

Kenya's tea exports up, output down in H1 2021 - regulator

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NAIROBI (Reuters) - Kenya's tea exports rose 19% in the first half of this year to 298.67 million kg from the same period in 2020, while output was down 9% to 274.07 million kg, the country's sector regulator said.

The East African nation is the world's biggest exporter of black tea and the commodity is one of its top earners of hard currency, alongside tourism and remittances from Kenyans living abroad.

The average price of the leaves at the Mombasa-based auction during the period was \$1.96 per kg, down from \$2.07 per kg in first half 2020, the Tea Board of Kenya said in a statement seen by Reuters on Tuesday.

Pakistan, Egypt, and the United Kingdom were the top buyers of Kenyan tea.

Domestic consumption in the first half of 2021 slipped by 3.2% compared to the same period in 2020.

Although production fell, shipments rose as export volumes often include unsold tea carried over from previous production periods.

The board said it expected output for the rest of the year to fall due to unfavourable weather.

(Reporting by George Obulutsa Editing by Ayenat Mersie and Mark Potter)

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