

TEA RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of the **199th** Meeting of the Council of Management held
on 24th March 2023 at 3.30 p.m. at Kolkata

Present	Ms N Palchoudhuri	-Chairperson, TRA	
	Mr A Asthana	-Vice Chairman, TRA	On Line
	Mr A Sharma	-Joint DGFT, Guwahati	
	Dr Mahipal Singh		
	Mr P K Bezboruah		
	Mr P C Dhandhanania		
	Mr Sunil Munshi		
	Mr M K Varma		
	Mr Arun Sultania		
	Mr Rajvinder Singh		
	Mr Padmanabh Jalan		
	Mr S K Saria		On Line
	Mr G Barooah		On Line
	Mr J S Chahal		On Line
	Mr M P Bansal		On Line
	Mr H C Malpani		On Line
	Mr Jai Vardhan Kejriwal		On Line
	Mr Deboshyam Barua		On Line
	Mr B K Dalmia		On Line
	Dr A Babu	-Director, TRA	
	Mr J Phukan	-Secretary, TRA	
	Mr A Mitra	-Financial Controller, TRA	

The Chairperson welcomed all members and a warm welcome was given to Mr Amit Sharma ITS, DGFT Kolkata and Guwahati who is attending his first meeting after being nominated by Commerce Ministry.

1. Confirmation of Minutes:

The Minutes of the 198th Meeting of the Council of Management held on 11th January 2023 was circulated and no comments have been received. Members confirmed the same.

2. Action Taken Report

1. The Chairperson stated that the Secretariat has taken up with the Commerce Ministry and Agriculture Ministry to expedite the extension of label claim of new compounds for tea. Accordingly, a meeting was chaired by Addl. Secretary Plantations on the 22nd February to understand the

issue. Thereafter the matter has been taken by Department of Commerce with the Ministry of Agriculture and FSSAI. The approval of two new compounds is expected by end of April from CIBRC as per manufacturing company sources. The FSSAI is also expected to notify the revised MRL's for compounds such as Quinalphos etc. Mr P K Bezboruah stated that if the FSSAI gives effect to the August 2020 notification, then lower limit of Thiamethoxam will cause problems for the industry.

2. The Chairperson said that the Secretariat organized a meeting with Rainforest Alliance (RA) global IPM team on the 28th February and took up issues on various plant protection formulations. RA was requested to give exceptional use permission for Mancozeb Carbendazim to control Fusarium to which they agreed to give exceptional usage to the list collated by TRA. Members stated that it's a temporary measure and suggested the Director to carry out trials on Zineb. The Director was also requested to circulate the bulletin on the control of Fusarium.
3. It was informed that the tenders for appointing event managers for the 25th FAO IGG session was done. However the 25th session has been postponed to November 2023 from April.
4. The Chairperson informed that orders for hiring vehicles for advisory visits for Tocklai, North Bank has been given to the lowest quoted prices.

3. Launch of new TRA website :

The website of the Association has been revamped with many features to bring in more transparency and ease of accessing information for the members. The Chairperson inaugurated the new website of the Association. The Secretary explained the new features of the website. The Council complimented the Secretariat for the new website.

4. R & D Highlights :

- a) Mr Shiv Saria Chairman of North Bengal Committee apprised the members of the NBC meeting held on 9th March, 2023. He also stated about the seminar on helopeltis organized at Nagrakata. He stated that the model tea factory at Nagrakata would be ready by April 2023.
- b) Mr Manoj Varma Chairman of the Assam Committee apprised the members of the Assam Committee meeting held on the 9th February.

- c) The Chairperson gave an overview of the Cachar Tripura & NE Committee held on 14th March, 2023 was given to the Council.
- d) Mr Rajvinder Singh Chairman Agriculture Committee enquired about the new molecules, irrigation subsidy and soil fertility issues which was replied by the Director. It was decided to pursue with Jain Irrigation on having a webinar.
- e) The Secretary TRA informed the Council on the high value tree plantation scheme of the Government of Assam which will also cover tea garden areas of Assam.
- f) Report by the Director TRA

The Director TRA apprised the Council of Management on the salient features of the R&D work through his presentation. There was a detailed discussion on the nano fertilizers trials. It was suggested that one full pruning cycle should be taken. Mr Asthana suggested that while traditional fertilizers are being broadcasted, the nano fertilizers can be applied as foliar spray.

5. **Finance & Accounts:**

a) Membership Subscription

The membership subscription upto 15th March 2023 is given below.

MEMBERSHIP COLLECTION FIGURES								
							2021-22	2022-23
Membership	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	Till 15.03.2022	Till 15.03.2023
Subscription							last year	Current year
A. Ordinary								
Billing	1330.36	1574.4	1822.03	1842.89	1881.8	1898.48	1898.48	1713.74
Collection	1124.92	1300.68	1362.08	1376.21	1486.17	1404.16	1392.55	1271.45
Rebate/Discount	57.93	56.51	60.84	55.53	36.69	41.03	40.77	43.23
Net Recovery Total	1182.85	1357.19	1422.92	1431.74	1522.86	1445.19	1433.32	1314.68
Arrear/Outstanding Recovery	98.08	100.28	116.97	220.31	237.7	122.44	120.84	197.6
Gross Total Collection:	1280.93	1457.47	1539.89	1652.05	1760.56	1567.63	1554.16	1512.28
RECOVERY % WISE(CURRENT YR.)	89%	86%	78%	78%	81%	76%	75%	77%
OVER ALL RECOVERY % WISE	96%	93%	85%	90%	94%	83%	82%	88%
B. Associate								
Current	14.37	20.8	20.8	21.55	7.79	12.98	11.58	22.58
Arrear	1.61	5.63	9.78	10.25	9.16	9.82	7.12	8.05
Total:	15.98	26.43	30.58	31.8	16.95	22.8	18.7	30.63
GROSS TOTAL COLLECTION:(A+B)	1296.91	1483.9	1570.47	1683.85	1777.51	1590.43	1572.86	1542.91
LESS: REBATE/DISCOUNT	57.93	56.51	60.84	55.53	36.69	41.03	40.77	43.23
NET TOTAL COLLECTION(A+B)	1238.98	1427.39	1509.63	1628.32	1740.82	1549.4	1532.09	1499.68

The over all percentage of collection has improved with the collection of arrears but the percentage of collection for the current year is low. It was informed that all efforts are being made to engage with individual companies to clear old default amount. The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the North Bengal Committee have also taken the initiative to approach members from North Bengal for collection of old dues. The Secretary TRA gave an overview of the subscription status.

Mr P K Bezboruah suggested that different Council Members should be given the responsibility to pursue subscriptions from their respective areas using their influence in the area. He said that members who have not paid and sold estates, the same should be taken up with the revenue departments of the concerned State Governments.

Mr Amit Sharma suggested that members should be categorized according to their payment status. Members who have not paid, their name should be published in the TRA website.

b) Financial status of the Association :

The Secretary stated that the financial position of the Association continues to be difficult. Tea Board of India have cleared Rs 7.86 crores upto the third quarter. Rs 2.62 crores will be paid by the end of this month. The total liability of the Association is as under:

	(Rs. in Lacs)
Gratuity	377
Leave Encashment	601
Party Liability	150

The Council discussed in detail that to address the issue of payment of arrears, one-time payment in terms of loan or monetization of assets should be considered. It was decided to collate the list of properties of the Association with status of property title and tentative valuation. The same should be reviewed by the Finance Committee. It was also discussed to approach finance institutions for a loan of Rs 5 crore.

6. To approve the budget of the Association for 2023-24

The Chairperson placed the budget of the Association to the Council for 2023-24. Apart from the general budget, an activity-based budget has also been made which was presented. The Finance Committee reviewed the budget on the 24th March. Members discussed the budget of the Association. The new verticals such as the Guest House needs to be marketed well as a package with a new brochure. The Council approved the budget of the Association.

7. To apprise Government of Assam meeting on Tocklai issues

The Secretary informed that the Chief Secretary Assam took a meeting to discuss various issues of Tocklai on the 4th March 2023 at Guwahati. The meeting was attended by Vice Chairman, Secretary and the Director besides representatives of the Tocklai Employees Union, Officer's Association and Retired Employees Association. It was stated by the Chief Secretary Assam that small tea growers and BLF should become members of TRA with a proposed fee of Rs 100 and Rs 5000 per month respectively.

8. Tocklai Garden Matters :

The Director TRA reported on the transfer of the Tocklai Division to ATCL and stated that due to non payment of the liability of Rs 80 lacs, ATCL is not taking back the estate. It was stated after following the due process of tendering, the same should be given to the winning bidder.

9. NEC Tourism Project for Tocklai:

The Chairperson TRA informed that the North Eastern Council has approved a project on creating infrastructure at Tocklai for an amount of Rs 4.03 crores. The main key component of the project is

- I. Construction of three large cottages/ bungalows in the Western Campus of Tocklai adjacent to the Jorhat Gymkhana Club : **Rs 2.18 crores**
- II. Artefacts and curation of the Tocklai Museum , campus improvement and display items : **Rs 1.85 crores**

The above project has been sanctioned by the NEC vide letter dated 22nd December 2022. The Council approved the project to be taken over by TRA.

10. Proposal for ICAR National Pesticides Monitoring Project at Tocklai :

The Director stated that the ICAR runs a nationwide pesticides monitoring project on various crops which forms the baseline data for Government of India. TRA Tocklai lab has been selected to be one of the centres for pesticides monitoring. The Council approved the same.

11. Opening of green leaf tenders :

The tenders for green leaf of Borbhetta, Tocklai, North Bank and Nagrakata were opened. The winning bidder are as under:

Nagrakata Leaf	: Rs 24 from Mogulkata TE
Tocklai & Borbhetta	: Rs 28 by B&A
Thakurbari Leaf	: Rs 25.50 from Kolony TE

12. Any Other Business:

- a) The Tocklai Employees Union letter on higher deduction for pension through EPFO was discussed.
- b) The revised rates for Tocklai Guest House approved are as per following :
 - Tocklai Guest House Suite : Rs.5000 inclusive of breakfast
 - Tocklai Guest House Rooms :Rs.4000 inclusive of breakfast

c) Proposal from M/s. Dhunseri Tea & Industries Ltd.:

The proposal of Dhunseri Tea to the Association to provide the office building at Deohall Tea Estate for the purpose of training young executives and other activities which TRA was discussed. The Council thanked Mr C K Dhanuka Chairman and the Management of Dhunseri Tea on their offer and resolved the same.

d) Bank Resolutions:

Members discussed and approved on the opening two new bank accounts with Indian Bank, Jorhat and one new bank account with ICICI bank, Malbazar, as per following list, for the new scientific projects received from different agencies:

- TRA-NTRF:NICOTINE PROJECT WITH **INDIAN BANK, JORHAT**
- TRA-NTRF: NANO-BOTANICAL BIOPESTICIDE WITH **INDIAN BANK, JORHAT**
- TRA-SERB: ENRICHMENT OF CARBON POOL IN TEA SOILS AND MITIGATION OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION BY RECYCLING TEA WASTE: A GREEN STRATEGY TOWARDS ORGANIC TEA CULTIVATION, **ICICI BANK, MALBAZAR**

"RESOLVED that two new accounts with Indian Bank, Jorhat and one new account with ICICI Bank, Malbazar be opened for the projects as mentioned above".

Members also discuss on the closure of the following bank accounts in Jorhat, Assam.

Closing the following bank accounts:


- A/c No. 6824305844 – DBT TRA UNDERSTANDING THE MECHANISM (INDIAN BANK)
- A/c No.7161423636 – TRA DBT- MULTI INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH (INDIAN BANK)
- A/c No.7065783847 – DBT-ISOLATION, IDENTIFICATION AND SYNTHESIS OF PHEROMONES (INDIAN BANK)
- A/c No.6725895223 – TRA-NTRF-DROUGHT STRESS MANAGEMENT IN TEA (INDIAN BANK)
- A/c No.6725898508 – TRA-NTRF PYRROLIZIDINE ALKALOIDS IN TEA (INDIAN BANK)
- A/c No.520101250769963 – TRA NTRF MICROBIAL BIOCIDES (UNION BANK OF INDIA)
- A/c No.520101252681181 – NTRF- TEA GENOME SEQUENCING PROJECT (UNION BANK OF INDIA)

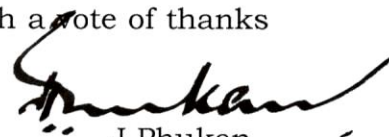
"RESOLVED that all seven bank accounts be closed and the amount, if any, lying in the said accounts be transferred to TRA Main account".

"RESOLVED further that the copy of the above resolution be forwarded to the concerned branch of the bank for necessary action at their end".

- e) The Council approved the Group Medical Insurance to SBI General Insurance.
- f) The Secretary stated that the new TRA GAP GMP will be implemented from 1st April 2023 and the Council approved the same.

There being no other business the meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair.


N Palchoudhuri
Chairperson


J Phukan
Secretary

Dated the 20th April 2023.