

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

**RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.701
TO BE ANSWERED ON 08/12/2023**

PROGRESS OF TEA BOARD'S CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

701. SMT. MAUSAM NOOR:

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE & INDUSTRY** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether steps are being taken to ensure that funds given to private tea research institutes are used only for climate change related research activities, and not for administrative purposes as found in the CAG Report 2023;
- (b) the steps that are being taken to comply with the Parliamentary Standing Committee's recommendations on undertaking research based on climate change during the XII Plan and Medium Term Framework; and
- (c) the status of the proposal submitted by the Tea Board regarding the study on 'Building Climate Resilience in Tea Value Chain for Small Tea Growers'?

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)**

(a) & (b) Tea Research Association (TRA) Tocklai and United Planters' Association of Southern India-Tea Research Foundation (UPASI-TRF) are the premier tea research institutes in the country. The two institutes are provided financial support by way of 49% of the administrative expenditure with the remaining met by the tea industry and through its internal resource generation. The administrative expenditure is primarily used for human resources including those who are engaged in research, including on climate change, or supporting them. In addition, project based support is also provided to these institutes. With regard to research on climate change, the following steps have been taken during XII Plan and Medium Term Framework (MTF) period:

- i. As part of the network project launched by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), TRA-Tocklai has initiated a project to develop a climate resilient tea production system to study the impact, vulnerability and adaptation of tea to climate change.

- ii. As part of Open Top Chambers (OTC) facility commissioned by TRA in 2011-12, the clones released by TRA are being subjected to elevated CO₂ and temperature conditions, besides creating artificial water stress (both high and low) conditions to explore the adaptive measures.
- iii. Tea Research Institutes shortlisted planting materials suitable for unfavourable condition like marginal land, drought and poor drainage. Tea cultivars with characteristics of deep-growing roots and high metabolite content (like amino acids and sugars) have proved highly resistant to drought and have been released to the tea industry.
- iv. TRA released two high yielding and drought tolerant clones viz. TV 34 and TV 35 and disseminated to the tea industry.
- v. UPASI-TRF released clones namely UPASI-2, UPASI-9, ATK-1, TRI-2025, UPASI- 20, UPASI-26, and Biclonal Seed Stocks namely BSS-1 and BSS-5 for the drought prone areas in South India.
- vi. The Report of the Working Group on Climate Change of the FAO Intergovernmental Group on Tea, consisting of adaptation strategies for tea cultivation developed and practiced by major tea growing countries in the World has been disseminated to the tea industry during various meetings and trainings.

(c) The proposal of the Tea Board titled 'Building Climate Resilience in Tea Value Chain for Small Tea Growers (STGs) in Assam, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh' has not been taken up on account of discontinuation of the scheme National Adaptation Fund for Climate Change Notwithstanding this, the Tea Board as part of its ongoing scheme, has various activities which are also aimed at building resilience for climate change.
