

India's tea output till April up about 53%

Economy Agri Business | P S SUNDAR | Updated on May 31, 2021

All regions except Darjeeling post higher output

India's tea production in the first four months of current calendar has increased by a whopping 52.70 per cent over the same months of 2020.

"Analysing the official data just released by the Tea Board, it is evident that April was a notable month as the country's production rose by as much as 87.63 per cent over April 2020," Rajesh Gupta, compiler of annual Global Tea Digest told BusinessLine.

"In April, India produced 73.44 million kg (mkg) against 39.14 mkg in April 2020, thanks to favourable weather in most producing regions," he said.

"Our compilation shows that helped by this increase, the cumulative production in the four months rose to 173.28 mkg from 113.48 mkg in Jan-April 2020," he disclosed.

This increase of 59.80 mkg marked a growth of 52.70 per cent. Production increased substantially in the North compared to the South. After prolonged closure for winter, tea gardens and factories in the North began production in April.

"In the four months, North Indian output increased to 100.49 mkg from 57.56 mkg in the same months of 2020," Gupta noted. This increase of 42.93 mkg marked an impressive gain of 74.58 per cent. Assam regained its prominence by topping the country's production table at 51.77 mkg (Jan-Apr 2020: 25.35 mkg) – a massive increase of 104.22 per cent.

West Bengal's output rose by 49.67 per cent to reach 45.56 mkg from 30.44 mkg in Jan-April 2020. Here, Darjeeling posted a decline of 21.15 per cent to dip to 0.82 mkg from 1.04 mkg. Darjeeling was the only region in the whole of India to post a fall in output in the four months.

"The South Indian production rose to 72.79 mkg from 55.92 mkg in Jan-April 2020, marking an increase of 16.87 mkg or 30.17 per cent," Gupta disclosed.

Here, Tamil Nadu topped at 50.61 mkg – the second position in the country's production table. It was 12.43 mkg or 32.56 per cent more than 38.18 mkg produced in Jan-April 2020.

Kerala's output rose to 20.33 mkg from 16.27 mkg marking a gain of 4.06 mkg or 24.95 per cent, Rajesh Gupta noted.

While the four-month data indicates a reversal of the decline in output in calendar 2020 over 2019, the onset of the second wave of Covid-19 has thrown up fresh challenges in the coming months.

With the rise in the Covid-19 cases among the workers in Assam, many labour lines have gone under lockdown. The working of estates in The Nilgiris has also been affected with increasing cases of Covid-19 among the labour. The situation in Kerala and West Bengal is also causing worries to the planters.

Published on May 31, 2021