

Small sector share up in tea production

AVIJIT SINHA Siliguri: Small tea sector has contributed to around 55 per cent of total production in Bengal in 2018, show data published by the Tea Board of India. The continuous drop in the production by tea estates in the state has mainly been attributed to old bushes in big gardens and fresh plants in small plantations.

Across India, the small sector contributed around 47 per cent of the total tea produced last year.

The data show in 2018, the total tea production in India was 1,311.63 million kilos, which is marginally less -- by around 10 million kilos than the production of 2017. In 2017, 1,321.76 million kilos of tea were produced in the country.

The decline, industry BREW BOON sources said, was because of restriction by the Tea Board on plucking and processing during the current winter. The restriction was done to prevent production of low quality tea in winter months when bushes stop growing fresh leaves.

Out of the total production, the small tea sector has produced around 628.14 million kilos, which is around 47 per cent.

"Production in tea estates is declining as most gardens have old bushes. But bushes are young in small tea plantations (which shouldn't be more than 25 acres)," said Bijoygopal Chakraborty, the president of the Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers' Associations (Cista).

In Bengal, the total production was 385.87 million kilos in 2018 -- 222.63 million kilos in the Dooars, 155.52 million kilos in the Terai and 7.72 million kilos in Darjeeling. The small tea sector's contribution was around 55 per cent.

The small tea sector has produced 212.99 million kg of tea, while the remaining 172.88 million kg came from tea estates.

In the previous year, the small tea sector's contribution was 51 per cent in Bengal..

SOURCE: https://epaper.telegraphindia.com/textview_250488_135136935_4_8_01-02-2019_72_0.html