

Tea Board unveils accident cover for workers

- Special Correspondent



Of the total Indian tea production of 1,233 million kg in 2015-16, around 33.8 per cent came from small tea gardens. File Photo

The Tea Board of India has introduced an accident insurance scheme for workers in small tea gardens at an annual premium of Rs.14. Of this, tea farmers will have to pay only Rs. 3.50 annually.

Enrolment of workers has now begun for this scheme, which will provide compensation to small tea farmers between 18 and 70 years for a Rs.2 lakh-cover, a Tea Board of India official said, adding that the master policy would be issued by Oriental Insurance in the Tea Board's name.

The share of small growers in total Indian tea production is rising. Of the total Indian tea production of 1,233 million kg in 2015-16, around 33.8 per cent came from small tea gardens.

Small growers

While the production by tea estates (as in large gardens run by corporates) increased by 1.62 per cent last fiscal, that of the bought leaf factory (BLF) sector increased by 5.81 per cent which indicated an increase in the small growers' share in production. "This is a welcome scheme for tea workers in the unorganised sector," said Bijoy Chakraborty, President, Confederation of Indian Small Tea Growers Association.

Sources said that the initiative would be funded under the 12 Plan scheme. Recognising the growing importance of this sector, the Centre had made a maiden allocation of Rs.200 crore for it in a plan of Rs.1,425 crore. "A part of this may be used for funding the insurance scheme," the Tea Board official said.