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Probe into 2 Assam tea gardens

From Our Calcutta Bureau

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The Central government has appointed a five-man committee to investigate into the affairs of two tea gardens in Cachar district of Assam.

Disclosing this to "The Economic Times" here today, the Union commerce ministry sources said that the two gardens — Hatticherra and Subong, originally owned by Hindustan tea company were not properly managed over the past few years.

The gardens which used to produce about 5 lakh kgs. of tea are presently being run by the district judge of Cachar as receiver appointed by the court. The receiver sells the green leaf to the neighbouring tea gardens (through public auctions) for meeting the day-to-day expenses, it is learnt.

Hatticherra tea gardens situated in Udabandi, about 20 km from Silchar has an area of 414 hectares under tea plantation while Subong in Dalu has 372 hectares under tea. Both the gardens have about 3,500 hectares under their possession, according to the tea board records.

According to sources, the Central government has, in a gazette notification appointed an investigating committee consisting of the director of tea development, Tea Board of India, financial adviser and chief accounts officers of the board, secretary to the government of Assam (department of industries), deputy adviser: finance) of Bureau of Public Enterprises and joint director (accounts) in the office of the regional director of Company Law Board, Calcutta.

The committee has been asked to submit its report to the Central government before September 15, 1981.

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