



Vice-President calls for modernising tea industry, strengthening research and building Indian tea brands for global markets

Vice-President addresses Centenary Conference of UPASI Tea Research Foundation in Coonoor, The Nilgris

“Industry welfare and workers’ welfare must go hand in hand”: Vice-President

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Vice-President of India, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan, today inaugurated the Centenary Conference of the UPASI (United Planters’ Association of Southern India) Tea Research Foundation at Coonoor, The Nilgiris, and called for greater research, modernisation, branding and value addition to make Indian tea more competitive in global markets.

Vice-President Thiru C. P. Radhakrishnan graced the Centenary Conference of the UPASI (United Planters’ Association of Southern India) Tea Research Foundation at Coonoor, Nilgiris, today.

The Vice President called for strengthening tea research, modernising factories, improving... pic.twitter.com/TCZHWM0HTn

— Vice-President of India (@VPIndia) September 21, 2026

Congratulating the UPASI Tea Research Foundation on completing 100 years of service to the tea industry, planters and workers, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan appreciated the Foundation’s century-long contribution to research and the development of the tea sector.

He said India is among the world’s largest tea-producing and tea-consuming countries and emphasised the need to focus on both cultivation and efficient processing and manufacturing of tea.

The Vice-President called for expanding research in the tea sector, particularly in areas that can improve cost-effectiveness, quality and productivity. He also emphasised the need to educate planters on maintaining quality and responding to changing market requirements, noting that the global tea market is becoming increasingly competitive.

Referring to competition from other tea-producing countries, Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan said India needs to examine how its tea can be marketed more effectively, improve revenues and address the challenges faced by the plantation sector through sustained research and innovation.

He urged stakeholders to undertake a systematic assessment of the requirements of the tea industry and work with the Central and State Governments to develop concrete project proposals. He also stressed the need to identify professionals for research, modernise tea factories and undertake necessary renovation to ensure that Indian tea production meets global standards.

The Vice-President called upon tea producers and exporters to move beyond bulk tea and develop strong Indian brands. Drawing from his experience of travelling to several countries, he recalled seeing a wide range of tea brands from several countries in international markets and noted the need for greater visibility of Indian tea brands.

He suggested that stakeholders come together to market Indian tea under strong brands, which could help improve market positioning as well as revenues and prices.

Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan also called upon UPASI to use its centenary year to create a lasting institutional landmark by expanding the tea research network to more locations and equipping research centres with modern facilities. He said research must continuously evolve to address emerging challenges and opportunities.

Highlighting the important role of plantation workers, the Vice-President called for greater attention to their welfare. He emphasised that the welfare of plantation workers must remain an integral part of the growth and sustainability of the industry. “Industry welfare and workers’ welfare should go hand in hand,” he said.

The Vice-President stressed the importance of value addition in tea and called upon leading stakeholders to work together to identify new products, processes and market opportunities.

He pointed out that India has the advantage of being both a major tea-producing and tea-consuming country and urged the industry to make greater use of its large domestic market. The Vice-President said the present environment provides an opportunity for stakeholders to work closely with the Government to strengthen the tea sector.

The Centenary Conference brought together stakeholders from the tea and plantation sector, including planters, researchers, industry representatives and other dignitaries, to deliberate on the future of tea research and the plantation industry.

During the occasion, the Vice-President released the book “Tea Research in South India – A Compendium”, documenting the rich legacy and contributions of tea research in southern India.

Governor of Tamil Nadu, Shri Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar; MLA, Udhagamandalam, Shri Bhojarajan; Deputy Chairman of the Tea Board of India, Shri C. Murugan; President, UPASI, Shri Ajoy Thipaiah; and other dignitaries, planters, agricultural scientists and industry representatives were present at the event.





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