

## Tea price ping for growers



**Siliguri:** The Tea Board of India on Tuesday introduced the bulk SMS system for small tea growers of north Bengal and neighbouring Bihar by which they would be able to know the minimum benchmark price of green tealeaves of every month.

After the 234th meeting of the board at its headquarters in Calcutta, the facility was inaugurated by P.K. Bezbaruah, the board's chairman.

"Earlier, the Tea Board had started fixing the MBP or the minimum selling price of green tealeaves in each of tea producing districts of the country. The system was made operational to ensure that the small tea growers are not being exploited by the bought-leaf factories and they earn a decent profit over their cost of production," said Bijoygopal Chakraborty, the president of the Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers' Associations (Cista), who was present at the inauguration of the SMS facility.

He said even though the fixing of prices in each district was made operational, many growers hardly had any information about the MBP.

"They used to sell produce at prices far lower than the MBP, without bargaining with the buyers. That is why the tea board has now decided to send bulk text messages to the cell phones of the growers every month so that they can have information about the price," said Chakraborty.