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Sonowal inaugurates Small Tea Growers' training and research centre at Tocklai

Small tea growers to get land pattas at the DC office level

Govt to set a research centre for organic tea at Tocklai Tea Research Institute

Dispur, October 15: Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal said that the small tea growers of the state will henceforth be able to collect their land pattas from the office of the Deputy Commissioners of their respective districts. The Revenue Department will issue a notification to this effect very soon.

Announcing this at a function organised to inaugurate a building for small tea growers' training and research centre at Tocklai Tea Research Institute in Jorhat today, Chief Minister Sonowal said that the decision to allot land pattas to small tea growers locally has been taken to dispose of the demands expeditiously to the benefit of the recipients. He at the same time handed over land pattas to six small tea growers symbolically to kick start the programme of allotting land pattas to small tea growers at the level of DC office.

It may be noted that under 'Mission Assam QualiTea' programme the building that Chief Minister Sonowal inaugurated has been built at an expenditure of Rs. 5.83 crore of the total financial outlay of Rs. 17 crore earmarked for small tea Growers' training and research centre. The ground floor of the building has got four laboratory rooms and the first floor has four class rooms. The centre has facilities like tea testing and diversification, mechanization and bio-control study besides training cum demonstration for the tea growers.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Sonowal while terming the tea industry as a symbol of pride of Assam said that in the global market Assam has made its identity through tea. He however, said that while maintaining its impressive streak for the last two hundred years, Assam tea of late has faced several challenges. In the highly competitive market in order to stay relevant, the quality of Assam tea will have to be improved substantially. He also hoped that the small tea growers training and research centre would help to lend quality development of Assam tea.

Acknowledging the role of Tocklai Tea Research Institute in qualitative improvement of Assam Tea and giving it a new name and fame, Sonowal said that in the back drop of new experimental innovations and their cascading effect on tea, the research institute once again has to re-establish its prowess to capture the world market. He also said that wielded by the experience of 109 years, Tocklai Tea Research Institute will have to shoulder the responsibility to make Assam Tea a global name once again. Sonowal also said the institute has to take the responsibility to promote Assam Tea as a beverage with its inherent medicinal quality.

He also said that for the development of tea industry both big tea growers and small tea growers will have to work in tandem. Stating that though questions have been raised on the qualitative production of the small tea growers, Sonowal called upon the two lakh small tea growers to take quality tea production as their mission and work towards that end. He also said that the small tea growers training and research centre would work to lend capacity building of the small tea growers.

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement of transforming Assam and other North eastern states into an organic hub, Sonowal asked the tea growers in the state to lend their hands in reaching this target. He also said that close on the heels of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal, State government would do everything possible for the production of organic tea, its research and marketing. Speaking on the economic stimulus announced by the Prime Minister for MSME to the tune of Rs. 3 lakh crore, Sonowal informed that under this 98 thousand MSME enterprises earned loan to the tune of Rs. 1900 crore in the state.

While speaking on the occasion, Industry and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary said as per the direction of the Chief Minister a research centre of the organic tea would be set up in Tocklai Tea Research Centre.

Presided over by Director Tocklai Tea Research Association Anup Kumar Barooah, Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly Hitendra Nath Goswami, Industry and Commerce Minister Chandra Mohan Patowary, Union Minister of State for Food Processing Rameswar Teli, Minister of State for Revenue and Disaster Management Jogen Mohan also spoke on the occasion. Member of Parliament Kamakhya Prasad Tasa, Commissioner and Secretary Industry and Commerce Dr. K.K. Dwivedi, several functionaries of tea associations and a host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

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