

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, ECONOMICS & MANAGEMENT

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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	A STUDY ON STATUS AND PROSPECTS OF INDIA - THAILAND FREE TRADE AGREEMENT <i>DR. SAIFIL ALI & MANIVASAGAN</i>	1
2.	MICRO FINANCE TOWARDS GENDER EQUITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT <i>DR. WAJEEDA BANO</i>	7
3.	TEXTILE INDUSTRY: INDIA'S SECOND LARGEST EMPLOYER, BUT WHAT'S REALLY IN FOR THE WORKERS? <i>DR. HALIMA SADIA RIZVI & ISHA JASWAL</i>	14
4.	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN BANKS IN INDIA <i>DR. PRITA D. MALLYA</i>	18
5.	ECOLOGICAL ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABILITY: THE FUTURES <i>DR. PAWAN KUMAR SHARMA</i>	21
6.	DEALING WITH SEASONALITY: MODELLING TOURISM DEMAND IN CROATIA <i>DR. BALDIGARA TEA & MAJA MAMULA</i>	23
7.	SOCIO-ECONOMIC DETERMINANTS OF TELECOMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA: AN INTER-STATE ANALYSIS <i>NEENA & KAWALJEET KAUR</i>	30
8.	INTEREST RATE AND UNEMPLOYMENT NEXUS IN NIGERIA: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS <i>ABDURRAUF IDOWU BABALOLA</i>	42
9.	CORRELATION BETWEEN CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PRACTICES AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE OF THE COMPANY: CASE OF 5 INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED INDIAN FIRMS <i>SHWETA SATUA</i>	46
10.	FINANCIAL CAPACITY AND ITS EFFECT ON IMPULSE BUYING BEHAVIOUR: AN ON-FIELD STUDY AT LULU INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING MALL, KOCHI <i>JITHIN RAJ R & ELIZABETH JACOB</i>	50
11.	INCREASING AND CHANGING ROLE OF MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING IN CAPTURING THE VOICE OF CUSTOMERS <i>MANMEET KAUR & RAVINDER KAUR</i>	55
12.	GENDER BUDGET STATEMENT: IS THE BIG BEAUTIFUL <i>MASROOR AHMAD</i>	60
13.	CREATING AN OPTIMAL PORTFOLIO ON S&P BSE SENSEX USING SHARPE'S SINGLE INDEX MODEL <i>HETAL D. TANDEL</i>	64
14.	INNOVATION IN RURAL MARKETS: A CASE STUDY OF PROJECT SHAKTI BY HUL <i>CHIRAG V. ERDA</i>	69
15.	TEA INDUSTRY IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW <i>DR. R. SIVANESAN</i>	71
16.	IMPACT OF WOMEN EDUCATION ON CHILD HEALTH <i>NUPUR KATARIA</i>	77
17.	VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION IN LIGHT OF THE TOURISM INDUSTRY <i>BIVEK DATTA</i>	84
18.	AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND TRUST <i>AMOGH TALAN</i>	89
19.	FOSTERING MUTUAL COEXISTENCE AMONG ETHNO-RELIGIOUS GROUPS IN NIGERIA TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY THE YEAR 2020 <i>ADEBISI KOLAWOLE SHITTU & ADEKOLA OMOTAYO AJIBIKE</i>	93
20.	THE EFFECT OF CLIMATIC SHOCKS ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION AND FOOD SECURITY IN TIGRAY (NORTHERN ETHIOPIA): THE CASE OF RAYA AZEBO WOREDA <i>GIRMA BERHE</i>	98
21.	A NOTE TOWARDS FINDING A BUYBACK CONTRACT PRODUCING CLOSE RESULT TO A GIVEN QUANTITY FLEXIBILITY CONTRACT <i>SHIRSENDU NANDI</i>	104
22.	DIRECT TAX CODE IN INDIA: A MAJOR TAX REFORM FOR THE EMERGING ECONOMY <i>RAKESH, C & MANJUNATHA, K</i>	107
23.	PERFORMANCE OF INDIVIDUAL BOREWEL PROGRAMME IN KARNATAKA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SCs AND STs <i>DR. RAJAMMA.N</i>	113
24.	EMPLOYMENT IN HARYANA: WHAT DOES THE LATEST DATA SHOWS? <i>ANNU</i>	115
25.	ALGERIAN SMES AMIDST ECONOMIC REFORMS AND GOVERNMENT SUPPORT <i>AISSA MOSBAH & ROCHDI DEBILI</i>	117
26.	CORRUPTION WITHIN EDUCATION SECTOR: A TYPOLOGY OF CONSEQUENCES <i>MOHAMED DRIDI</i>	122
27.	GROWTH EVALUATION OF SELECTED COMMERCIAL BANKS IN PALESTINE <i>MOHAMMED MALI</i>	127
28.	JOBLESS GROWTH IN INDIA IN 2000's <i>JAGANATH BEHERA</i>	131
29.	FOOD PROCESSING AND VALUE ADDITION: THE PATHWAY TO AGRICULTURE SUSTAINABILITY <i>SREEJA MOLE.S</i>	134
30.	AGRICULTURAL MARKETING REFORMS IN INDIA <i>SHIKHA MAKKAR</i>	138
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	145

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TEA INDUSTRY IN INDIA: AN OVERVIEW**DR. R. SIVANESAN****ASST. PROFESSOR****ST. JEROME'S COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE****ANAADHANADARKUDY****ABSTRACT**

The discovery of indigenous tea in Assam in 1823 led to the origin of the tea industry in India. However, the Kolkata Agricultural Society differs from the above opinion. It has consistently held that in the early 1700's, the ships of the East India Company frequently brought the tea plants in the country by way of curiosity. Col. Kyol, a resident of Kolkata and a famous botanist, saw tea plants growing in his garden in 1780. This information was sent to Sir Joseph Bank and in 1782 his garden as handed over to Botanical Garden of Kolkata. In 1788, Sir Joseph Bank recorded the existence of indigenous tea growing wild in Coochbehar and Rangpur districts of Bengal and suggested the cultivation of this plant. The wild teas of Coochbehar confirmed the first discovery of indigenous tea in India.

KEYWORDS

Tea, Cultivation, Yield, Industry, Tea Board, Replantation.

INTRODUCTION

The discovery of indigenous tea in Assam in 1823 led to the origin of the tea industry in India. However, the Kolkata Agricultural Society differs from the above opinion. It has consistently held that in the early 1700's, the ships of the East India Company frequently brought the tea plants in the country by way of curiosity. Col. Kyol, a resident of Kolkata and a famous botanist, saw tea plants growing in his garden in 1780. This information was sent to Sir Joseph Bank and in 1782 his garden as handed over to Botanical Garden of Kolkata. In 1788, Sir Joseph Bank recorded the existence of indigenous tea growing wild in Coochbehar and Rangpur districts of Bengal and suggested the cultivation of this plant. The wild teas of Coochbehar confirmed the first discovery of indigenous tea in India.

BIRTH OF INDIAN TEA INDUSTRY

The birth of Indian tea industry was marked by the discovery of indigenous tea plant in Assam in 1823 by Robert Bruce. This received momentum when the East India Company in 1833 lost the tea trading monopoly in China. In 1835, a scientific deputation was sent to Assam to report on prospects of the tea industry and the team saw tea plants in many parts in the hills between Assam and Burma. In 1836, C.A. Bruce was made the superintendent of Tea Forests. Among others, he formed the Bengal Tea Company at Kolkata with the objective of purchasing the produce from the East India Company's tea plantations in India. A similar company was also established in the same year in London with the same objectives.

In 1839 the first consignment of tea from India (eight chests) was shipped to London and it was auctioned at a price ranging from six to thirty four shillings per pound. In 1840, two thirds of experimental teas were handed over to new company. In 1852, the first tea company in India paid its final dividends. The second limited company in 1859 was formed in Assam called Jorhat Company. During 1862-67, tea cultivation started in Chittagong and Chotta Nagpur. Ultimately tea cultivation was commissioned in many districts in India wherever there was some hope of a success. Within a few months, India along with Sri Lanka dominated the world tea trade/ market.

BIRTH OF TEA TRADE IN INDIA

In 1874 the land located in the east of Teesta River was explored with the foreign liability of growing tea plants. By 1876 as many as 13 gardens had started cultivating tea. In 1878 the first two Indian tea gardens by name Megaltek Tea Estate and Indian Tea Company Ltd. were established though the company actually received a grant of 741 acres on 19 March 1981. The first tea auction started on May 26, 1841 in London under the pioneering leadership of Lyal & Co., Mincing Lane, London was the centre of world tea activities prior to World War II. The first tea auction in Kolkata in December 27, 1861 and the second in Cochin in 1947 for South Indian teas were held. Subsequent many tea auction centres were opened in Coonoor, Guwahati Amritsar and Siliguri.

TEA INDUSTRY IN INDIA

Tea is one of the oldest industries in India and today it enjoys the status of one of the best organized industries in the country. Although tea has been known since 2737 B.C. and consumed as a beverage for 1250 years⁸, its cultivation in India commenced very recently.

The weakening of trade relations between China and Britain during 1780 led to the initiative of the East India Company to raise the commodity in India. In 1778, Sir Joseph Banks was asked to prepare a series of notes for the company. He recommended the cultivation of tea in India. He gave priority to tea as an article of greatest national importance to Britain. The first recorded mention of tea in India was in 1780 when Robert Kyol experimented with tea cultivation with imported seeds. Warren Hastings had some interest in tea cultivation.

- ❖ The discovery that the tea plant grows wild in the upper part of the Brahmaputra Valley was made by Robert Bruce in 1823 and the rise of the industry in India owes its origin to the momentous discovery of this indigenous tea plant.
- ❖ India is considered as one of the native homes of the tea plant. "The indigenous tea plant growing in a wild condition in Assam was first discovered about 1820"⁹.

The inception of the tea industry in India can be associated with the refusal of the Chinese Government in 1833 to renew the agreement as granting the East India Company the rights of monopoly of British trade with China. This removal of the monopoly of the China trade in 1833 'quickened their perceptions to the advantages likely to accrue to India by the establishment of a new industry'¹⁰. Subsequently, in 1834, Lord William Bentinck, the then Government – General, appointed a committee, called Tea committee with Dr. N. Wallich as head "to study a plan for the accomplishment of the introduction of tea culture in India and for the superintendence of its execution". The committee recommended that G.J. Garden should be directed to proceed to China to obtain more knowledge about the cultivation. In 1835, the secretary of committee dispatched the seeds from China which reached Calcutta later in the same year. A Governmental experimental garden was opened at Chabua planted with Assam indigenous seed. Experiments were also conducted in South India under the auspices of the Tea Committee.

The first commercial sample of Assam tea of eight chests, weighing 488 lbs., was sent to London and sold on January 10, 1838 at a fancy price. The Assam Company with a capital of 200000 pounds was formed in that city in 1839. The Assam Company had a virtual monopoly of tea production during the first decade; but its management was so ineffective that it did not pay dividends out of earnings for thirteen years and at one time had dissipated all its capital¹¹, but, later on, it began paying handsome profit; this led to a great extension of a tea planting.

8. Ukers, W.A., - "All About Tea", The Tea and Coffee Trade Journal, Vol. 1, New York, 1935, PP. 1-4.

9. Gadgil D.R., "The Industrial Evolution India in Recent Times", Fifth Edition, New Delhi, P. 50.

10. Buchanon, Daniel H, "Development of Capitalist Enterprise in India", CTC Reporter, Autumn. p-30

11. Parliamentary papers, 1874, XLVIII, Cd, 982, P. 36.

“There was a frenzied rush for opening up tea gardens and in fact, tea became a favourite topic”¹². Tea was first planted in Darjeeling (West Bengal) in 1839, in Sylhet and Cachar (Assam) in 1855, in the Terai (West Bengal) in 1862 and in the Dooars (West Bengal) in 1874. The foundation of the present tea industry was laid between 1856 and 1859¹³. In 1852, a private garden was started and then, the number of gardens began to increase. From the latter date, the rate of growth was, indeed, amazing both in the number of estates and the outturn of tea.

IMPORTANCE OF TEA INDUSTRY

The importance of the tea industry in the nation’s economy and its role in our planned economic development has been widely recognized. Except the public utility services like the Railways, it is the largest organized industry which comprises more than a million workers employed both in plantation and manufacturing industry. Till recently tea had been the largest foreign exchange earner for India but for the last few years’ jute has taken the first place and tea remains as the second largest foreign exchange earner.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are stated as follows

- To analyse the tea cultivation areas in India.
- To analyse the tea production of tea in India.
- To analyse the yield of tea in India.

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The present study covers the periods from 1970 to 2007.

FRAME WORK OF ANALYSIS

The collected data are processed with the help of appropriate statistical tools like Trend analysis and Compound Growth Rate in order to fulfill the objectives of the study.

TEA CULTIVATION AREA IN INDIA

Area is the important factor for tea cultivation. The following Table 5.3 reveals the tea cultivation area in India.

TABLE 1: TEA CULTIVATION AREA IN INDIA

Year	Area (in Hectares)	Index of Growth
1970	3,54,133	100.00
1975	3,63,303	102.58
1980	3,81,086	107.61
1985	3,99,936	112.94
1990	4,16,269	117.55
1995	4,27,065	120.60
1998	4,74,027	133.85
1999	4,90,200	138.42
2000	5,04,366	142.42
2001	5,09,770	143.95
2002	5,11,940	144.56
2003	5,19,598	146.72
2004	5,21,403	147.23
2005	5,55,611	156.89
2006	5,67,020	160.12
2007	5,78,458	163.35

Source: Statistical Report of Tea Board

It is clear from Table 1 that the tea cultivation area in 1970 was 354133 hectares. In 1980 it increased to 381086 hectares and then it increased to 416269 hectares in 1990. It assumes a gradual increase and reached to 578458 hectares in 2007.

The growth rate of tea cultivation area is analysed through trend analysis and the details of it are stated in Table 11 as follows:

TABLE 1.1: TREND IN TEA CULTIVATION AREA IN INDIA (in Hectares)

Year	Areas (in hectare) y	Deviation x (2002.5)	x ²	xy	Trend Value (yc)
1998	474027	-4.	20.50	-2133121.50	475083.90
1999	490200	-3.5	12.25	-1715700.00	485785.10
2000	504366	-2.5	06.25	-1266915.00	496486.30
2001	509770	-1.5	02.25	-764655.00	507187.50
2002	511940	-0.5	00.25	-255970.00	517888.70
2003	519598	0.5	00.25	259799.00	528589.90
2004	521403	1.5	02.25	782104.50	539291.10
2005	555611	2.5	06.25	1389027.50	549992.30
2006	567020	3.5	12.25	1984570.00	560693.50
2007	578458	4.5	20.50	2603061.00	571394.70
	Σy=5232393		Σx² = 83	Σxy = 888200	

$$a = \frac{\sum y}{N} = \frac{5232393}{10} = 523239.3$$

$$b = \frac{\sum xy}{\sum x^2} = \frac{888200}{83} = 10701.20$$

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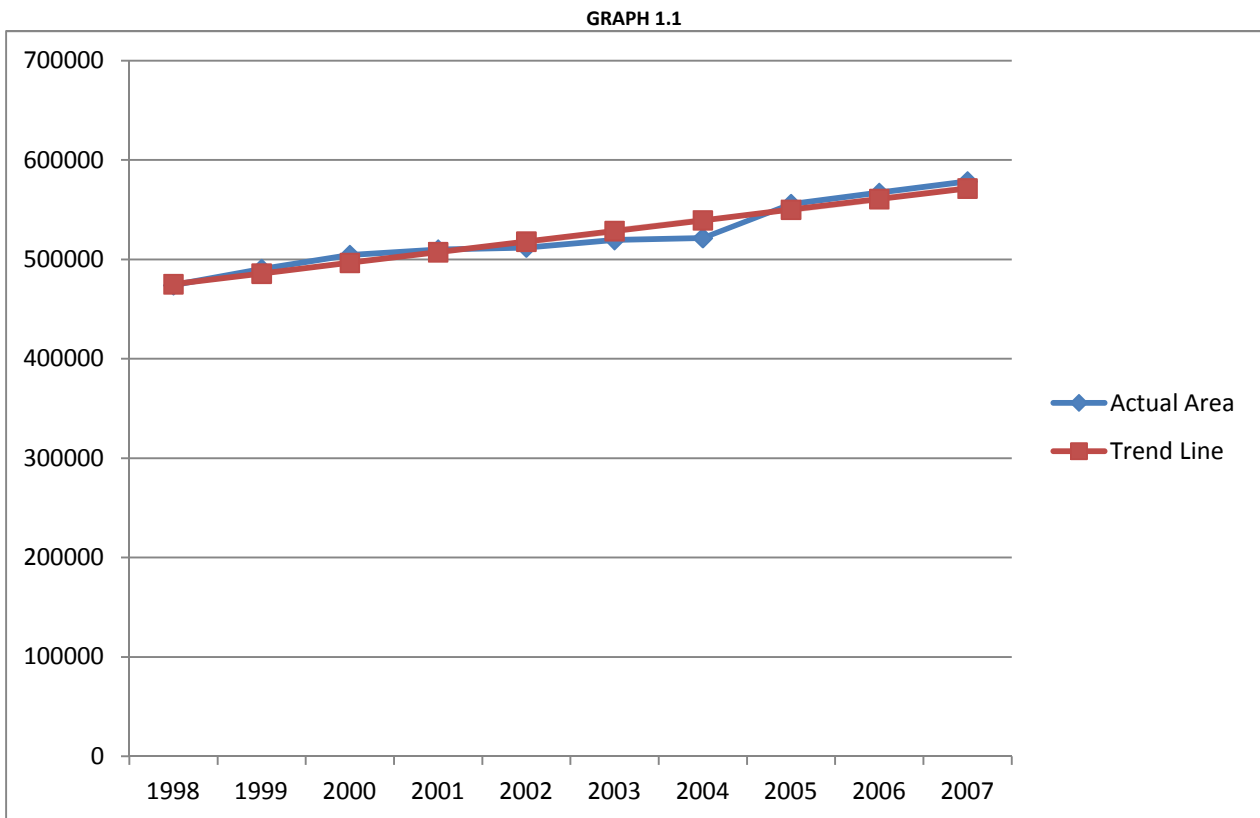
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Trend equation $Y_c = a + b(x)$

Hence $Y_c = 523239.3 + 10701.20(x)$

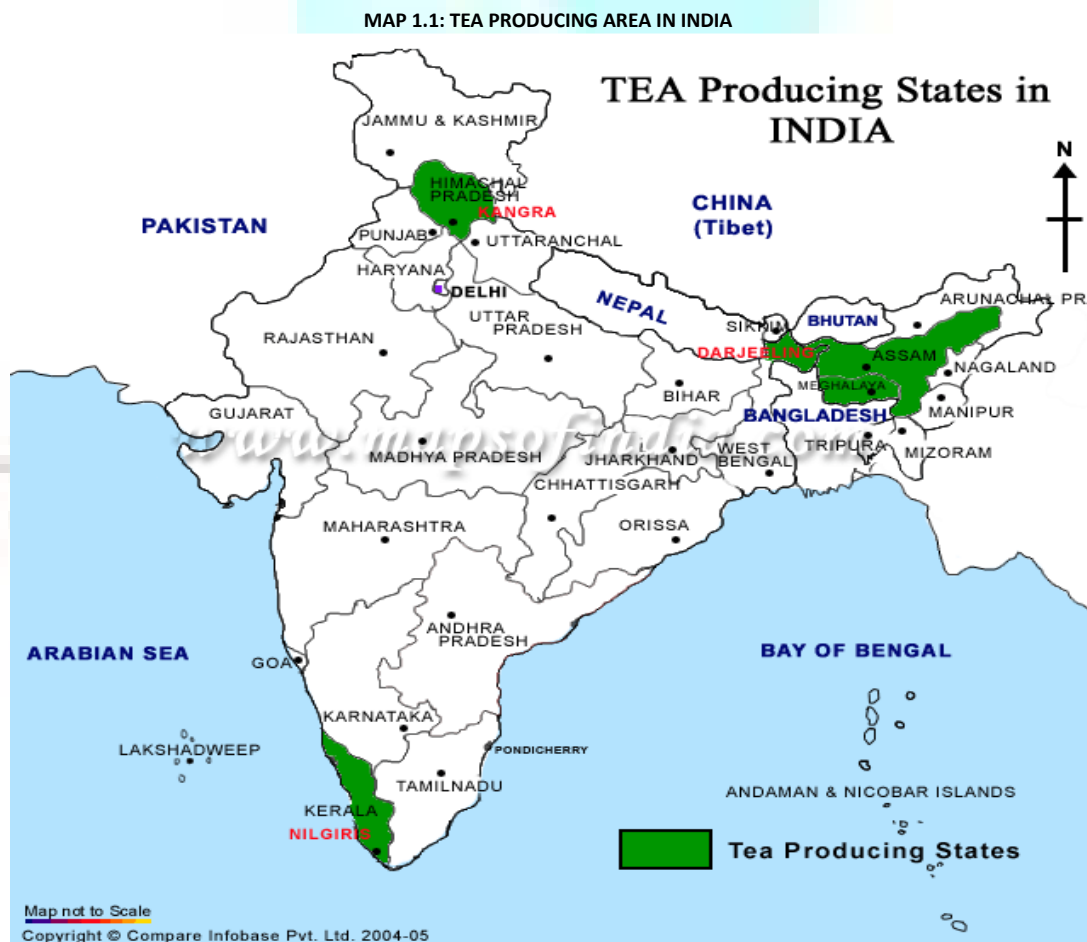
$Y_c = 2015 = 523239.3 + 10701.20(12.5) = 657004.3$

According to the trend analysis, the tea cultivation area in 2015 would be 657004.3 hectares. Trend values are shown in Graph 1.1 as follows:



It is clear from Graph 1.1 that Trend Values are increasing every year.

The tea producing areas in India can be known through Map 1.1



It is known from the Map 1.1 that the important tea producing areas in India are Assam, West Bengal, Tamilnadu and Kerala.

TEA PRODUCTION IN INDIA

Tea production is the important factor for the development of tea industry in India. The details of tea production in India are shown in the following Table 2

TABLE 2: TEA PRODUCTION IN INDIA

Year	Production (m.kgs)	Index of Growth
1970	418.517	100.00
1975	487.137	116.40
1980	569.172	135.99
1985	656.162	156.78
1990	720.338	172.12
1995	756.016	180.65
1998	874.108	208.85
1999	825.935	197.34
2000	846.922	202.36
2001	853.923	204.03
2002	826.165	197.40
2003	857.055	204.78
2004	892.970	213.36
2005	945.970	226.02
2006	981.800	234.59
2007	986.430	235.69

Source: Statistical Report of Tea Board

It is clear from Table 2 that in 1970 the tea production in India was 418.517 m.kgs, and 1980 it increased to 569.172 m.kgs. It further increased to 720.338 m.kgs in 1990 and in 1998 the tea production increased to 874.108 m.kgs. It decreased to 825.935 m.kgs in 1999 and then increased to 846.922 in 2000. In 2001 tea production was 853.923 m.kgs and then it assumed an increasing trend and reached to 986.430 m.kgs in 2007.

The Table 2.1 shows the annual changes in production of tea in India from 1970.

TABLE 2.1: ANNUAL CHANGES IN PRODUCTION OF TEA IN INDIA

Year	Production (m.kgs)	Annual Change	Percentage of change
1970	418.517	-	-
1975	487.137	68.620	14.086
1980	569.172	82.035	14.413
1985	656.162	86.990	13.257
1990	720.338	64.176	08.909
1995	756.016	35.678	04.719
1998	874.108	118.092	13.510
1999	825.935	-48.173	-05.832
2000	846.922	20.987	02.478
2001	853.923	07.001	00.819
2002	826.165	-27.758	-03.359
2003	857.055	30.890	03.604
2004	892.970	35.915	04.022
2005	945.970	53.000	05.603
2006	981.800	35.830	03.649
2007	986.430	04.630	00.469

Source: calculated value

It is clear from Table 2.1 that in most of the years the change in tea production is positive. The change is very prominent in the year 2005 with an increase of 53 compared to previous year. The changes are high for years from 1970 to 1998 than what was in 2005 since they were calculated for a span of 5 years and 3 years.

TEA YIELD IN INDIA

Yield of tea is the important factor for the development of tea industry in India. The Table 3 shows the average yield of tea in India.

TABLE 3: AVERAGE YIELD OF TEA IN INDIA

Year	Average Yield (kgs per hectare)	Index of Growth
1970	1174	100.00
1975	1340	114.13
1980	1450	123.50
1985	1640	139.69
1990	1730	147.35
1995	1770	150.76
1998	1844	157.06
1999	1685	143.52
2000	1679	143.01
2001	1675	142.67
2002	1625	138.41
2003	1690	143.95
2004	1713	145.91
2005	1703	145.05
2006	1732	147.52
2007	1705	145.23

Source: Statistical Report of Tea Board

It is clear from Table 5.5 that the average yield of tea in India, in 1998 was 1844 kgs., and it decreased to 1685 kgs in 1999. It marginally decreased to 1679 kgs, in 2000 and the average yield was 1675 kgs. in 2001. It gradually increased to 1732 kgs, in 2006 and it decreased to 1705 kgs in 2007.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEA CULTIVATION AREA, TEA PRODUCTION AND AVERAGE YIELD OF TEA IN INDIA

The following Table 4 describes the area of tea cultivation, production of tea and yield of tea in India from 1970 to 2007.

TABLE 4: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEA CULTIVATION AREA, TEA PRODUCTION AND AVERAGE YIELD OF TEA IN INDIA

Year	Area (in Hectares)	Production (m.kgs)	Yield (Kg. per hectare)
1970	3,54,133	418.517	1174
1975	3,63,303	487.137	1340
1980	3,81,086	569.172	1450
1985	3,99,936	656.162	1640
1990	4,16,269	720.338	1730
1995	4,27,065	756.016	1770
1998	4,74,027	874.108	1844
1999	4,90,200	825.935	1685
2000	5,04,366	846.922	1679
2001	5,09,770	853.923	1675
2002	5,11,940	826.165	1625
2003	5,19,598	857.055	1690
2004	5,21,403	892.970	1713
2005	5,55,611	945.970	1703
2006	5,67,020	981.800	1732
2007	5,78,458	986.430	1705

Source: Statistical Report of Tea Board

It is clear from Table 4 that area and production in India are gradually increasing every year from 1970 to 2007 but average yield of tea in India was differing from 1970 to 2007.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following are the important findings of the present study.

The tea cultivation area in 1970 was 354133 hectares. In 1980 it increased to 381086 hectares and then it increased to 416269 hectares in 1990. It assumes a gradual increase and reached to 578458 hectares in 2007. According to the trend analysis, the tea cultivation area in 2015 would be 657004.3 hectares. The important tea producing areas in India are Assam, West Bengal, Tamilnadu and Kerala. Most of the years the change in tea production is positive. The change is very prominent in the year 2005 with an increase of 53 compared to previous year. The changes are high for years from 1970 to 1998 than what was in 2005 since they were calculated for a span of 5 years and 3 years. The average yield of tea in India, in 1998 was 1844 kgs., and it decreased to 1685 kgs in 1999. It marginally decreased to 1679 kgs, in 2000 and the average yield was 1675 kgs. in 2001. It gradually increased to 1732 kgs, in 2006 and it decreased to 1705 kgs in 2007. Tea cultivation area and tea production in India are gradually increasing every year from 1970 to 2007 but average yield of tea in India was differing from 1970 to 2007.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

Tea cultivation area and tea production was increasing every year but average yield of tea in India was varying from year to year because of replantation of tea is not effective and rehabilitation of tea cultivation area was not effective. So the Tea Board may provide Special assistance to the tea producers in India. Tea Board may take necessary steps to increase the quality of Tea plants. Government may arrange the special education program to tea growers and tea manufacturers in India.

CONCLUSION

The tea industry is a labour intensive industry providing gainful employment to a large number of people. It has its specific importance in India where unemployment is one of the serious economic problems. The tea plantation and manufacturing industry provides direct employment about one million workers in India. A large number of ancillary industries have been started to fulfill the requirements of the tea industry where thousands of persons have been employed in different jobs. The business and trade, associated with tea industry have also provided enough opportunities for employment to a large number of persons.

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