

# **TEA RESEARCH ASSOCIATION**

## **PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Minutes of the **206<sup>th</sup>** Meeting of the Council of Management held on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 3.00 p.m. at TRA, 113 Park Street, Kolkata 700 016

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<b>Present</b>	Ms. N Palchoudhuri	Chairperson, TRA	
	Mr S S Sikand	Vice-Chairman, TRA	
	Mr R Singh	Addl. Vice-Chairman, TRA	
	Mr A Sharma,ITS	Joint DGFT, Guwahati, Tea Board of India	On Line
	Mr D Mondal	FA & CAO, Tea Board of India	On Line
	Dr.M Singh	Director(Research), Tea Board of India	On Line
	Mr H Bangur	Chairman, ITA	
	Mr S Singhanian	President , TAI	
	Mr P K Bezboruah	Former Chairman, TRA	On Line
	Mr A N Singh	Goodricke Group Ltd.	
	Mr S K Saria	Soongachi Tea Industries Pvt.Ltd.	On Line
	Mr P C Dhandhanian	Dhunseri Tea & Industries Ltd.	
	Mr S Munshi	Luxmi Tea Company (P)Ltd.	
	Mr S S Malhotra	Amalgamated Plantations Pvt.Ltd.	
	Mr A M Sing	Andrew Yule & Co.Ltd.	
	Mr S K Das	Andrew Yule & Co.Ltd.	
	Mr S Bhasin	Goodricke Group Ltd.	On Line
	Mr M K Varma	The Jorehaut Group Ltd.	
	Mr M P Bansal	Simulbarie Tea Co.Pvt.Ltd.	On Line
	Mr D Hegde	Assam Company India Ltd.	
	Mr H C Malpani	Jay Shree Tea & Industries Ltd.	
	Mr P Jalan	Bhatkawa Tea Industries Ltd.	
	Mr B Barkakoty	Mahalaxmi Tea Estate	On Line
	Mr B K Dalmia	Quality Tea Plantations Pvt. Ltd.	On Line
	Mr G Barooah	Amalgamated Plantations Pvt.Ltd.	On Line
	Mr A Raha	Secretary General, ITA	
	Mr D Buragohain	Director Incharge, TRA	
	Mr J Phukan	Secretary, TRA	
	Mr A Mitra	Financial Controller,TRA	

The Chairperson welcomed all members. The Council of Management deeply condoled the demise of Dr. Manmohan Singh, Former Prime Minister of India and Mr Sudhir Prakash, Former Chairman, TRA who had greatly contributed to the development of research and development at TRA Tocklai. Former Chairmen Mr P K Bezboruah, Mr Arun Narain Singh, Chairman North Bengal Committee Mr S K Saria, Vice Chairman Mr SS Sikand, EMC Chairman Mr Dhandania and Mr Joydeep Phukan Secretary TRA spoke on their experiences with Mr Prakash. The Council observed a minutes silence in the memory of the departed souls.



## **Release of the 2025 TRA Planters Calendar**

Mr Hemant Bangur Chairman CCPA released the TRA Planter's Calendar for 2025 which was on the theme "**Butterflies in the tea ecosystem**"

### **1. Confirmation of Minutes**

The Minutes of the 205<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Council Management held on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024 was circulated and confirmed.

### **2. Action Taken Report**

The Chairperson informed of the following action taken:

- MOU with Farmutd Ecosystem Private Ltd signed & project submitted to Assam Government
- Dr. A Babu released as Director TRA on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and Mr D Buragohain has been appointed as Actg. Director till the selection process is completed.
- Search & Selection Committee has been formed for the recruitment of Director TRA

### **3. R & D Report – October to December 2024**

The Director Incharge presented the R & D highlights to the Council. The members discussed issues on Fusarium control, Bacterial Blight, Lopper and the efficacy of plant protection products and the LCA study on carbon sequestration.

### **4. Membership & Finance**

#### **a) Membership Subscription**

The Secretary informed the Council the of the collection of subscription and the fall in over all billing by around 40%. Current year collections are little better than last financial year for the same period.

Financial Status of the Association:2024-2025								
							2023-24	2024-25
Membership	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	Till 31.12.2023	Till 31 .12.2024
Subscription							last year	Current year
<b>A.Ordinary</b>								
Billing	1822.03	1842.89	1881.8	1898.48	1711.34	1519.97	1161.3	955.14
Collection	1362.08	1376.21	1486.17	1404.16	1274.65	980.43	742.81	647.82
Rebate/Discunt	60.84	55.53	36.69	41.03	33.21	27.43	20.81	18.56
Net Recovery Total:	1422.92	1431.74	1522.86	1445.19	1307.86	1007.86	763.62	666.38
Arrear/Outstanding Recovery	116.97	220.31	237.7	122.44	199.42	133.22	104.51	160.06
Gross Total Collection:	1539.89	1652.05	1760.56	1567.63	1507.3	1141.08	868.13	826.44
RECOVERY % WISE(CURRENT YR.)	78%	78%	81%	76%	77%	66%	66%	70%
OVER ALL RECOVERY % WISE	85%	90%	94%	83%	88%	75%	75%	87%
<b>B. Associate</b>								
Current	20.8	21.55	7.79	12.98	22.58	17.25	14.43	21.16
Arrear	9.78	10.25	9.16	9.82	8.05	17.87	11.43	3.3
Total:	30.58	31.8	16.95	22.8	30.63	35.12	25.86	24.46
GROSS TOTAL COLLECTION: (A+B)	1570.47	1683.85	1777.51	1590.43	1537.9	1176.2	893.99	850.9
LESS: REBATE/DISCOUNT	60.84	55.53	36.69	41.03	33.21	27.43	20.81	18.56
NET TOTAL COLLECTION (A+B)	1509.63	1628.32	1740.82	1549.4	1504.7	1148.77	873.18	832.34

**b) Financial Status of the Association**

The Secretary informed that the Association has received an amount of Rs.**7.86** crores from Tea Board of India for the financial year 2024-2025 till the **3<sup>rd</sup> quarter**. The financial condition of the Association is very grim. The total liability of the Association as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024 stands as:

<b>Income Tax</b>	<b>0.85</b>
<b>Provident Fund</b>	<b>4.10</b>
<b>Gratuity</b>	<b>3.92</b>
<b>Leave Encashment</b>	<b>5.33</b>



Mr P K Bezboruah stated that efforts should be made to tag the Assam Government subsidies. Mr Hemant Bangur stated that only 300 million Kgs of the total production is paying for R&D being done at TRA which is very low. Mr A N Singh stated that efforts should be made to bring in the small tea growers. Mr Bangur also stated that the industry should approach Government of Assam and West Bengal for allocating funds for R&D. He also said that the overall base of the production needs to be increased for TRA.

**5. Apprise meeting with Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

The Chairperson informed the outcome of the industry stakeholder interaction held at Guwahati. The HCM Assam supported the cause of TRA Infront of the HCIM. The HCIM stated that he will ask HUL and TCPL for help the research organizations through their CSR funds.

**6. Membership of HUL and TCPL in Tea Research Association**

The Chairperson informed the Council that Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry in the meeting held on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at Guwahati stated that he would request HUL and TCPL to be involved with TRA & UPASI-TRF and contribute financially to ease out the financial crunch being faced by both organisations. As per the directive of the Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry a meeting was held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December organized by Tea board between TRA, UPASI, HUL and TCPL.

Mr Dhananjay Mondal stated that HCIM wishes to focus more on upgrading the R&D work and facilities of TRA and UPASI-TRF and wishes to help both the organizations.

Mr Bangur stated that the base production of TRA should be increased to 700 million Kgs and for the immediate requirements, TRA should approach the Government of Assam for a soft loan. Mr Sukhi Malhotra stated that the idea of the CIM to take TRA to the next level for R&D in tea. The Secretary informed of the BCG preliminary study. Mr Bangur stated that as per the rules of the Association, admission of non producer cannot become a ordinary member with voting rights. Mr A N Singh stated that HUL and TCPL should be invited to join the Council for collaboration and greater development of the tea industry. It was discussed to explore monetization of TRA assets to pay off existing dues. It was decided send a proposal to Tea Board stating the situation and the requirement of funds. The Chairperson TRA requested Mr Bangur to sensitize the above situation to the ITA National Committee.



## **7. Leasing terms of Tocklai Division**

The Chairperson informed that the Association have signed an agreement with ATCL on the 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 wherein it has leased out the Tocklai Division for 30 years. It is intended by TRA to sub-lease the Tocklai Division to interested parties for a period of 30 years with the following condition.

- Security deposit of Rs.3 crores non-interest bearing.
- Annual payment of Rs.5 per kg of made tea for meet 5 years upto 2030 and thereafter revised.

The Chairperson appreciated the efforts of the Secretary on this matter. The Council approved the same for floating the tender.

## **8. Recruitment of Director & Administrative Officer**

The Chairperson informed that the Selection Committee consisting of Chairperson, Vice Chairman, Addl. Vice Chairman, Mr A N Singh, Mr P K Bezboruah, Mr S K Saria, Dr. B K Sarmah and Dr J Deha met on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December to shortlist the candidates. The first round of interview is being scheduled for end January 2025. The Deputy Chairman Tea Board of India have nominated Mr S Soundarajan in the Committee from Tea Board of India.

## **9. Any Other Business**

- a) **Resolved to include Vice Chairman and Addl. Vice Chairman for Banking operation of all existing Bank Accounts of TRA, Kolkata.**

### **Resolution for IDBI A/C No. 060102000057673**

- a) **RESOLVED THAT** the following **two** persons included **as Authorized Signatories** in Account No.060102000057673 held in the name of the Tea Research Association with **IDBI BANK LTD.**

1. Mr Suneel Singh Sikand, Vice Chairman
2. Mr Rajvinder Singh, Addl. Vice Chairman



**Resolution for SBI A/C No. 52092147927**

- a. **RESOLVED THAT** the following **two** persons included **as Authorized Signatories** in Account No.52092147927 held in the name of the Tea Research Association with **STATE BANK OF INDIA**.

1. Mr Suneel Singh Sikand, Vice Chairman
2. Mr Rajvinder Singh, Addl. Vice Chairman

**Resolution for KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK A/C No. 2611164454**

- a. **RESOLVED THAT** the following **two** persons included **as Authorized Signatories** in Account No.2611164454 held in the name of the Tea Research Association with **KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK**

1. Mr Suneel Singh Sikand, Vice Chairman
2. Mr Rajvinder Singh, Addl. Vice Chairman

Members confirmed and pass the Resolution.

- b) **Decide on the statutory auditor as they seek substantial hike in the annual fees.**

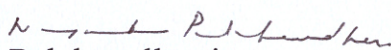
The matter was discussed and the Council stated that no increase can be allowed.

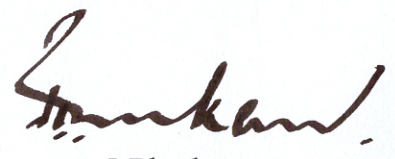
- c) **Proposal of Arbro Pharmaceuticals to set up residue lab at TRA Dikom**

The Council approved the signing of the MOU with Arbro Pharmaceuticals / Auriga Research for setting up a lab at Dikom and rent out the space for the labs at a concession rate.

- d) Mr P Jalan stated that chemicals companies can be also approached for CSR funding for research.

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

  
N Palchoudhuri  
Chairperson

  
J Phukan  
Secretary

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> January 2025.