



## Press Release

Kolkata, February 10: Hon'ble Finance Minister during the budget speech on 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2021 had proposed to provide Rs. 1,000 Cr for the welfare of Tea workers especially women and their children in Assam and West Bengal. A special scheme will be devised for the same.

Tea garden workers are the backbone of the tea industry and women workers constitute 50% of the workforce. The entire gamut of activities ranging from nursery to planting, bringing up young saplings, plucking, pruning and manufacturing in the factory are accomplished by them deftly. It is due to the strenuous and untiring efforts of the tea garden workers that Indian tea industry has exhibited remarkable resilience in the midst of multilateral challenges-climate change, upheaval in market, Covid-19 Pandemic etc. In such a situation, it is incumbent upon to ensure well being and socio-economic milieu of workers especially that of women workers.

The scheme will be aimed towards the workers and their dependents in tea gardens with special emphasis on the women workers and their dependents. The proposed scheme will significantly incentivize the tea garden workers especially women labourers and foster amongst them a feeling of self reliance and an acknowledgement of their service.

Assam and West Bengal contribute a total of 81 % to total tea production with contributions of 52 % by Assam and 29 % by West Bengal. There are 4.17 lakh women workers in Assam and 2.06 lakh women workers in West Bengal totaling 6.23 Lakh female workers in the states of Assam and West Bengal as would be evidenced from the table given below:

| State       | Contribution to total tea production (%) | Total Workers (Permanent & Temporary) |               |         |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------|
|             |  | Male                                  | Female        | Total   |
| Assam       | 52 %                                     | 316420                                | 417227        | 733647  |
| West Bengal | 29%                                      | 134506                                | 206129        | 340635  |
| Total       | 81%                                      | 450926                                | <b>623356</b> | 1074282 |

The broad contours of the scheme will include health, education and skill development and will significantly enhance the quality of life of the women workers and help in capacity building of their dependents by infusing adequate skills.

Tea Board in consultations with the Ministry of Commerce is evolving the details of the above scheme and will be submitting the details of the scheme shortly before the Department of Commerce, Govt. of India for implementation.

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