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Tea Board of India Acts Tough On Sale of Inferior Tea

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E-Paper

The Tea Board of India has started acting tough on inferior tea production in Assam with an aim to make only quality tea available in the market.

The Tea Board recently asked Apeejay Tea to destroy 1.2 lakh kg of tea waste which the firm had claimed as tea, violating the norms set by the Tea Waste Control Order.

“Tea waste is tea sweepings, tea fluff, tea fibre or tea stalks or any article purporting to be tea, which does not confirm the specifications for tea laid down under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 (37 of 1954),” a source in the Tea Board told The Sentinel.

Sources said 44 out of 47 samples of tea sent to a Tea Board-approved laboratory in South India by Apeejay Tea have failed the test. The fibre content in black tea should be less than 16.5 per cent, according to the Food Safety (Food Standard and Food Additives) Regulation, 2011.

However, the Apeejay tea samples carried more than 20 per cent fibre content.



According to the FSSAI standard, tea waste consists of more than 16.5 per cent of crude fibre, whereas tea should have less than 16.5 per cent fibre content.

Sources said the 44 tea samples will now have to be destroyed or denatured or composted in the presence of Tea Board officials in respective gardens. The recent order passed by the executive director, Northeast, Tea Board, will have to have complied with the criteria at the earliest.

The primary objective of the Tea Board's move to act tough is to attract more people, particularly the younger generation, to drink tea. “Reputation of Assam's quality must be retained at any cost. The younger generation will not be attracted to drink tea unless we stop production of inferior tea,” a Tea Board official said.