

Cess on tea waived for two more years

Siliguri: Bengal finance minister Amit Mitra on Monday announced in the budget that the Mamata Banerjee government would continue to waive for the next two years the cess that the tea industry needed to pay.

"I now propose to give full exemption to the tea gardens from payment of Education Cess and Rural Employment Cess for a period of next two financial years," Mitra said in his speech.

According to tea industry sources, they need to pay a cess of 12 paisa against each kilo of tea leaves.

Last year, the government had announced a waiver on agricultural income tax for the tea sector but this time, the finance minister was silent.

"In 2018, the state had waived the agricultural income BREW BOON tax till 2019-20. This year, the finance minister only announced exemption of the cess for another two years, that is till 2020-21. He didn't say whether the state would waive the agricultural income tax for 2020-21," said Bijoygopal Chakraborty, the president of the Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers' Associations. In the tea industry, corporate tax is imposed on 40 per cent of the total profit, while agricultural income tax is charged on the remaining 60 per cent. Before it was waived, the industry had to bear the tax at 30 per cent.

Allocations for north Bengal development and tourism departments were increased marginally in the budget.

For the north Bengal department, Rs 640 crore had been allocated last year. The amount was increased to Rs 683 crore this year.

For the tourism department, the allotment went up from Rs 370 crore to Rs 385 crore.

The finance minister said the government would continue to give impetus to the development of tourism infrastructure and renovate a number of accommodations in different parts of the state..

Source: https://epaper.telegraphindia.com/textview/251330_134453375_4_9_05-02-2019_72_0.html

