

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY
(DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4042
ANSWERED ON 25/03/2025

IMPORT OF TEA

4042. SHRI SELVAGANAPATHI T.M.:

Will the Minister of **COMMERCE & INDUSTRY** (वाणिज्य एवं उद्योग मंत्री) be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that India has become the largest importers of tea from Kenya, despite the fact that India is the second largest producer of Tea after China;
- (b) whether it is a fact that the increase in tea imports from Kenya has been a cause of concern for tea producers and traders in India who have been grappling with oversupply for some time although production in the country dropped by more than 50 million kgs in 2024;
- (c) whether it is also true that some Indian brands use the cheap and lower quality African teas as well as substandard teas from Iran and Vietnam for blending and re-exporting as Indian teas; and
- (d) if so, the steps taken against such exporters to protect the good image of Indian tea across the globe?

ANSWER

वाणिज्य और उद्योग मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री जितिन प्रसाद)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
(SHRI JITIN PRASADA)

(a) & (b) No, India is not the largest importer of tea from Kenya. Tea imports by India from Kenya stood at only 2.83% of total tea exports made by Kenya in 2024. Overall Indian tea imports in 2023-24 were 25.21 million kgs which was 1.82 % of country's total tea production of 1382.03 million kgs. Tea imports are mainly for blending and re-exports.

(c) & (d) No information in this regard is available.

However, Tea Board has taken several measures in respect of teas imported into the country, which include as below:

- A Notification dated 11.11.2021 was issued with a directive stating that imported tea must not be blended with GI teas, and if blending is done, the end product must not be claimed as GI tea.
- Directives were issued to packers, requiring them to clearly indicate on the packaging that the blended tea contains imported ingredients.

- Importers and exporters have been directed to mandatorily obtain clearance certificates from the Board's Tea Council portal before importing or exporting tea, and the origin of the tea must be clearly mentioned on the tea packages.
- The importers should notify, to the Board, the place of storage of the imported teas within 24 hours of import. The importers shall ensure that origin of the imported teas is mentioned in all sale invoices.
- The tea consignments are tested for compliance to parameters laid down by FSSAI at the time of import in India. Tea Board also collects random samples from the tea imported and tests them for compliance with the FSSAI parameters.
- Process of conducting joint training sessions among between Tea Board, Customs and FSSAI were initiated to strengthen food import clearance procedures.
