

THE COLOMBO TEA TRADERS' ASSOCIATION

P .O. Box 274
Colombo

CIRCULAR NO. 06 OF 2021

March 10, 2021

FOR ATTENTION OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

EXTRANEIOUS MATTER / IMPURITIES IN TEA

Further to the Circular No 02 of 2013 dated January 18, 2013 on the subject of **“IMPURITIES IN TEA”**.

It is reported that a considerable volume of teas offered through the Auction is contaminated with extraneous matter. The CTTA's Quality Claim Management System has confirmed the veracity of this. Buyers have pointed out that they have raised this concern over the past few decades, notwithstanding which, it has continued unabated and, in fact, has progressively intensified.

It has been observed that teas originating from factories in all elevations, even those producing high quality, high priced teas, with high profile garden marks, are equally affected. However, the incidence of impurities has been predominantly in the leafier grades, such as FBOP, OP, Pekoe, OPA, BOP1A, and Tippy Grades.

Buyers have reported that the extraneous matters mainly grit detected in Tippy Teas have gone up significantly. The foreign Buyers are making tea quality claims based on extraneous matters in the Ceylon Tea shipments that could adversely affect our market share.

In the cleaning process of blends during the preparation of export consignments, a wide range of extraneous matter has been detected. This includes stones, grit, metal particles from old machinery, dried frogs, geckos, human hair, pieces of wire, poisonous madatiya seeds, chewed "veralu" [olive] seeds, betel nuts, pieces of plastic, beetles, screw nails, plant seeds, stapler pins, safety pins, watch battery, small pieces of glass, metal nails and pieces of iron. Exporters are unable to identify the specific garden marks responsible; as the detection can only be made at the point, the teas exit the blending drums.

Attention is drawn to the fact that there are punitive measures already in place, which could be imposed against manufacturers/factories that, through negligence or deliberate acts, are identified as having extraneous matter/impurities in their teas. Such legal provisions are as follows:

- i. **Section 8(2) of the Tea Control Act No 51 of 1957, which provides for suspension or cancellation of the Registration of the Tea Factory.- Sri Lanka Tea Board.**
- ii. **Food Act No 26 of 1980, which makes provision for litigation, in terms of the Food Hygiene Regulation.- Director-General of Health, Department of Health.**
- iii **By-Law 36 of the By-Laws and Conditions for Sale of Tea by Public Auction and by Private Treaty, which provides for the imposition of a fine and debarment from offering teas for sale through the auction.- Colombo Tea Traders' Association**

The situation has become so alarming that Buyers have requested the intervention of the Association to impose some form of punitive measures, as, in most instances, the profusion of such impurities create the impression that they may have been deliberately introduced. This matter was addressed at a recent meeting of CTTA, at which deliberations ensued on means by which to eliminate this problem.

It will be appreciated if producers will pay special attention to this aspect of manufacture and packing, towards protecting our valuable overseas markets.

**SECRETARIAT
COLOMBO TEA TRADERS' ASSOCIATION**