

History of Tea Plantation in India

Tea Cultivation

Tea seems to have been known from very old days. It was consumed as a beverage for many centuries in China. Tea was primarily a luxury drink of the aristocracy. It was introduced in the Western market in early part of the 17th century. Then almost the entire supply came from China. The position remained unaltered for two centuries.

The story of tea in India started two centuries ago when the East India Company started searching for an alternative source of supply to Chinese tea. In the early part of 1820-23 in course of colonial effort of the exploitation of the natural resources of Assam, Major R. Bruce discovered some indigenous tea plants growing wild in upper Assam. Indian tea was first introduced in World market by the British proletariat who developed a habit of strong Indian tea.

Tea is made from the young leaves and unopened leaf buds of the tea plant 'camellia sinensis. It grows almost every where it is wet and warm. It is generally assumed that a minimum of 45" rainfall per annum is necessary to grow tea. A tea estate run on modern time with amenities given to settled labour force and only where the climate is such, big yield are possible. Tea is a permanent crop of a tea bush which has an economic life span varying from 50 to 80 years approximately with a great variation of location and soil type of the plants and a large number of factors. The most basic factor of production is land, which has a peculiarity of its own, conditioned by natural environment which is not substitutable by any other primary or secondary factor of production non capable of being humanly manipulated. The commercial end product is the processed leaf of tea plant dependent upon a large scale supply of the green leaf which in its turn depends on land. Tea bush is allowed to grow to a height of three feet. Left to itself a tea bush can grow to a height of about 18 feet or more but it is kept stunted at three feet because the bush spread out best at that height, give the maximum number of plucking points. Since the plucking is done by hand it is convenient to

pluck at that height. A bush is generally covered with large dark green coloured leaves of which light green coloured leaves are chosen and plucked to make tea leaves. These leaves comprise two leaves in either side and a bud in between. These leaves grow some of the branches of the bush known as 'plucking points'. About four or five kilograms of these leaves would result in one kilogram of made tea after being processed in the factory.

The plucking season begins with the early rain in May and ends in late November or early December. It reaches its peak i.e. highest yield during the month of July and August when rainfall is heavy. The first crop of leaves known as 'the first flush' in the early monsoons showers is supposed to produce the best quality of tea.

After the plucking season is over the bushes are pruned by 6 inches to 15 inches. Pruning of bush is a very important task as the yielding of the on coming season largely depends on how the bushes are pruned.

Factories are necessary for the gardens because the green leaves plucked should be processed within 24 hours or their quality decays. Small gardens do not have the factories or they can not afford them. They have their leaves to be sent to near by gardens for processing. The leaves generally sold to these gardens. Most of the smaller gardens are part of a company which owns other gardens with factory.

The legal definition of a 'Plantation' is laid down in the Plantation Labour Act 1951. According to the act plantation means any land used for growing tea, coffee, rubber or cinchona which covers an area of 25 acres or more and on which 30 persons are employed or were employed on any day of the preceding twelve months. In this respect almost all the tea gardens of Terai and Doars fall in this perview.

A Brief History of Tea Plantation in India

The experimental cultivation of tea in India was undertaken by the then British Government in 1834. Tea makers and artisans from China was introduced in 1837. Lord Bentinck, the then Governor General, appointed a tea committee in February 1834 which issued a circular to the local officials and calling for information regarding the initiation and provisional prosperity of tea plantation in their respective areas. At the end of 1834 the tea committee reported to the Government about the wild indigenous tea plant in Assam

and about its possible success. By this time, after a prolonged search and experimentation, it was certain that tea could grow in India. But a difficulty arose before the Government as the experts were divided as to the best site experimentation. Finally the British Government of India wisely decided to try all the areas and despatched seeds to all the centres. The experiment in sub-Himalayan region was successful with Assam as the most satisfactory result. The experiment in south was initially unsuccessful. Several plants were started by 1837 on an experimental basis. They were roughly grouped as North-Eastern plantation, Kumaun plantation, Garhwal plantation, Deyrahdhun plantation, Punjab plantation and southern plantation. With the direct encouragement of the Government tea was sought to be commercially exploited in India. Encouraged by the Government, private and foreign capital hastened the course of development of the tea plantation which came to be localized in Assam and Bengal mainly and also in parts of U.P., Punjab and in some South Indian states.

In 1839 a small lot of Indian tea was for the first time auctioned publicly in London. In 1873 only about 13 percent of the tea reaching the British market emanated from India. By 1904 Indian tea exports overtook China's and came at the supreme position as the world's largest tea exporter which has remained unchanged till recently. The early growth of this industry was slow due to the heavy duty clamped on it which was as much as 100 percent of the import price. However with the move towards free trade consumption rose and Indian Tea scored over its Chinese rival as it became exceedingly popular among the British Working class because of its thicker brew.

The development of tea industry in India was closely associated with the growth of Western market for tea and the colonial era which encouraged and supported the tea plantation with foreign capital and enterprise. The dimensional change of industrial development created an increasing market for Indian tea not only in Great Britain but also in the other young industrial nations of Europe. Imports of Chinese tea declined yielding place to black Indian tea and London became the biggest importer for Indian tea. George Williamson is credited with developing modern technology for tea production in India as opposed to the method practiced in China. The development of the tea plantation sector in India took place with the development of the global economy and improvement in the means of transport and communication that widened the scope of international trade.

Indian tea plantation met the first crisis in 1865 which was a result of unscrupulous investments by the speculators accompanied by indiscriminate land grant, aggravated by a financial crisis in London money market during 1867. This crisis was over by 1868. It has a drastic effect on the Indian tea industry. It provide new lease of life to the industry. After this many former companies died out while financially sounder Agency Houses stepped into the field. The plantation investment was given a solid foundation by 1870.

Table 3.1. : Tea Plantation in India (1885-1995)

Year	No. of tea Estates	Area under tea (in hectares)	Production in Tonnes	Yield per hec. (in tonnes)
1885	"	114900	32444	282
1895	"	168234	65049	387
1900	"	211443	89567	424
1905	5696	213675	100567	471
1915	4437	256951	168829	657
1925	4330	294474	164886	560
1935	5134	336572	178912	532
1945	6685	308922	229038	741
1955	6840	320238	307704	961
1965	10823	341762	366374	1072
1975	13166	363303	487137	1341
1985	13537	398966	656162	1641
1995	"	421913	753922	1787
1996	"	"	780034	"

*Source : J. Thomas Tea Statistics 1996.
(" Data not available)*

From 1870 onward the trend of plantation investment was the conversion of small proprietorship estates into large stock companies through amalgamation. Crisis also revealed in managerial inefficiency. To remedy the direct managing agency system was rapidly introduced in the plantation sector. These agents acted as promoters, financiers and controller of marketing channels.

Tea was previously a very much labour intensive industry with totally manual processing system. The demand of tea was increasingly rapid after 1870. The area under cultivation was also growing speedily. Then the scarcity of labour was the prime constrain. The manual process of tea manufacturing was too slow to cope with increasing demand of finished tea and the supply

of green leaves. Machines were introduced for the processing of tea by 1880's and towards the end of this century tea manufacturing became a factory industry.

Table 3.2. : Area under Tea (in hectares) Production of Tea (in kgs) Yield per Hectare (in kgs) : A all India Picture 1995.

Region	Area under tea (in hectares)	Production of tea(in kgs)	Yield per hectare (in kgs)
1. West Bengal	100650	160305	1593
2. Assam	234580	399133	1701
3. Other Northern & North Eastern States	345788	567976	1643
4. South Indian States	76125	185949	2443
5. All India	421913	753922	1787

Source : Tea Board Statistics. J. Thomas 1996

Table 3.3. : Number of Tea Estates in India (As on 31.12.94).

Region	Upto 8 hec.	8-50 hec.	50-100 hec.	100-200 hec.	200-400 hec.	Above 400 hec.	Total
1. West Bengal	39	14	19	54	114	104	348
2. Assam	236	99	96	141	203	237	1012
3. Other Northern & North Eastern States	1962	150	140	217	326	346	1781
4. South Indian States	31534	200	43	54	105	39	31975
5. All India	33496	350	183	271	431	385	33756

Source : Tea Board Statistic J. Thomas 1996.

In 1900 about 2.12 lakh hectares were under tea cultivation with an output of 90 kgs. an average yield of 424 kgs. The comparable figure of 1950 were 3.15 lakh hectares, 275 million kgs. and an average yield of 873 kgs. Production of tea in the country has grown steadily from a level of 561 million kgs in 1982-83 to 723 million kgs in 1992-93. Domestic demand for tea has risen at a faster pace, hereby creating a pressure on the exportable surplus which is close to about 200 million kgs. Steps have been taken by the Government to stimulate production so as to meet the growing domestic demand for tea. Tea board has drawn up a perspective plan for achieving a production target of 1000 million kgs by 2000 AD. In 1992-93, 177.9 million

kgs valued at Rs. 393.4 crore was exported. In 1993-94 exports declined to 161.2 million kgs valued at Rs. 1080.1 crore (Year book 1998).

The Indian tea industry has been facing a stormy era ever since the collapse of the USSR in 1991. The Soviet Union were the biggest buyer of Indian tea. It imported more than one lakh tonnes of tea from India. This figure fell to 50000 tonnes in 1994. Iran, another good customer of Indian tea has also been facing problems. The redeeming feature has been the ever rising domestic demand.

India continues to be the World's largest tea producer, consumer, and exporter of black tea. It is the only producer which manufactures both CTC and Orthodox tea in substantial quantities. For 1994-95 production target of 770 million kgs. and export target of 210 million kgs has been fixed. Up to August 1994, production was 465.9 million kgs as against 454.1 millions kgs during the corresponding period of the last year. Similarly exports up to August 1994 were 53.5 million kgs valued at Rs. 408.1 crore during the corresponding period of the previous year. The country consumes over 70 crore cups of tea every day resulting in a per capita consumption of about 640 grams. The area under tea cultivation has increase at less than one percent per annum and currently around 4.2 lakh hectares of land is under tea cultivation. The average productivity has also been improving. It increasing from 1174 kilograms per hectare in 1970 at the rate of 2 percent per annum. (Year book 1997).

The quality of tea produced by other countries is not as good as that grown in India. Tea provides the highest employment per hectare of cultivated land. Plantation afford direct employment to over 10 lakhs people. Many more are employed indirectly in tea machinery, packing, ware house operation, tea trade, transportation etc.

The tea board formulated two schemes for promotion of the Indian tea under the planned budget namely the Brand promotion Fund (interest free) Loan scheme and the sophisticated Tea Packaging Arrangement Scheme. The first is meant to provide loans to exports to undertake brand promotion on sustained basis in overseas markets and the second to give loans to enable exporters to set up modern packaging machinery for export purposes. Tea production in 1995-96 was 762.35m ton about 34 percent higher than the proceeding years out put 737.4m tonnes. Export was worth Rs. 11.91 billion i.e. 163.65m tonnes. (Tea Board Statistics 1996).

In the following paragraphs area wise production of tea is discussed with a brief tea history of the respective region.

Tea Plantation in Assam

Tea plantation in Assam started in 1828 under the patronage of the then colonial British rulers. Here this industry has passed through the different phases of boom and slump period to reach at the present stage. The first plantation started here experimentally in 1835 by the then Government at Lakhimpur in Upper Assam but failed. Private enterprise took the field with the formation of Assam Tea Company in 1839 entirely by the private Britishers and was the first tea company in India, still one of the biggest. After the failure of tea plantation in Lakhimpur items transferred to Sibsagar district. The garden later on was sold to the Assam Tea Company. During 1840's the company ran into trouble due to managerial inefficiency and financial mismanagement. This depression phase was over by early 1850's. The success of the Assam Tea Company paved the way for the spread of tea plantation in North East India and within 1860's upper Assam, Cachar, Sylhet and Darjeeling district appeared in the tea map of India. During the later part, mainly in the last three decade of 19th century tea plantation in Assam has enjoyed continuous prosperity and growth and expand rapidly and occupied almost one seventh of the settled area of Assam plain.

An 1850 the actual acreage under tea cultivation was 1876 that increased slowly to 7599 acres in 1859. In 1869 the actual area under tea cultivation was 25174 acres. About 0.7 million acres of land has been settled with planters in 1871 but the area under tea was only the 8 percent of the total land held. Since the later part of 19th century and early part of 20th century there was a rapid and continuous growth of plantations which shows plantation industry's prosperity. In 1880 about 566277 acres of land were occupied by the planters where as in 1893 the acreage increased upto 1045334 acres. During the period from 1901 to 1911 the growth of the industry remarkably flow down in Assam. In 1947, 30 percent of 1.5 millions of acres of land was occupied by the planters in this state.

Table : 3.4.: Progress of Tea Plantation in North East India (1874-1890) in Early Days.

No.	Area	Acerage under cultivation		
		Year	1874	1890
1.	Assam & Brahmaputra Valley		22910	131280
2.	Surma Valley		26751	99758
3.	Bengal Darjeeling Jalpaiguri		14603	85573

Source : Duars Plantation Economy : Mukherjee.

Table 3.5. : Tea Plantation in Assam (1955-1995)

Year	Area under Tea (in hec)	Production in kgs.	Yield (per hec)
1955	156749	166640	1063
1960	162367	157500	970
1970	182325	212027	1163
1980	200569	300700	1499
1990	230363	388181	1643
1995	234580	399133	1701

Source : Tea Statistics J. Thomas 1996.

The 1995 Tea board Statistics records the area, of this state, under tea was 234580 hectares yield per hectare was 1701 kgs. and total production was 399133 kgs. which increased to 424864 kgs. in 1996.

Tea Plantation in West Bengal (with special reference to North Bengal) :

West Bengal is the second largest tea producing state in India with the concentration of tea production in the hills and plains (Terai) of Darjeeling district and Doars of Jalpaiguri district, along with Cooch Behar and West Dinajpur District in a small scale. The following table shows the production of tea in the past few decades in West Bengal.

Table 3.6.: Tea Plantation in West Bengal (1955-1995).

Year	Area under Tea (in hec)	Production in kgs.	Yield per hec (in kgs)
1955	79234	74433	939
1960	82705	81523	986
1970	88499	101197	1143
1980	93497	133185	1424
1990	101170	149753	1540
1995	100650	160305	1593

Source : Tea Statistics, J. Thomas 1996.

Tea Plantation in North Bengal

Tea in North Bengal grows mainly in hills and plains (Terai) of Darjeeling district and Doars of Jalpaiguri. Besides little quantity of tea is produced in parts of Cooch Behar and West Dinajpur. The economy of North Bengal districts is even at present highly underdeveloped while the tea gardens are the pocket of prosperity. In the following paragraphs the tea history of North Bengal will be discussed in nut shell.

Darjeeling District

Tea plantation takes place in hills and foothills i.e. Terai of Darjeeling district. The history of plantation in this district is quite old. The East India Company acquired the nucleus of Darjeeling from the Raja of Sikkim in 1835 and started developing Darjeeling as hill resort. Around 1850 Terai was attached to Darjeeling. Previously it was attached to Bihar. Due to the reluctance of its inhabitants it was further attached to Darjeeling district. Hunter records that the discovery of tea in this district dated back to 1826, where the plants grew indigenously. The first trial plant started here experimentally in 1841 and it was quite successful.

Since 1856-57 the tea industry in Darjeeling district took off in commercial basis. Before this it was existed here but in experimental form. In 1853 two or three gardens were existed here of which one was 'Marfins Plantation' at Pankhabari and the other two were of Karseong and Darjeeling Tea Company and D.L. Mortgage Bank. These two gardens were at Aluabari and Labong Mineral spring (O Marley 1907). Dr. Broughame started the Dhutarils Tea Garden in 1859. Between 1860-64 four gardens were established in Ging, Ambutia, Takdah and Phubsering by Darjeeling tea Company, the largest tea company in this district. The head quarter of this company was at London, its local management was vested upon the hands of local European superintend^{ent}. The other two gardens were at Takver and Badmatam, owned by Lebong Tea Company. Before 1864 the other tea plantation started here at Makaibari, Pandum, Steintal tea estate (West Bengal Gagetier). The labourers were recruited from the Nepali immigrants and Lepcha, Bhutias and tribes men from plain. These people were encouraged to settle down in the gardens permanently by assigning to them small plots of land unsuitable for tea, for the cultivation of cereals.

During the four years following 1870 the tea industry in Darjeeling district

continued to develop in an even greater pace than before. The industry flourished with a rapid growth in this district in between 1866-1874. In 1866 the number of plantation was 39 with 103922 acres of land under cultivation which increased to 56 in 1870 and 133 in 1874 while the acreage under cultivation goes up to 18,8888 acres. The outrun of 1874 was 3927911 ILBs as against 2956710 ILBs of 1873. From 1866-1874 the number of tea garden was trebled and the area under cultivation increased to 82 percent. In 1891 there was 177 tea estates. The time onward Darjeeling tea estates were more and more organised under big limited concern. So that although the area under tea cultivation increased the number of gardens decreased. The total area under tea cultivation was more or less constant since 1921. During the period 1905 to 1935 the number of plantation remained same but the statistic of 1940 show decrease in plantation number which came down to 142. The acreage under cultivation increased to 63059. The tea record of 1960 shows the number of tea gardens in Darjeeling district was 139 which was decreased to 119 in 1971.

The tea plantation of Terai region of Darjeeling district was started in 1862. The first tea garden started here was at Chmapta near Khaprail by James White (Dash 1947 Hunter 1907). The other tea gardens of this area are established by 1866. The following table shows the growth of the tea industry in Darjeeling district since the initial state of this industry here.

Table 3.7. : Tea Industry in Darjeeling District in Early Days (1861-1951).

Year	No. of Gardens	Total Area under tea (in acares)	Production (in kgs.)
1861	22	3251	42600
1871	-	-	-
1881	155	28367	5160316
1891	177	45585	10910487
1901	170	51724	13535537
1911	156	51488	14250615
1921	148	59005	14030946
1931	169	61178	2049648
1941	136	63173	24815216
1951	138	62580	29283499

Source : Compiled from Census District Hand Book Darjeeling 1951.

Tea industry flourished in the hills and foothills (Terai) of Darjeeling district at a faster rate till recent times. Tea board statistic 1994 reports the

number of tea gardens in hills and Terai of Darjeeling district are 88 and 92 respectively. They all are not equal in size. Here a size wise break down of the gardens of this district is given in the following table.

Table 3.8.: The Number and Size of Tea Gardens in Darjeeling District(1994)

Region	Upto 8 hec.	8-50 hec.	50-100 hec.	100-200 hec.	200-400 hec.	Above 400 hec.	Total
Darjeeling Hills	-	3	8	30	39	8	88
Terai	30	5	5	10	29	13	92
Total	30	8	13	40	68	21	180

Source : J Thomas Tea Statistics 1996.

In Darjeeling district the size of the gardens are generally in between the size of 200 hectares to 400 hectares. In hills the number of garden of this range is maximum 44.31 percent and in Terai it is 31.52 percent. While above 400 hectares i.e. too large gardens are only 9 percent and 14 percent in hills and Terai of Darjeeling district respectively. There are few gardens with the area of 100-200 hectares(34 percent in hills) But in Terai 32 percent of the gardens are upto 8 hectares. The gardens range between 8 hectares to hundred hectares are very few both in Terai and Darjeeling hills. The following table shows the area under tea in Darjeeling and Terai, production of tea and yield per hector from 1955.

Table 3.9.: Area under Tea, (in hectares) Production of Tea (in kgs.) and Yield per hectare in Darjeeling hills and Terai (1955-1995)

Year	Area under Tea (in hec)		Production in kgs.		Yield per hec (in kgs)	
	Hills	Terai	Hills	Terai	Hills	Terai
1955	25133	-	7202	6685	553	-
1960	18605	9344	10123	8118	544	861
1970	18245	19769	10058	11970	551	1112
1975	17958	11040	10689	13148	595	1191
1980	19241	11474	12689	15872	659	1383
1985	19804	12395	12921	22494	652	1815
1990	20065	13345	14499	21130	615	1876
1995	19100	13850	10403	25594	545	1848

Source : The Board Statistics 1996 J. Thomes.

The table shows that the area under tea more or less increased during 1955 to 1995. Production increased remarkably from that of the earlier times as well as the yield per hectare increased but the production of tea of Darjeeling decreased in 1990-1995 than that of 1985-1990.

Jalpaiguri District

Jalpaiguri district has an old and prestigious ethnic history. Prior to 1947 Jalpaiguri was a larger district containing 16 police stations. Of which five, namely Tetrelia, Boda, Pochagarh, Debiganj and Pathgram was transferred to east Pakistan i.e. present Bangladesh. At present the district has 12 police stations of which 11 existed earlier and a new police station was set up at Nagrakata. The present district of Jalpaiguri was born on 1st January 1869 by the amalgamation of Western Doars (also known as Bhutan Doars) districts and Jalpaiguri subdivision of Rangpur District. Doars was annexed from Bhutan in 1865. 'Duars' literally means duars i.e. gateway. The area is actually the gateway of Bhutan. Doars i.e. the tea growing area of Jalpaiguri district, at present comprises that area run along the foot of Bhutan hills bounded by Teesta in the west and Sankos in the east. Doars was a most unhealthy district with malaria and black fever. Its climate was very much suitable for tea cultivation.

In Doars of Jalpaiguri tea industry took commercial shape in 1874-75. J.R. Haughton opened the first tea estate at Gajoldoba in Western Doars. In these years two tea estates at Phulbari and in Bagrakota were established. (Mukherjee 1978). Since 1874-78 in Mal sector 13 tea estates were established namely Gazaldoba (1874), Phulbari (1875), Dalimkota (1876) Bagrakot (1876), Kumlai (1877), Dumdim (1877), Washabari (1877), Ellenbari (1877), Money hope (1878), Patabari (1878), Ranicherra (1878). The following police stations are the major tea producing areas of Jalpaiguri district of which Mal, Maliali, Nagrakata have the highest concentration with Dhupguri, Madarihat, Kalchini. Doars land with low revenue attracted the planters mostly.

In the course of development of tea plantation in Jalpaiguri district important feature is the conscious and bold attempt by Indians, mainly the Bengalees to establish tea estate in this district inspite of the unfair competition of the Europeans. The first few such attempts were failed. In some cases the tea garden started by Indian venture but finally transferred to the Europeans. The first Indian tea estate started in this district was of

Munsi Raham Bukhs in 1879. A few Bengalees of this district joined their hands to form the first Indian tea company viz. The Jalpaiguri Tea Company Limited which was registered as a joint stock company. This company owned a garden called Mugalkata established in 1879 (Mukherjee.1978), other sprung later.

The growth of tea industry in Jalpaiguri district was very rapid during the 1880's. In 1881 the number of tea plantation was 55 and area under tea was 6230 acres. This number was increased to 182 in 1892 with a turn out of 18 million pounds. The acreage under cultivation was increased to six times to that of in 1881. This expansion continued till 1901 when the number of tea gardens were 235 and the acreage under cultivation were 76403 acres. The acreage under tea was nearly doubled between 1892-1901. The production of tea since 1901 was due mainly to young tea bushes coming into bearing and to a gradual extension on existing grants. It has been seen that after 1880 the cultivation of tea extended rapidly in the tract between Teesta and Diana river but after this period there was a check as the country towards the east to Diana was believed to be devoid of water. After 1901 the expansion of the industry checked and the number of plantation came down to 180. The area under cultivation was increased by mere 4935 acres. 1961 census reports the number of tea garden in this district was 155 while 1975 records the number as 187. Till 1960 the British owned companies known as 'Sterling Company' were the majority. After 60's they started rapidly selling their individual companies to the Indians and also the shares. In the initial stage the Indian planters faced certain problems. They could not get the tea grant land as their British counterpart and had to start in 'jota' lands whose terms were not as favourable of the tea grant lands. They also faced difficulties in getting trained and experienced management personnel as they could not afford to pay them as much as the British concerns. However by 1910 there were 10 Indian owned gardens with an acreage of 7000 which rose to 31 with an acreage of 40,000 by 1918. (Griffiths-1972). By 1881 Indian Tea Association (ITA) was form to deal with the labour problem and keep the interest of the planters. But this association mainly represented the interest of the British planters. The subsequently Indian Tea Planters Association (TIPA) was formed by the Indian Planters with its born in Doars.

Table 3.10.: Tea Plantation in Jalpaiguri District in Early Days (1876-1907)

Year	No. of tea Garden	Acreage under tea	Production of Tea (lb)
1876	13	818	39520
1881	55	6230	1027117
1882	182	38583	18278628
1901	235	76403	31087537
1907	180	81338	45196894

Source : Gazetteer of Jalpaiguri.

Table : 3.11. : Yearwise Establishment of Tea Estates in Jalpaiguri District

Sl. No.	Year	Tea Garden
1.	1875	1. Gajoldoba
2.	1876	1. Fulbari 4. Gandhabheel
		2. Rangatee 5. Dalingkote
3.	1877	1. Jaldhaka 4. Ellenbarrie 6. Wassabari.
		2. Praintbari 4. Damdim
		3. Bamandanga 5. Kumlai
4.	1878	1. Kalabari 4. Manihope 7. Altadanga
		2. Goodhope (Sisubari) 5. Manabari 8. Chael
		3. Bamandanga 6. Ballabari 9. Patabari
5.	1879	1. Magulkata 4. Nagarkata
		2. Rupee
		3. Songachi
6.	1880	Nill
7.	1881	1. Hataipatta 4. Mogalkata
		2. Godlabari 5. Bytagool
		3. Neora Nuddy
8.	1882	1. Needum
9.	1883	1. Toonbari
10.	1884	1. Yongtong 4. Ingo 7. Aibheel 10. Metelli 13. Alston 16. Meenglass 19. Ranikhola
		2. Chalouni 5. Zurrantee 8. Kilcott 11. Chulse 14. Banks 17. Chengli 20. Sathkhaya.
		3. Idong 6. Moortee 9. Nedum 12. Sundree 15. Sylee 18. Bhuttabari
11.	1885	1. Baitaguri 4. Changmari 7. Indong
		2. Rangakottee 5. Kurti 8. Chupaguri
		3. Danguajhor 6. Nakhati

Sl. No.	Year	Tea Garden		
12.	1886	1. Springfield 4. Tondoo 7. Rangatee 10. Ghatia 13. Foresthill	2. Suknabares 5. Jitee 8. Gurjonjhora 11. Bhogotpur 14. Chalanni	3. Hope 6. Malnuddy 9. Nagarkata 12. Looksan
13.	1887	1. Glencoe	3. Puthurjhora	
14.	1888	1. Kujih	2. Huldibari	
15.	1889	1. Chengamari	2. Grammore	3. Sangaon
16.	1890	1. Telipara	2. Gaikatta	3. Mujnai
17.	1891	1. Maktapara	2. Hantupara	
18.	1892	1. Bandapani 4. Totppara	2. Lankapara	3. Chamurchi
19.	1894	1. Chumabati 4. Doodoomari	2. Hartalguri 5. Gandrapara	3. Newlands 6. Chauapara
20.	1895	1. Nakhai 4. Toorsa 7. Karbala	2. Rangamattee 5. Kathalguri 8. Jointee	3. Chanapara 6. Banarhat
21.	1896	1. Huldibari 4. Durlah 7. Hashimara 10. Birpara	2. Chuniajhora 5. Guabari 8. Kalchini	3. Barodighi 6. Palashbari 9. Rohimbud
22.	1897	1. Garganda 4. Lakhipara 7. Hashimara 10. Birpara.	2. Muktijhora 5. Reti 8. Kalchini	3. Mateejhora 6. Shyamjhora 9. Rohimbud
23.	1898	1. Binaguri 4. Ababari	2. Debpara 5. Phaskawa	3. Lankapara
24.	1899	1. Galupara	2. 4 Grants of Meheods	
25.	1900	1. Gandrapara 4. Dalsingpara	2. Chuarpar 5. Rangatee	3. Rangamattee
26.	1901	Nill		
27.	1902	1. Nagrakata 4. Baradighi 7. Kalchini	2. Dimdima 5. Gandabheel 8. Natipota	3. Baintbari 6. Chuniajhora 9. Dhoala
28.	1903	1. Teshati 4. Kumlai	2. Dalmoni	3. Bhatkhawa
29.	1904	1. Emerarad	2. Rupai	3. Atiabari
30.	1906	1. Baitayol		
31.	1907	1. Damchipara		
32.	1908	1. Ambari		
33.	1909	1. Dimaa	2. Dalmore	3. Ranijhora

Sl. No.	Year	Tea Garden		
34.	1910	1. Turturi	2. Rubhat	
35.	1911	1. Dumdim	2. Debpara	3. Daina
36.	1912	1. Lakhipara		
37.	1913	1. Gopalpur	2. Hossainabad	3. Jaybirpara
		4. Dheklapara	5. Nimtijhora	6. Palasbari
		7. Reheabari	8. Radharani	
38.	1915	1. Palkapara	2. Dhowlajhora	3. Kohinoor
39.	1917	1. Saraswatipur		
40.	1918	1. Sunayavalley	2. Karalavally	3. Sikarpur
		4. Bhandarpur		
41.	1919	1. Mejerdabari	2. Satali	3. Mathura
		4. Bitri	5. Barron	6. Moraghat
42.	1922	1. Redbank		
43.	1923	1. Nangdata		
44.	1924	1. Ellenbari	2. Hartalguri	
45.	1926	1. Batabari	2. Jadabpur	
46.	1927	1. Malhati	2. Anandapur	3. Sreenathpur
47.	1928	1. Kadambini		
48.	1929	1. Madhu	2. Lakhitanta	3. Rahimpur
49.	1930	1. Sandamini	2. Gopimohon	
50.	1933	1. Nepuchapur		
51.	1934-1962	1. Surendranagar		

Source : T. K. Ghosh-Tea Gardens of West Bengal 1987.

The number of tea estates in Doars according to Tea Board Statistic 1992-93 is 168. The size of the gardens varies. The following table gives a break down of the size of the tea gardens of Dooars.

Table 3.12.: The Number and Size of Tea Gardens in Jalpaiguri District (1994).

Size	No
Upto 8 hec.	9
8-50 hec.	6
50-100 hec.	6
100-200 hec.	14
200-400 hec.	46
Above 400 hec.	87

Source : Tea Board Statistics 1996, J. Thomas

Here the size of gardens are bigger than that of the Terai and Darjeeling hills. About 52 percent gardens are above 400 hectares followed by 27 percent

in between 200-400 hectare. Gardens range between 100-200 hectares are 8 percent while the gardens range between 8 hectares to 100 hectares are very few. The following table gives a picture of tea producing acreage the production of tea as well as yield per hectares from 1955 to 1995.

Table 3.13.: Area under Tea (in hectares) Production (in kgs) and Yield per Hectare (in kgs) in Doars (1955-1995)

Year	Area under tea (in hec)	Production (in kgs)	Yield per hectare (in kgs)
1955	54101	60546	1119
1960	54756	63282	1156
1970	59485	79169	1331
1975	59801	88025	1472
1980	62782	104624	1666
1985	65816	121956	1853
1990	191170	114124	1744
1995	100650	124308	1836

Source : Tea Board Statistics 1996, J. Thomas.

It is clearly seen that the land under tea in Doars increased simultaneously. Since 1950 the production increased remarkably as well as the yield per hectare but the picture from 1985 to 1995 shows a slight decrease from the period of 1980-1985. Though production during the period 1990-95 increased than that of the previous years.

Tea production do not remain same though out the year. The following table shows the monthly production of tea.

Table 3.14.: Monthly Production of Tea in Doars, Darjeeling Hills and Terai (1995-96).

Month	Year	Production (in Tonnes)		
		Doars	Darjeeling Hills	Terai
March	1996	760	1020	1354
	1995	4353	468	702
April	1996	9224	938	1247
	1995	10472	1169	1688
May	1996	10841	751	863
	1995	6801	521	354
June	1996	14927	1436	2664
	1995	14253	1203	2316

Month	Year	Production (in Tonnes)		
		Doars	Darjeeling Hills	Terai
July	1996	14246	1486	4072
	1995	15428	1561	4323
August	1996	18633	1747	4667
	1995	16933	1526	4156
September	1996	20640	1395	1558
	1995	22421	1495	1664
October	1996	9718	1040	4936
	1995	8400	931	4288
November	1996	9718	1040	4936
	1995	12962	651	4255
December	1996	19194	824	478
	1995	10544	743	391
Upto December	1996	127993	11288	26094
	1995	124308	10403	25594

(N.B. : Break down of Data of Tea Production of January & February is not available so all are included in March fig.)

Source : *Tea Board Statistic 1996, J. Thomas.*

Besides the districts of Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri there are one each garden is situated in Cooch Behar and West Dinajpur namely Cooch Behar Tea Tstate and Debijhora Tea Estate.

The total acerage under tea or the number of tea gardens have remained unaltered for the last fifty years or so. Because the valuable forest cover will be demolished for the purpose of tea which is on the other hand undesirable. During the early 1980s the approximate number of tea estates in West Bengal was 360 of which 147 was in Darjeeling district and 187 in Jalpaiguri district (T.K. Ghosh 1987). The number of Tea estates was 147 in Darjeeling District, (including 82 in Terai) and 163 in Jalpaiguri district in early 1990's (Tea Board Statistics 1992-93 report).

With the march of time the tea plantation of North Bengal faces several ups and downs. While each of the garden tells its own story of success and woe.

Tea Plantation in Tripura and other North Eastern States

Besides Assam, in North East, Tripura is an important tea grower where tea plantation was introduced in 1916 by the then Maharaja Birendra Kishor. In 1931 there was 50 tea gardens with an area of 8386 acres. There was 7668

acre area under plantation in 1954. By 1980s the number of tea gardens in Tripura was 50 which increased to 57 in 1994. The total area under tea of Tripura in 1995 was 156 hectares with the production of 6118 kgs. and yield per hectares was 995 kgs. Production in 1996 was increased to 6570kgs.

Along with Assam and Tripura Tea Plantation also exists in some other states of North East. In 1994 there were 20 tea plantations in Arunachal Pradesh, 8 in Nagaland and 5 in Monipur. Tea Board Statistics 1994 reports only one tea garden in Sikkim.

Tea Plantation in Northern States

Tea production is very negligible in some Northern States. The tea statistics of 1994 reports the number of tea plantation in Bihar is 17, Orissa 2, U.P. 11 and Himachal Pradesh 1660. In the following table shows the positions of tea plantation of Northern and North Eastern States including Tripura, Monipur, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Bihar, Orissa, U.P. and H.P. is given.

Table 3.15. : Tea Plantation in North and North Eastern States (except Assam and West Bengal) (1955-1990).

Year	Area under tea in (hec)	Production (in kgs.)	Yield per hec
1955	249411	246267	387
1960	256928	243302	347
1970	282729	317348	1122
1980	307844	438455	1429
1990	341004	545106	1643

Source : Tea Statistics J. Thomas 1996.

Tea Plantation in South India

Tea Plantation in southern states were initially unsuccessful but later on tea plantation on the elevated area of Malabar coast and Nilgiri region flourished quite rapidly. Here the major tea producing states are Tamilnadu, Kerala and Karnataka. By 1950's the total area of south India under tea was 71177 hectares. Total production was 61437kgs. with the yield per hectare was 836kgs. By 1960's the area under tea increased to 74301 hectares, production increased to 77775 kgs. with the yield per hectare was 1047 kgs. By 1970's the total area under tea was 73787 hectares which includes 9 percent of Tamilnadu and Kerala each and 1 percent of Karnataka. The production increased to 101169kgs. with the yield per hectare of 1371kgs. By

1980's total number of tea gardens in South India was 534 of which 252 was in Tamilnadu 209 in Kerala and 73 in Mysore. The total area under tea was 75047 hectares with the production of 131095kgs. and yield per hectare was 1747kgs. By 1990 the total area of South India under tea increased a little. It was 75265 hectares, total production was 175232 kgs and yield per hectare was 2255kgs. Tea Board statistics 1994 records the number of tea gardens was 25807 in Tamilnadu, 6131 in Kerala and 37 in Karnataka. In 1995 the area of this region under tea was 76125 hectares with a production of 185949kgs. and yield per hectars 2443kgs. The production was 180408 kgs in 1996.

Table 3.17. : Tea Plantation in South India (1955-1995)

Year	Area under Tea (in hec)	Production in kgs.	Yield per hec (in kgs)
1955	71177	61437	863
1960	74301	77775	1047
1970	73787	101169	1371
1980	75047	131095	1747
1990	75265	175232	2266
1995	76125	185949	2443

Source : J. Thomas, Tea Statistics 1996.

OBSERVATION

Tea is one of the oldest, cheapest and the most popular beverage in India originally came from China and developed as an organised industry under the patronage of the British rulers who accidentally found some wild tea plants growing in the Assam hills in early 1820-23. Tea is made from the young leaves and unopen buds of the tea plant 'camellia sinensis' in wet (45" per annum) and warm climate and need a huge and settled labour force. Factories are necessary for the tea gardens attached to it because the green leaves plucked should be processed within 24 hours or it decays. Legally 'Plantation' means any land used for growing tea, coffee, rubber or cincona which covers an area of 25 acres or more and on which 30 persons are employed or employed on any day of the preceeding 12 months. Experimental tea cultivation in India was under taken by the then British Government in 1834 with the help of Chinese artisans and tea maker by some crude processes. Tea seeds were sent to the hilly areas with some possibility and several committees were appointed to survey the possibility of successful tea cultivation which found the hills of Assam as the most satisfactory one.

The development of tea plantation sector in India took place with the development of global economy improvement in the means of transport and communication that widen the scope of international trade. This industry in the initial stage have faced several crisis of investment, scarcity of labour and so on which could have been overcome through time and inventions.

Tea plantation in Assam was started under the government patronage but by 1839 a private enterprise, Assam Tea Company enter into this business. Production increased gradually with the increase in the acreage under tea plantation. At present Assam is the largest producer of tea in India. Beside Assam, Tripura of North East also produces some amount of tea with a ineligibile percentage added by Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Monipur of the Northern States small amount of tea is produced by Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. Tea plantation of southern state was initially unsuccessful but later tea in the elevated area of Malaber coast and Nilgiri flourished quite rapidly. The Tea Board Statistics show in 1995 land area under tea in Assam was 234580 hectares with the yearly production of 399133 kgs. In other Northern and North eastern states it was 345788 hectares of land under tea with the yearly production of 567976 hectares. In southern states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka the land under tea was 76125 hectares in 1995 with the production of 185949 kgs. per year (J. Thomas 1996). West Bengal is the second largest tea producer in India. The appearance of West Bengal in the tea plantation map of the country is quite late. The first tea estate in West Bengal was started in 1866. In this state tea plantation is located mainly in the hills and foot hills (Terai) of Darjeeling district and Dooars of Jalpaiguri District. Since 1856-57 Tea Industry in Darjeeling took off in commercial basis. Before this it was existed here in experimental forms. The industry flourished in this district very rapidly between 1866-1874. Tea plantation in Terai region started in 1862. In Dooars of Jalpaiguri Tea Industry took commercial shape in 1874-75. Its growth was very rapid in the 1880's. Tea Industry in North Bengal experienced several ups and downs with the march of time. At present according to Tea Board Statistics 1992-93 the number of Tea Estates in Darjeeling District is 147 of which 82 is in 'Terai', 'Doars' of Jalpaiguri can be proud of its 163 tea gardens. In 1995, 13850 hectares of land of Terai was under tea with the yearly production of 25594 kgs. In Darjeeling hills the land was 19100 hectares with the yearly production of 10403 kgs. In Doars 100650 hectares of land was under tea with the yearly production of 124308 kgs.