

Guwahati Tea Auction Centre neglected



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Assam produces 55% of India's total tea production. However, producers of Assam tea do not sell their tea through the Guwahati Tea auction centre which is a big concern for Assam tea. "We are giving agriculture subsidy of 6% and levying only 0.5 % Tax, yet the tea producers are not selling tea from Guwahati Tea Auction Centre", said Industry Minister Pradyut Bordoloi, at a press conference on Tuesday held at the Guwahati Tea Auction Centre. The industry department has been trying to woo producers to sell their tea through the GTAC, so that the standard of the Assam tea can be judged and thus promoting Assam tea.

The GTAC was established in 1970, with lots of aspirations for Assam Tea, but tea producers are still overlooking the GTCA, which is a matter of concern for the Assam Tea." we are not asking the producers to sell all their tea through the GTCA but at least some amount can be sold through it, May be they are getting a better price in other Auction centre" Said the Minister.

Bordoloi said that the government is also trying to create awareness among Tea producers regarding the issue of MRL which is very important to be addressed for everyone's interests. He added that the MRL issue has been taken up with the Commerce Ministry, Government of India. There were recent reports that more nicotine and pesticides were found in Assam tea and recently a consignment of Assam tea was returned from Germany. The minister, however said that he is not aware of the incident.

MRLs are the maximum allowed concentrations of pesticide residues in or on food products. To export food products to the EU, one has to make sure that all products meet all food safety requirements. One important issue is the presence of pesticides on food products placed on the EU market. In the EU, legislation has been laid down regulating the presence of pesticide residues in food products by setting maximum residue levels (MRLs).

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