

## **Sri Lanka Tea Board Affirms Rapid Stabilization of Ceylon Tea Industry Post-Cyclone Ditwa**

The Sri Lanka Tea Board today affirmed the industry's exceptional resilience and swift return to operational stability following the severe disruptions caused by Cyclone Ditwa across the Central and Uva Provinces. While the storm inflicted considerable damage to infrastructure and tragically impacted our workforce, the collective response from growers, manufacturers, and exporters has ensured that the backbone of the Ceylon Tea production chain remains intact. The industry is operating under a coordinated national recovery strategy, focused on supporting affected communities and maintaining global supply.

Crucially, we can confirm that other than a few isolated incidence there have been no reported loss of permanent factory or manufacturing capacity within the Ceylon Tea sector. Despite initial projections of a significant drop in production due to temporary labor shortages and weather severity, most of our factories were not affected. The immediate focus on securing and restoring these manufacturing centers paid off, allowing the processing of green leaf to stabilize as estate workers gradually returned to work with the swift restoration of accessibility across the affected regions.

The logistical challenge posed by damaged regional roads is being addressed with priority. Key arteries connecting plantations to the city and transport hubs are being diligently reopened, ensuring the continuous flow of green leaf to processing centers and finished tea to warehouses. Furthermore, to safeguard the vital liquidity of the entire supply chain, including the smallholders. The Colombo Tea Auction schedule has been swiftly and strategically adjusted, guaranteeing uninterrupted financial support and market momentum for our producers.

However, the primary hurdle to a full restoration of export capacity lies in the damage sustained in specialized post-processing and packaging machinery. Most of the tea companies have taken precautionary measures to protect their equipment/machinery to minimize the potential damage with timely relocation. The industry stakeholders are prioritizing the repair and restoration of these machinery and equipment. This issue is being addressed with urgency to mitigate any long-term delays in delivering value-added Ceylon Tea. Stakeholders across the industry have joined hands to ensure the supply chain remains uninterrupted.

The global reputation of Ceylon Tea is founded on unwavering quality and the spirit of its people. We commend the Central Bank and government stakeholders for their rapid deployment of temporary debt relief and financial support measures. We assure all international partners and consumers that every measure is being taken to ensure consistent supply and quality. The industry has weathered far greater storms, and our current collective effort demonstrates our confidence in emerging from this challenge stronger, ensuring Ceylon Tea remains a reliable pillar of the global market.

**Sri Lanka Tea Board**

574, Galle Road, Colombo 03.

12.12.2025