

Tea production turns around on favourable weather

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If the current trend continues, annual production will be 10 million kilograms more than last year

Highlights

- *Tea production surged by 4.33 million kg in 1st seven months this year*
- *Of a 77.78 million kg target, the production was 38.31 million kg as of July*
- *If current pace continues, annual production to be 10 million kg more than last year*
- *The country produced 86.39 million kg of tea in 2020*
- *More than 3 lakh workers are employed in this sector across Bangladesh*

Tea production was adversely hit by the Covid-19 pandemic, drought, and heavy rains last year. This year it has made a comeback, increasing by 4.33 million kilograms in the first seven months of this year, thanks to favourable weather.

Some 38.31 million kg of tea leaves were produced from January to July this year, an increase of 4.33 million kg compared to production in the same period last year. Some 33.98 million kilograms of tea was produced in the same period of 2020.

According to the tea board and tea garden owners, production of the everyday drink has been better than compared to the same period last year, thanks to favourable weather.

They estimate that by year end, production of the beverage will be 10 million kilograms more than last year if the current pace of production continues. The country produced 86.39 million kilograms of tea in 2020.

According to the Bangladesh Tea Board, the government has set a production target of 77.78 million kilograms of tea this year. Of the target, about 51% of tea has already been produced in the first seven months.

There are 167 tea gardens in Chattogram, Sylhet, Habiganj, Moulvibazar and Panchagarh. Also, more than 5,000 small farmers in Bandarban and the northern part of the country are engaged in tea cultivation. More than 3 lakh workers are employed in this sector all over Bangladesh.

According to the Tea Board, Bangladesh produced 96.07 million kilograms of tea in 2019. But production of the beverage decreased by 10.22 million kilograms in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic, drought, heavy rains, and insect attacks. In 2021, tea production started increasing again.

M Shah Alam, chairman of the Bangladesh Tea Association, told The Business Standard (TBS) that tea production was greatly hampered by severe drought from January to April last year, and excessive rains disrupted production in September. Covid also had a negative effect on tea production.

Compared to last year, tea production is increasing this year, thanks to favorable weather, he added.

According to tea gardeners, since April last year, they have been storing the produced tea in warehouses as the demand for tea went down owing to the prolonged Covid-19-induced lockdown. Moreover, the beverage also remained unsold as Bangladesh saw more than usual record tea production in 2019.

Tea gardens were forced to sell their produce below production cost, pushing them into an extreme capital crisis, with huge troubles in paying their workers. Production was also disrupted, being unable to maintain the gardens properly, they added.

Bangladesh Tea Board member (Finance and Commerce) Nazneen Kauser Chowdhury told TBS that the volume of tea production is consistently increasing every month, thanks to favorable weather since the beginning of this year and various initiatives taken by the Tea Board.

If the current pace continues in the remaining months of this year, tea production will exceed the target by the end of the year, she hoped.

<https://www.tbsnews.net/economy/tea-production-turns-around-favourable-weather-292765?amp>