00	582.50	613.96	1887.01
Replanting	107.90	75.45	30.78	214.13
Rejuvenation	125.84	106.02	103.26	335.12
Self Help Group	558.63	99.50	589.46	1247.59
Setting up of New factories	474.77	0	0	474.77
Training /workshop/ study tour etc	126.58	978.74	585.00	1690.32
Total	2084.72	1842.21	1922.46	5849.39

For 2014-15, Rs.3 cores has been earmarked for small tea gardens.

(d): Tea Board is a statutory body set up under section 4 of the Tea Act, 1953 and functions under administrative control of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. The Board consists of 31 Members including Chairman. The members represent Parliament, major tea producing state governments, owners of tea estates and gardens and growers of tea, dealers/traders of tea, persons employed on tea estates and gardens, manufacturers and consumers, etc. The Board reconstituted every three years, regulates the tea undertakings and plans & implements programmes and schemes for development, production, marketing and exports of tea. It also implements specific schemes and initiatives for improvement and upgradation of quality of tea, research in tea cultivation and production and protection of the small growers and workers in the tea undertakings through arrangements for marketing of tea and human resource development.

Total Plan funds allocated to Tea Board for the last three years and the current year are as under:

(Rs. In Crore)

Year	Total funds allocated	Funds under HRD
2011-12	219.99	4.66
2012-13	160.41	12.69
2013-14	124.36	8.93
2014-15	148.50	5.00

(e): The Plantation Labour Act, 1951 (PLA) provides for regulation of the conditions of work and welfare measures for workers in tea plantations. Tea Board also undertakes several welfare activities which are supplemental in nature and cover welfare measures aimed at Human Resource Development (HRD) in the area of health and hygiene of workers, education of wards of workers and training to improve skills for growers/workers and plantation managerial staff.