

**Record Notes of the 76th Annual General Meeting of the
Assam Tea Planters' Association held on 29th June, 2013
at 5-30 P.M. at Jorhat Gymkhana Club.**

Present :-

As per the statement attached herewith as **Annexure -1**.

The A.G.M. had two sessions one (1) **BUSINESS SESSION for Members** & the other **OPEN SESSION for Members & Guests**.

5-30 P.M.: Business Session to adopt the following Resolutions

ITEM NO.1: TO CONSIDER AND PASS THE AUDITED ACCOUNTS OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE YEAR ENDING ON 31ST MARCH, 2013

On a proposal being made by Shri Abhijit Sarmah and seconded by Shri J.N. Goswami the Audited Accounts of the Association for the year ending on 31st March, 2013 is adopted unanimously by all Members.

ITEM NO.2: TO APPROVE THE RATE OF ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR 2013-14.

Shri A.R. Kasera proposed that the Annual Subscription for the year 2013-2014 be fixed at the existing rate of 6 paise per kg of Average Tea Made for 2010-11, 2011-12 & 2012-13, subject to a minimum of Rs. 5,000.00, irrespective of crop or area under tea.

On being seconded by Shri Sanjib Barthakur the proposal was adopted unanimously by all Members.

ITEM NO.3: TO APPOINT AUDITORS OF THE ASSOCIATION AND FIX THEIR REMUNERATION FOR THE YEAR 2013-2014.

While proposing to appoint the existing auditors M/s. Roy Atal & Atal and M/s. Sharad Bajaj & Associates respectively as Statutory Auditors and Internal Auditors, Shri P.K. Bezboruah stated that the remuneration should not be the same for both the firms.

Shri O.P. Chokhani endorsing the proposal suggested that the remuneration for the year 2013-2014 be fixed as under :-

(1)M/s. Roy Atal & Atal Statutory Auditors	Rs. 7,500.00
(2)M/s. Sharad Bajaj & Associates Internal Auditors	Rs. 10,000.00

All Members unanimously adopted the proposal.

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Thereafter, the Chairman declared the Business Session of the A.G.M. as ended and requested all Members to join "Tea & Snacks" as laid down in the Club Room and also, to attend the Opening Function of the 76th A.G.M. Exhibition, 2013 and also the OPEN SESSION as organized in the Club and its premises.

6-30 P.M. OPEN SESSION FOR ALL GUESTS & MEMBERS

As announced by the M.O.C. all Hon'ble Guests & Members took their seats at about 6-30 P.M. in Conference Hall.

Shri Rajib Barooah, Chairman, ATPA proposed from the chair that a Condolence Resolution be adopted as a mark of respect to the memory of all those who lost their lives and also all those who suffered recently from the unprecedented Uttarakhand Calamity.

All members and Guests rose from their seat and prayed for a minute of silence as a mark of respect and eternal peace for all those departed souls and expressed their heartfelt sympathy and condolence to all Members of the bereaved and suffering families.

Shri Rajib Barooah, Chairman, ATPA felicitated Shri Paban Singh Ghatowar, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Development of North Eastern Region and Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs, Govt. of India who graced the occasion as Chief Guest, with a "**FULLAM GAMOCHA**" a "**SALVER**" and a PACKET of **TEA** from Madhupur Tea Estate as a token of love & affection from all Members of Assam Tea Planters' Association.

Shri Madhukar Khemka, Vice-Chairman, ATPA felicitated Shri M.G.V.K. Bhanu, Chairman, Tea Board who was our Guest of Honour, with a "**FULLAM GAMOCHA**" a "**SALVER**" and a PACKET of **TEA** from Madhupur Tea Estate as a token of love & affection from all Members of the Association.

Shri Rajib Barooah, Chairman, ATPA welcomed all Members & Guests and delivered the Welcome Address highlighting the problem areas and prospects of the Tea Industry as per the copy of the Printed Address attached as **Annexure -2**.

Thereafter, on being requested from the chair, Shri Paban Singh Ghatowar, Hon'ble Union Minister for DONER and Shri M.G.V.K. Bhanu, Chairman, Tea Board of India addressed the august gathering and highlighted the prospects and problems of the Tea Industry as published in the print media and now attached herewith as **Annexure - 3 & 4**.

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Thereafter, on behalf of the sister Associations Shri B.N. Barkakoty, Chairman, NETA & Shri Niraj Verma, Vice-Chairman, TAI (A.B) addressed the gathering and conveyed their greetings and good wishes to all Members of the A.T.P.A.

Shri Madhukar Khemka, Vice-Chairman of the Association proposed a vote of thank to Shri Paban Singh Ghatowar, Hon'ble Union Minister for DONER and Shri M.G.V.K. Bhanu, Chairman, Tea Board of India, all past Chairmen of the Association, distinguished all Members & Guests, all Members of sister Associations, Tea Fraternity, Handling Agents, Jorhat Gymkhana Club & Stipendiary officers, Staff & Sub-Staff of the Association for sparing their valuable time & making the 76th A.G.M. of Assam Tea Planters' Association a success.

All Members & Guests endorsed the proposal by clapping their hands.

Thereafter, Shri Rajib Barooah, Chairman, ATPA declared the Meeting as ended & requested all Guests & Members to join refreshment & Dinner in the club.

Enclo : As stated above.

Sd/- (D. BORA)
SECRETARY
ATPA, Jorhat

Memo No. G-42/23 Dated Jorhat the 2nd July, 2013

Copy to:-

- (i) The Chairman, ATPA
- (ii) The Vice-Chairman, ATPA
- (iii) The Zone Chairman,
All Zones, ATPA
- (iv) The Circle Chairman,
All Circles, ATPA
- (v) All Member Tea Estates, ATPA

} For favour of information
and record please.

(D. BORA)
SECRETARY
ATPA, Jorhat

Tea Board plan to sustain brew fame

OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT



The meeting in progress on Sunday. Picture by UB Photos

Jorhat, June 30: The Tea Board of India is about to enforce production and labour management regulations in the industry to sustain the popularity the beverage, especially the Assam and Darjeeling varieties, enjoys across the world.

Disclosing this, Tea Board of India chairman M.G.V.K. Bhanu said strict regulations were the need of the hour to maintain sustainability so that Indian tea continued to be the world's favourite.

Bhanu said Assam tea was so popular across the world that even villages in Germany, Russia and Kazakhstan knew about it along with the names of the producing gardens. To maintain this track record, the industry must maintain quality of the tea, he added.

"These villages probably have no idea where Assam is but they know this part of the world produces the best quality tea," Bhanu said at Jorhat Gymkhana Club here last evening, while addressing the 76th annual general meeting of Assam Tea Planters Association, the oldest tea association in Assam.

"I am sorry to say that the most gardens are not concentrating on producing quality tea and if this trend continues, it will be difficult for Indian tea to remain the preferred beverage in this competitive world. There will be strict regulations coming up soon to maintain quality and other aspects in tea production."

Industry sources said the new set of rules would come into force after the July 11 release of the sustainability code for tea — a joint initiative of the Tea Board and certification bodies such as the Rainforest Alliance, the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH) and Hindustan Unilever Ltd.

The Tea Board chairman said many gardens were not maintaining the quality of leaf, which was directly proportional to prices. "Better quality leaf is very essential to produce quality tea that will fetch good prices. Planters should ensure that they maintain the minimum residual content in the tea and should be careful while using chemical fertilisers and pesticides."

Bhanu said he had interacted with tea buyers in a meeting at Vadodara recently where he was made to understand that there was always great demand for quality tea.

He said the labour force was an important stakeholder in the tea industry and all possible steps should be taken for its welfare. "The industry can no longer treat the labour force as they did a hundred years ago and all necessary steps should be taken for their welfare," he said.

Bhanu said many gardens had not appointed a permanent labour welfare officer, who could act as a friend, philosopher and guide for the labourers and deal with their problems directly. "Gardens not having full time labour welfare officers would be penalised as soon as the new set of rules are enforced," he said.

The Tea Board, he said had been taking special measures for the welfare of the workforce and Rs 25 crore had been earmarked for the welfare of labourers in the tea industry in the Twelfth Plan period. "There will be more funds for labour welfare in future."

Bhanu said the board had been taking special interest in the development of the small tea growers sector as it contributed nearly 30 per cent of the total production. "Planters should provide all necessary help and support to the small tea growers as they make a big contribution to the industry."

Speaking as the chief guest, DoNER minister Paban Singh Ghatowar said Indian tea had been lagging behind in terms of research and development. "The Tocklai Experimental Station has not been able to meet the aspirations of the industry. Though it has come up with a few tea clones, there wasn't any path-breaking achievement by Tocklai."

The association's chairman, Rajib Barooah, said promoting tea through tourism was an important thrust area through which Assam tea could develop on the lines of the Nilgiris, where tea and tourism are the two pillars of the economy.

Stating that air connectivity was very important for the landlocked region, as it was a safe mode of transport to bring in tourists and businessmen, Barooah said, "I take the opportunity to request the state government to allot a suitable plot of land for a new airport at Jorhat, which will go a long way in development of the region."

He said Jorhat, the erstwhile capital of the Ahoms and the tea capital of Assam, could also be called a tourism hub of Assam, given its proximity to Kaziranga, Majuli, Sivasagar, Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland.

Call to include tea in priority sector

Correspondent

JORHAT, June 30 – The Assam Tea Planters Association (ATPA) has requested the Centre and State Government to bring tea industry into the priority sector of the Petroleum and “other related ministries” for supplying adequate fuel for running their factories which have suffered from “dismal power supply” in the State.

Addressing the 76th annual general meeting of ATPA here on Saturday evening, chairman of the association Rajib Barooah said the supply of gas has been inadequate and extremely irregular with very low pressure since 2011, compelling them to close down the factories temporarily.

“Erratic power supply is one of the factors for increasing cost and quality deterioration at the manufacturing stage and thus deserves some major attention from the authorities concerned,” Barooah said at the meeting, which was also attended by DoNER Minister Paban Singh Ghatowar and Tea Board Chairman MGVK Bhanu.

Besides highlighting many other general issues of the tea planters, the ATPA requested Ghatowar to take the initiative to develop an integrated tea park and set up a tea auction centre in Jorhat.

They also need satellite warehousing facilities in Golaghat, Jorhat, Sivasagar, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia districts which produce about 400 million kg of tea annually out of the total 580 million kg produced in the state.

The DoNER Minister said that he would discuss the issues with his colleagues in the ministries concerned. Stressing the need for new innovations for ensuring quality tea production in the State, the Minister said that Toklai Tea Experimental Station’s performance in this case “is not up-to-the mark”.

He also said that the planters should give adequate importance to the tea workers in their respective tea estates as the living standard of thousands of workers was yet to improve.

Tea Board Chairperson MGVK Vanu asked the tea garden owners to recruit welfare officers in their gardens within six months. “I am slightly upset after knowing that there are no welfare officers in many tea gardens in the state. Recruit the welfare officer within six months. It is mandatory,” Bhanu said.

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