

## **Tea production across country up 31% till May**

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All planting districts produce more

India's tea production in the first five months of the current calendar has increased by 30.81 per cent over the same months of 2020.

According to the latest data from the Tea Board, there were ups and downs in production levels in different districts in May.

Overall, India's production in May rose to 101.73 million kg (mkg) from 96.75 mkg in May 2020 – an increase of 4.98 mkg or 5.15 per cent.

“Our compilation shows that in the five months, India's production increased to 275.01 mkg from 210.23 mkg in January-May 2020,” Rajesh Gupta, compiler of the annual Global Tea Digest, told BusinessLine.

This increase of 64.78 mkg marked a gain of 30.81 per cent. The increase was more in North India compared to the South.

“In the five months, North Indian output rose to 177.86 mkg from 133.58 mkg, marking an increase of 44.28 mkg or 33.15 per cent,” Rajesh Gupta said.

All regions in North India produced more tea than in 2020. Assam continued to top the country's production table. Till May, it produced 88.47 mkg against 66.78 mkg in January-May 2020 – an increase of 21.69 mkg or 32.48 per cent.

West Bengal produced 83.88 mkg against 62.89 mkg in January-May 2020 – a gain of 20.99 mkg or 33.38 per cent. Darjeeling, which was lagging behind 2020 production until April, has overcome the shortfall and produced 1.38 mkg against 1.356 mkg in Jan-May 2020.

“The South Indian production rose to 97.15 mkg from 76.65 mkg in Jan-May 2020, marking an increase of 20.50 mkg or 26.74 per cent”, Rajesh Gupta disclosed.

Here, Tamil Nadu topped at 68.45 mkg – the second position in the country's production table. It was 17.25 mkg or 33.69 per cent more than 51.20 mkg produced in Jan-May 2020.

Kerala's output rose to 26.22 mkg from 23.44 mkg, marking a gain of 2.78 mkg or 11.86 per cent.

So far, all plantation districts in the country have posted a cumulative increase over 2020 but in the coming months, production would depend on the spread of Covid-19 and the concomitant lockdown in the different states, planters opine.

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