

Jan-July output down 21.5% on bad weather, lockdown; big dip in North

PS SUNDAR

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The lockdown, along with adverse weather, has pulled down the production of tea in the country by as much as 21.55 per cent till July compared to the same month of 2019.

“The Tea Board has now announced the data for July that show that tea production in the country that month had fallen by 15.22 million kg (mkg) or 8.64 per cent over July 2019,” Rajesh Gupta, compiler of the *Global Tea Digest*, told *BusinessLine*.

“Our compilation of these data from various producing regions shows that India’s tea output in the first seven months of this calendar nosedived to 509.27 mkg from 649.19 mkg in January-July 2019,” he disclosed.

This marked a massive shortfall of 139.92 mkg or



21.55 per cent. The decline was acute in North India where the plantations were closed for winter till February and when they resumed operations, the nationwide lockdown to fight against Covid-19 affected normal manufacture.

North output crashes

“North India’s production till July crashed to 390.53 mkg from 526.99 mkg in Jan-July 2019,” Gupta said.

This meant that North India accounted for as much as 136.46 mkg out the country’s

total shortfall of 139.92 mkg in the seven months.

In other words, North India lost more than a quarter of its production – 25.89 per cent – in this period.

All the tea producing regions in the North reported a lower output but Assam continued to top the country’s production table with 222.37 mkg though down by as much as 94.93 mkg or 29.92 per cent.

South India’s output declined marginally to 118.74 mkg from 122.20 mkg in January-July 2019, down 3.46 mkg or 2.83 per cent.

Tamil Nadu produced 80.77 mkg against 85.99 mkg in January-July 2019, accounting for a decline of 5.22 mkg or 6.07 per cent. On the contrary, Kerala posted a gain of 1.28 mkg (3.80 per cent) to reach 34.93 mkg from 33.65 mkg.