

Small Tea Growers of Assam and North Bengal, India: A Policy Analysis

Dr. Sanghamitra Choudhury

Assistant Professor, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies and Management, Sikkim University (A Central University)

Dr. Shailendra Kumar

Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Sikkim University, India

Bishal Bhuyan

Research Scholar, Sikkim University, India

ABSTRACT

The emergence of STGs emanating from tea industry is a comparatively a new phenomenon. Starting from early 1970's attracted by the success of the tea industry, a number of youths, whose number went on steadily increasing began producing green tea leaves on a very small plot. That was the beginning of STGs in India.

Only in the state of Assam, it is being estimated that the STGs are producing almost 230458 thousand kg of green leaves cultivated over the area of 193399 bighas. But the present tale of STGs in Assam and West Bengal are a story of exploitation and deprivation, coupled with other issues. In this backdrop, policies pertaining to Small Tea growers will be analyzed in this paper followed by some suggestive measures.

Keywords: Policy, Small Tea Growers (STG), Assam, West Bengal, India

INTRODUCTION

Genesis of Small Tea Growers of Assam and North Bengal.

The concept of small scale tea cultivation in Assam was initiated during seventies by then Janata Government. The then agriculture minister Sri Soneswar Bora has mooted the idea of cultivation of tea in homestead garden and unutilized land along with other crops to sale the green leaf to the existing big factories to enhance farm income. Encouraged by the government patronage, a few farmers of erstwhile Sivsagar district-initiated tea cultivation. As a follow up of this trend, the rural areas of Assam experienced a phenomenal growth of tea cultivation. The growth of tea cultivation is highest in five districts of Assam i.e. Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sivsagar, Golaghat and Jorhat which accounted for 90 % of total STGs and the rest 10% are spread over the remaining 18 districts of Assam.

Table 1.1 District Wise Distribution of Small Tea Growers

District	Number of Growers	% of Total STGs in Assam
Dibrugarh	11625	30.26
Tinsukia	8438	21.97
Jorhat	5150	13.42
Golaghat	4774	12.44
Sivsagar	4258	11.08
Others	4148	10.83
Total	38393	100.00

(Data for the year 2003)

Source: Research Paper By Prof S. Barua ,Assam Agriculture University

In North Bengal, the **Small Tea Growers** (STGs) are mainly concentrated in Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, North (Uttar) Dinajpur and some parts of Coochbehar dist.

(Pl see the attached map in appendix)

Table 1.1: Block wise concentration of STGs in North Block

District	Block
Jalpaiguri	Sadar,Rajganj,Maynaguri,Malbazar,Mattelli
Darjeeling	Phansedewa,Naxulbari,Kharibari
UttarDinajpur	Chopra,Islampur,Goalpokhar
Coochbehar	Mekhliganj

Source: Based on the field work of Researcher

Small tea sector mushroomed in North Bengal because tea was found to be relatively economically viable than other crops and it seems that it will also remain remunerative for the years to come. The earlier crops that were in vogue were Paddy and Jute in Jalpaiguri area, Pineapple in Darjeeling area, *Til* (kind of oil seed) in Uttar Dinajpur area.

Now in North Bengal nearly 15000 STGs are cultivating tea and nearly 3 lakhs people are directly or indirectly engaged with this sector in rural areas.

It is important to discuss the steps/initiatives/Policies taken up by the TBI, GOI for the STGs of Assam and North Bengal to understand their plight.

1 Policies of Land regularization- In Assam, most of the growers are growing tea in government land, ceiling surplus land and so on. In absence of proper land documents, the STGs are unable to register their farm unit with tea board and hence could not take financial benefits offered by Board. **The Assam Fixation of Ceiling on land holding Act 1956**(which has been amended thrice in the year, 1972,1975 and 1976) has demarcated the maximum ceiling of land of a cultivator as 80 bigha (50 bigha in general, 30 bigha for housing, thatch bari and others 30 bigha) but Assam government has not included tea as a special cultivation under this Act. But as per the definition of tea board, the STGs can be included under this Act and can get the benefits .As land is a state subject, the lenient attitude of the Assam government has aggravated the land problem. On the top of it , Assam's Revenue Departments **order number RSR-9/88/PT/1-31 dated April 19,2000** , has further increased the land problem and defines the premium on the following categories of land if one aspire to acquire government land for tea cultivation. The applicable rates under various categories are as follows:

- If an unemployed youth wants to acquire government land, he has to pay premium @ 33.33% per bigha on the prevailing market rate.
- If one wants *un-encroached* government land for cultivation, he has to pay premium @ 150% per bigha on the prevailing market rate.
- If he want encroached government land for cultivation, he has to pay premium @ 200% per bigha on the prevailing market rate

If one wish to regularize STG's already encroached government land (where he/the grower started tea plantation) ,he has to pay premium @ 200%per bigha on the prevailing market price. On the top of it, he has to pay Rs 3 per bush as a penalty for not taking prior permission for cultivation.

Observation regarding implementation: It is not feasible to pay such premiums by the STGs to the government. Moreover there is no standard rate of value of the land in Assam on which the STGs can bank upon as it varies from district to district and within districts even. However the *Disguised STGs* can avail such lands as they are economically sound. Moreover, STGs are yet to , avail the *patta* land in Assam. Thereby, they face lots of problems in obtaining bank loan. It is being suggested that anti STG land policy of Government of Assam should be amended, so that land regularization process will be an easy task. Government should come out with farmer's friendly policy and undertake land allotment on priority basis in those areas where farmers have already grown tea. In this regard the D.C of Lakhimpur

area of Assam can be taken as a role model who has taken the initiative of issuing land certificate to 100 STGs¹.

In **North Bengal** too, substantial number of STGs has not yet submitted application for regularization of land. Many of the STGs are illiterate to understand the complexities of government procedures (for distribution of literate and illiterate population of STGs, please refer Appendix). There are a number of taxable slots for STGs, designed by Govt of West Bengal.

- a. Land rent of Rs 30+80% cess per year per acre of tea cultivation.
- b. Salami land of Rs 15000 ha. for vested, patta land plantation for 30 years long term lease
- c. West Bengal REP and primary education cess@ 12 paise /kg green leaf.
- d. Agriculture income tax 30%, besides panchayat and professional tax are applicable for STGs.

Most of the growers are growing tea in their own land or in some cases they are using **Government Patta (Lease) /Khatiyani Land/Tribal Land**. In West Bengal, it is mandatory to take NOC or long term lease for tea cultivation from the land and land reforms department. Though the Labour department has not come up with any substantial steps, the present Chief Minister of West Bengal has set up a panel to find solutions to the problems afflicting this arena.

2. Policies taken for stoppage of Green leaf theft and smuggling- The continuing incidents of theft of green leaf from various tea garden of upper Assam (specially Dibrugarh and Tinsukia) has become a cause of serious concern to the district Administration. Smuggled Tea leaves from Nepal and its way to some Indian BLFs has always been a major source of worry for the STGs of North Bengal.

However, in Assam, A District level Monitoring Committee on tea related matters has been formed in the year 2000, headed by deputy commissioners of respected districts. Other members of the committee are members from ABITA and TAI (tea research India), BCP (*Bhartiya Cha Parishad*), members from STGs and BLFs organizations. In addition to that there will be two district level officials. Some of the activities that they have discussed in their minutes are, to initiate steps by STGs not to encourage carrying or buying of illegal tea leaves, theft, proper monitoring of green tea leaves business, the truck carriers engaged in carrying of green tea leaves should also carry the nameplates indicating names of the factory, route maps, names of small tea growers and total customer etc.

In North Bengal the conditions are likely to change now following a meeting convened by the state industry and commerce minister in Kolkata. As per the proposal of the government of India a special policing will be introduced along the Indo Nepal border.

3. Tea Board has come up in its tenth plan period with certain schemes for the formation of 1) **SHG (Self Help Group)** in this region. However, in Dibrugarh area, Lahdoi co-operative society has come up, though it couldn't sustain. The idea of SHG is being mooted as it will be easier for the STGs for disposal of green leaf directly to the manufacturing factories and get a reasonable price. Besides procurement and supply of inputs, technology and information dissemination, collection, storage and transportation of the leaves are some of the areas that are propagated through this concept. Coming up to the SHGs in North Bengal, the model for this purpose was adopted by analyzing the SHG of neighbouring North Eastern state Tripura's *Durgabari* SHG. With the help of Tea Board, now Panbari (in Jalpaiguri dist, Matnaguri block) has become North Bengal's first SHG and it is running successfully since two years. SHGs working in these area are, Panbari, Jai Jalpesh, Premchand Gach, Shiv Shakti, Radha Govindo, Jagta Gaon, Shabtiguri, Maa Laxmi, Laxmi dangee, Khoribari, Naxalbari, Mahamilan. It is indeed a welcoming step in the history of the North Bengal small tea growers.

Coining the growth of STG in Assam as a *sociological phenomena*, Union Commerce Minister Jairam Ramesh says that the Tea Board of India would set up 2) **five co-operative tea processing factories** for STGs in Assam. This would help about 50,000 of them to realize better price for their produce. The Tea Board will soon identify the locations of these co-operatives, each of which will have a processing

¹ AASTGA report, Tinsukia, Assam, 2006.

² United Forum of STGs report, 2005

capacity of between 200 and 1000 kg per day. The Board will also fund the co operatives and it is expected that each will cost the state exchequer Rs 40 lakhs.

In North Bengal too, STGs do not get remunerative prices for their leaves and at many times, questions have been raised over the quality of tea produced. Like Assam, proposal is adopted by the Tea Board to open at least five factories.

Observation- Two years back, more than four lakh kgs of green leaves were burnt on the way side of national highway in upper Assam as slump in market price have brought havoc amongst the STGs .The price of the green leaves from the peak Rs 12.50 per kg has gone down to Rs 2.30 per kg ,forcing the STGs to burn most of their produce as they neither have the storage capacity nor the adequate machinery to process the tea. ³The bold steps taken by the TBI to form tea cooperatives in these areas will surely not repeat the tragic history as it occurred in Assam.

4. Policies of Auctioning and BLFs roles- In Assam,90% of the STGs sell their green leaf productions to private agencies who act as a middleman to the available processing factories attached to plantations. The price that the STGs receives from the BLF is based on the auction price of some representative factories. But there is no formal list of these 'representatives' factories and there is no transparency on how the BLFs decide the price of green leaf price.

The BLFs have no control over the tea produced by STGs Besides the STGs tend to compensate for the low price by increasing the quality on tea, compromising on quality. The tea Board has stepped into to resolve the ongoing tussle between the STGs and BLF, a meeting has been convened to sort out the serious controversy over price sharing formulae suggested by the Union commerce and industry ministry. Though the ministry has fixed a price sharing formula, the allegation from the STGs end is that the BLFs do not adhere to the formula. Instead they dictate their own and since tea is a perishable item, The STGs have to make distress sales at dirt cheap prices. However, the Tea board Siliguri regional office has taken some positive steps with the help of BLF owners associations and STG associations, like supply of minimum 30% fine leaf green tea leaf and monthly advisory meeting in District level for up gradation of quality. Meanwhile, the govt. of West Bengal enforced complete ban of setting up of New BLFs as per the recommendation of tea committees report(due to the mushrooming of BLFS in the region). Simultaneously, move has been taken up to increase the intake capacity of the existing BLFs.⁴

No steps have been taken up so far in the studied area for the quality up gradation of the machines for the BLFs.⁵

Observation regarding implementation- For the price sharing formula, the government should come forward with a strategy for properly monitoring the set price sharing formula ⁶. For fixing green leaf price

³ Souvenir entitled Cha ,AASTGA, Philobari, Tinisukia

⁴ Ministry of commerce, GOI document.

The average All India auction price of tea was 66.87(1992) which started moving up significantly from 1998.However ,prices started falling from November 1999 onwards to reach Rs 61.71 per kg in 2000 and 56 per kg in 2003. The low auction price for tea have been a source of concern and the government took steps in 2004 to help the small growers which resulted moderate hikes in prices of tea during 2004. It was due to the introduction of price sharing formula (60:40) for equitable sharing of the sale proceeds between the BLFs and STGs. However , the inherent imperfection and poor regulation of this policy has resulted the poor plight of STGs in the form of lower price realization.

⁵ Small Industries (SIA) Development has already issued an order (ministry of Commerce ,letter Rc no 56996/ICM2?04 dated 10.12.04) that says during the year 03, GOI through tea Board sanctioned Rs 115.88 lakh to almost 11 Indco tea factories as 50% subsidy under quality up gradation scheme. Now the tea board continues the scheme but with reduced subsidy at 25% of the cost of the scheme.T he industries commissioner and Director of industries and commerce has started the assistance from the state government to INDCO tea factory for modernization of machinery under quality up gradation scheme in association with tea board. This kind of step are highly commendable with respect to all STG states .

⁶ When the prices of green leaf crashed down drastically in TN, the govt took up various steps to solve the problems faced by the STGs .One such step towards the redressal of grievances of STGs is the introduction of ooty tea scheme launched by TN chief Minister. (28.8.01).As per the scheme, the INDCOSERVE participate in the auction

formula ,Prof. S Baruah along with Prof R.P. Bhuyan ,Dept. of Tea Husbandry and technology ,Assam Agriculture University has evolved a mechanism whose applicability can be tried.(please see the appendix for greater details).

5.Policies/moves for research- TBI greatest contribution to STG sector is **TRA**

(Toklai research institute, formed in the year 1911) which is the oldest tea research institute of the entire globe. TRA has come up with various pamphlets on tea cultivation specifically meant for STGs. Of late Assam Agricultural University Jorhat has also formed STAP (Small **Tea Growers Advisory Programme**) that tries to involve the STGs in institutionalize training. So far, it has trained almost 10,000 STGs. TBI has also come up with a Tea cell at Diphu for extending advisory services in the non-traditional area of Cachar.In his recent visit to Assam, Union commerce minister ,Jairam Ramesh has announced for setting up of a research consortium between the TRA, Regional Research laboratory(Jorhat) and Assam agricultural University for the benefits of the tea cultivation in general and STGs in particular. ⁷

In 2005 ,TRA along with TBI has come up with one crore fund for free technical advisory service to the STGs of West Bengal .A single phone call to the STG advisory cell headed by seven technically knowledgeable person (Terai branch ,Bengdubi in North Bengal)under a project by Ministry of Commerce can now assist the STGs , in any point of time. Of late, 12 such programmes have already been launched up coupled with quite a number of workshops. .Alternative crops specially Ayurvedic ones are given due importance .along with tea cultivation.

The TRA has also published a bulletin entitled ‘Char katha’ (topics related to tea in Bengali) for knowledge dissemination for the STGs.

6 Establishment of special Directorate- In order to address the numerous hazards encountered by the STGs in the country in a better manner, The Tea Board of India is going to set up a separate directorate for dealing with matters related to STGs. Union commerce and industry minister Jairam Ramesh is very much hopeful that separate directorate would be able to dispose of the existing hindrances smoothly. Through this directorate the STGs would serve as a focal point for the directorates extension activities aimed at improving the quality, consistency and a price realization for the teas produced by the STGs and for enhancing the export performance from this sector.

Observation-For any meaningful extension work, a closer interface with the grower is essential. Although tea Board is having a tie up arrangement with the tea research institutes for extending technical service to the STGs these agencies because of their limitations with regard to manpower are not in a position to reach out to the growers effectively.⁸

7. Others- The Tea Board has chalked out a few policies to ameliorate the problems of STGs of Assam and West Bengal in its tenth five year plan.

a) Small grower’s development **scheme** for NE states-(for nontraditional areas).

b) **New area development scheme-** Subsidy is available for STGs. (alongwith big growers)

c) **Price stabilization fund scheme-**With a view to bring stability in terms of income for the STGs.It is being implemented by the government through the Tea Board from 1.5.2000, whereby a subsidy of Rs 8 per kg is provided to the SHGs . Under this ,the STGs will have to pay one time entry fee of Rs 500 and open an account in any nationalized banks after the authorities in this case ,the Tea Board are satisfied about the ownership of land by the participant . As per the provision of the scheme, when prices fall below the normal average, the grower members will not be required to contribute but the government will contribute upto 1,000 per account. When prices move above the normal average, a grower member will have to make a minimum contribution of Rs 1,000 but there will be no contribution from government. A

,procedure made tea and market the same after blending and packaging under the brand ‘Ooty tea’through public distribution system fair price shops in TN. Similar steps can be launched by the government of the studied states.

⁷ *ibid.*

⁸ *ibid.* Also see The Hindu,26.6.06

Small growers having holding upto four hectares, comes under the purview of this schemes, but the priority is for the growers with the lowest holding size.

d) The STGS of North Bengal, In spite of non-possession of NOC, are now very close for getting subsidy approved by TBI. According to the TBI officials, these STGs will be now in a position to avail subsidy and soft loans from the Tea Board's various development schemes. However, these gardens had started tea plantation before they got clearance from Tea Board. Thereby, they were not entitled to come under the Board's purview. In spite of this, their cases have been taken seriously by the Board, considering their present suffering due to falling prices.

e) The Reserve Bank of India has also advised the member banks of the state level bankers committee (SLBC) to extend debt relief to STGs .Now banks have agreed to extend fresh working capital limits up to 2 lakhs at an interest rate of 9%.

8. **Financial Assistance** during 10th plan period under Development Grant Cass plan in Assam by Tea Board of India are as follows, (Rs in Lakhs) ⁹

Table 1.3: Financial Assistance rendered by TBI

S. No.	Different headings	Year 02-03	Year 03-04	Year 04-05
1	To AAU for advisory services to STG s	20.00		14.00
2	To Lahdoi co-operative society	19.56		
3	For workshop			
4	Vehicles for carrying green leaf			
5	SG to TRA			33.00
6	For setting up of tea nurseries			
7	Study tour	1.00		13.45
8	Imparting training			
9	Strengthening of boards offices			03.44
10	Publishing bulletins by STG			01.12
11	Stake holders conference			
12	Quality awareness programme		0.87	
	Total	40.56	0.87	65.01

9. TBI's support scheme to Assam also includes establishment of **demonstration plots** in the important areas of STG concentration, and supply of high yielding planting materials at subsidized rates. Setting up of nurseries for supply of plantation materials to the STGs, Organizing study tours for the STGs of North East to the other STG areas are some of the steps taken by thr Board .Now TBI would also take a delegation of STGS to Kenya, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Vietnam to enable them to learn about efficient tea production.

However, **Workshops conducted for the STGs of North Bengal** over years are as follows:

Year	Number of workshops conducted	No of participants	Ammount spend
01-02	6	306	93541.00
02-03	19	1332	286545
2003	11	625	121955.92
2004	26	1644	270259
2005	62	3897	774500.99

Source-TBI, Siliguri

10. The STGs across the country are coming together to form a federation to create a common platform to represent their issues. An in -principle agreement had been reached with the STGs of Assam, West

⁹ TBI reports ,Guwahati.

Also see.Tea plantation Development scheme for STGs .www.commerce.nic.in

Bengal, Nillgiris and Himachal Pradesh. Consent was awaited from the STGs of Kerala. Though this process is in a initial stage, with due course of time, this will change the present face of STGs.

11. Other observations

1. **Problems in Land Use Pattern-** Tea is a land based industry which occupied nearly 2.4 lakh ha. of area in Assam. As a late comer, (for the growth of STG over the years ,please refer appendix) the small sector virtually found very little virgin highland. So most of the land used by growers may be considered as 'second grade' land for growing tea. Some of them grow tea in ceiling surplus land, grazing land or government land – allotted or encroached or on their own land which were underutilized .The land used by growers can broadly be divided as:
 - a. *Virgin land-* In this category, village wood lots, degraded forests land allotted or encroached, government fellow land are included in which land remained unutilized for agricultural activities.
 - b. *Crop replaced land-*This category occupies major portion of the area under small-scale tea cultivation. Such areas include replacement of bamboo, areca nut, Som trees, sugarcane, orange, pineapple, and vegetable cultivation and so on.
 - c. *Marginal land-*In this category government grazing land, paddy nursery, high land paddy area, barren land of various nature can be included .This category of land requires suitable rehabilitation before starting tea cultivation.
 - d. *Unsuitable land-*this is a land which is not at all suitable to grow tea commercially. Low land, shallow sandy areas, degraded land used previously under various industrial purposes comes under this category.

The data on land use pattern throughout the state is not available, however, research revealed that around 35% of the total landholding under STGs are virgin and the rest were planted by uprooting village woods, Areca Nut (Betel Nut or *Tamul* in Assamese) plantation, Bamboo etc. (applicable in upper Assam)This is a shocking matter so far our ecological balance is concerned. The unique traditional farming system of Assam, which is self-sustained in nature, has been collapsed due to unsystematic growth of small tea units.

Table 1.2: Changing Land Use Pattern in Dibrugarh District-% of Land under various categories diverted for Tea Plantation

Land category	% Of Land Category Diverted
Virgin	35.43
Bamboo	28.34
Paddy	14.12
Areca Nut	13.46
Forest Tree	3.93
Other Crop	4.72

Source- Research Article by Swapon Baruah and Madan Taparia presented in Dibrugarh University in the year 2004.

Steps should be taken up to re-establish the ecological balance which has been destroyed by indiscriminate destruction of flora of this region. The potentiality of production of organic tea is to be explored in view of market demand.

2. **Registration of STGs** – In Assam, there are almost 50,000 scattered STGs but only 1200 are registered with Tea Board so far. Lack of periodic patta is the prime cause for this problem. Moreover there are three nodal agencies for STGs i.e. AASTGA (All Assam Small Tea growers Association), ABSTGA(All Bodoland STG), Cachar STG association, though due to lack of knowledge, a huge number of STGs have not yet registered which follows the problem of traceability. It is also to be noted that the activities of the organization has been slackened in the last few years .The STGs who are the members are now drifted apart from this parent organization.

Though in reality, there are almost 15000 STGs scattered in entire **North Bengal**, the registered ones are only 644, as per the records of following nodal associations of STGs of North Bengal.

- ❖ *North Bengal Small Tea Planters Association* (1994) in Siliguri.
- ❖ *United forum of STG* (2002) in Bagdogra.

The scattered STGs are not coming up for the registration. Therefore, there is an acute problem of tracing more than 95% of the STGs.

Observation regarding policy- No substantial policy has been taken up to re-organize the scattered SHGs.

As a solution to this problem, steps should be taken up to popularize the registration process of the STGs. The format for the registration should get due publicity in vernacular language for easy understanding so that the attached undue fear related to registration will fade away. In addition to this, as land is a state subject, regularization of land in a time bound frame is a must.

3. Well Knit Marketing and policy - In absence of well-knit marketing channel for the produce of STGs, the growers are always at the receiving end. As mentioned earlier, the entire exercise of selling green tea leaf is dictated by the factory owners. There are almost 150 BLFs scattered in Assam but they do not have any mechanism to decide on the remunerative price for the green leaves that the STGs produce. Per kg cost of production of green leaf is Rs 8.50 paise.(including the laborer's charge) However, the BLFs have fixed the price of green leaf as Rs 7 (including the transportation cost).The STGs take the help of the agents to reach the BLFs. Unless the STGs do not have the 'Chalan' (permit) issued by these BLFs, they have to sell their tea through the agents. The problem is further compounded by the fact that some of the STGs tend to supply green leaf of inferior quality (coarse and damaged leaf). The transportation of green leaf is another associated problem which ultimately helped the growth of agents, who eat away a major chunk of grower's profit. As a solution and to ensure the production of quality of tea, it is imperative to have an effective co-ordination amongst STGs, green leaf transporters, bought leaf factories (BLFs) agents and owners, so that all of them are involved in the production of quality tea maintaining the code i.e. two leaf and a bud. In this regard replanting young bushes on a regular basis will surely help. Proper branding of the STGs product in near future as a health drink can also be considered. Though the Tea Board is responsible for implementation of various statutory and regulatory orders issued by government, with respect to tea legislation, business license for tea experts, no move has been taken up for SHG sector.

Recently, a new concept of **future exchange** (concept developed by Prof of economics A Damodaran of IIPM), which may be a good marketing tool in tea trade will also help even the small tea growers in near future.

4. Policies related to labor issues- As the STGs do not come under the Plantation Labour Act, they and the seasonal laborer do not avail any of the security or benefits.

Therefore, it is very important to strengthen the policies related to the small tea growers in India as a whole and help them to establish their brand in the world market besides, providing them a place to reap the benefit of their hard work.

REFERENCES

1. Field studies in Assam and West Bengal.
2. Minutes of Government of India on STGs.
3. Tea Board of India Reports.
4. Tea bulletin of Assam and West Bengal.(2006-09)
5. Assam Branch of Indian Tea Association(ABITA) Bulletin
6. Baruah,S, Taparia,M (2004). Small Tea Growers of Assam –Status and Strategies, paper presented at the symposium on Tea Industry of Assam on Feb 10, Dibrugarh University, Assam.
7. Choudhury, Sanghamitra (2006). 'Small Tea Growers of Assam: Problems and Prospects', unpublished report submitted to Centre For Education and Policy, New Delhi.

8. Choudhury,S, Kumar ,S (2013), “Small Tea Growers of Assam”, seminar paper presented in Sikkim University Tea Conference on 7 April.
9. Sarma, Sonali 2010). JRF Paper on Valuing Life in Tea Plantation labour market of Assam, for OKD Institute, Assam.
10. Ema Elizabeth K (1989). Status of Women working in Tea Plantation” Vendrum Institute, Meghalaya.
11. Leigh,J Paul(1989),” Compensating Wages for job related death –the opposing arguments” in *Journal of Economic Issues*. vol 23, pp 823-842.
12. The workmen’s Compensation Act,1923(2009): State Amendments, Universal Law Publishers, Assam.