



# THE KARNATAKA PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION



## NEWS LETTER -1

**Mr. Mahesh Shashidhar**

Chairman

**Dear Member,**

It is a privilege and an honour to be elected as the Chairman of this leading State Plantation Association for the year 2022-23 at our 64th Annual General Meeting held on 12th November 2022 at Madikeri.

I am grateful to Members for having given me the opportunity to be the Chairman of the Association.

The General Body elected the following to the Executive Committee.

**1. Executive Committee & Sub Committees for 2022-23:**

The Executive Committee and Sub Committees formed for the year 2022-23 are as follows:

**a) Executive Committee:**

1. Mr. Mahesh Shashidhar (Chairman)
2. Mr. K.G. Rajeev
3. Mr. A. Arvind Rao
4. Mr. Yeshwant R. Gurjer
5. Mr. Sameer Gurjer
6. Mr. Waheed Naqvi
7. Mr. M.C. Kariappa
8. Mr. I.B. Bopanna
9. Mr. M. Salman Baseer
10. Mr. Krishanth Chowdhu

**b) Co-opted Members:**

1. Mr. A.S. Shankare Gowda
2. Mr. AL. RM. Nagappan
3. Mr. Jeffry Rebello
4. Mr. Ajoy Thipaiah
5. Mr. Sahadev Balakrishna
6. Mr. Marvin Rodrigues
7. Mr. Nishant R. Gurjer
8. Dr. M.M. Chengappa

9. Mr. H.T. Pramod
10. Mr. M.B. Ganapathy
11. Mr. Shirish Vijayendra
12. Mr. S. Appadurai
13. Mr. N. Ramanathan
14. Mr. A.P. Rajaram
15. Mr. N. Bose Mandanna
16. Mr. P.S. Satyanarayana
17. Mr. Jagan Thimaiah K.
18. The Chairman, CPA. (By Mr. C.U. Ashok)

**c) KPA Trustees, Trustees of Silver Jubilee Trust & Late R. Radcliffe Memorial Scholarship and JRD Tata-KPA Golden Jubilee Education Fund Trust and TEDT.**

1. Mr. Mahesh Shashidhar
2. Mr. K.G. Rajeev
3. Mr. A. Arvind Rao
4. Mr. N. Ramanathan

**d) KPA Sub-Committees & their Conveners:**

- |                                    |          |                          |
|------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| 1. Taxation Committee              | Convener | - Mr. P.S. Satyanarayana |
| 2. Negotiation Committee           | Convener | - Mr. AL. RM. Nagappan   |
| 3. Scientific Committee            | Convener | - Mr. Sameer Gurjer      |
| 4. Tea Committee                   | Convener | - Mr. A. Arvind Rao      |
| 5. Membership Drive Committee      | Convener | - Mr. M. Salman Baseer   |
| 6. Environment Awareness Committee | Convener | - Mr. Krishanth Chowdhu  |
| 7. Land Matters Committee          | Convener | - Mr. M.C. Kariappa      |
| 8. Finance Committee               | Convener | - Mr. Yeshwant R. Gurjer |
| 9. Publicity Committee             | Convener | - Mr. A.P. Rajaram       |
| 10. Sports Committee               | Convener | - Mr. A.P. Rajaram       |
| 11. Website Committee              | Convener | - Mr. Yeshwant R. Gurjer |
| 12. AGM/BGM sub-committee          | Convener | - Mr. Mahesh Shashidhar  |

**2. 5th World Coffee Conference–2023 ICC-Steering Committee Meeting on 15th November 2022 at the Coffee Board, Bengaluru.**

The World Coffee Conference and ICC meetings would be held from July 10th to 15th 2023 at the Palace grounds at Bangalore.

I had attended the ICC - Steering Committee Meeting on 15th November 2022 at the Coffee Board, Bengaluru. Various stakeholders of the coffee industry had participated. The Secretary & CEO Dr. K.G. Jagadeesha chaired the meeting.

### **3. Block Chain based e market place for Coffee by the Coffee Board.**

The Coffee Board re-started a 3 year old project seeking to create a Block chain based e-Commerce trading App for coffee trading. The GOI Metal Scrap Trade Corporation Ltd. would develop the App for smart phones. Acviss Technologies, a Bangalore based Software Company would develop the App.

This project will help in price discovery, traceability, transparency, accountability and efficiency, reduce intermediaries and help farmers to sell their coffees directly to the buyers. Help Coffee growers to get better prices for their coffees based on the quality parameters prescribed by the Coffee Board.

The stakeholders for e marketing project are: a). Coffee Farmers b). Exporters, c).Curers d). Local Roasters and e). International buyers.

A very good and stable internet service between all stakeholders is pre requisite for functionality and success of the project.

Mr. I.B. Bopanna represented KPA at the stake holders consultation, interaction meeting on 23rd November 2022 at the Coffee Board, Bengaluru virtually.

The Terms and conditions of the project would be decided and informed by the Coffee Board to the stakeholders within three months.

### **4. “Know your KAAPI: Let the Cups Speak” a Special Cup Quality Evaluation Drive of Coffee Board.**

The Coffee Board has launched the campaign.“Know your Kaapi : Let the Cups Speak” a special cup quality evaluation drive with an aim to help Coffee growers understand and delve deeper into the intricacies of Coffee. Top five Coffees from each region will be showcased at the World Coffee Conference scheduled in Bengaluru in July 2023. To participate in the evaluation drive, a nominal cupping fee of Rs. 50.00 + GST per sample is fixed.

An e-mail was sent to all estate Members on 5th December, 2022 informing about the campaign. All members, please send your samples. This will provide an opportunity to you to evaluate your Coffee.

### **5. 46<sup>th</sup> Tea Area Scientific Conference on 10th December, 2022 at M/s. Classic Tea Estates, Kalasa.**

The 46th Area Tea Scientific Conference was held on 10th December 2022 at the Classic Tea Estate, Kalasa, Chikmagalur District.

In the Morning Session there was a Field Visit to identified blocks of clonal tea, arecanut blocks which are recovering from yellow disease and newly planted Robusta coffee which were previously tea blocks. This was followed by a tour of the tea factory.

In the post-lunch session there were presentations by UPASI TRF scientists from Valparai, Coonoor and Koppa.

The topics of the Technical Presentations were very relevant on current interests of Tea Plantations in Karnataka.

A cupping and grading session was also carried out by a team of expert tea makers.



#### **6. Specialty Coffee Session held on 6th January 2023 at KPA Office, Chikmagalur.**

A specialty Coffee Session was held on 6th January 2023 at the KPA Secretariat at Chikmagalur. Young Coffee entrepreneurs and KPA members Mr. Pranoy Thipaiah and Ms. Chandini D.P made presentations highlighting how to prepare specialty coffee and the benefits of producing specialty coffee, points of view with focus on selective harvesting, specificity during the post harvest processing, sampling and cupping the lots. Plantation level steps of harvesting, fermentation, drying, ageing, roasting and cupping, marketing and branding in the 90 minutes session followed by a Q & A Session.

The efforts of the Scientific Committee in holding the session and providing information on producing specialty Coffee to Members was appreciated by all.



#### **7. Pre Budget Memorandum 2023-24 to the Union Finance Minister, GOI and the State Government.**

The Association had sent its Pre Budget Memorandum 2023-24 to the Union Finance Minister on 14th January 2023 and the Chief Minister of Karnataka on 16th January 2023. The following requests were made in the Memorandum:

**i). Union Finance Minister:**

1 a). Restructure all loans for a period of 9 years with a 2 years Moratorium period.

1 b). Reduce interest rate to 3% p.a. on Crop loans and Development loans.

1 c). Continue Interest Subvention Scheme during FY 2023-24 by increasing the limit with concessional rate of interest:

i) For Crop loans from 3 Lakhs to 25 Lakhs: At 3% pa.

ii). For Crop loans above Rs.25 lakhs: At 6% p.a.

iii). For Development Loans up to 25 Lakhs: At 3% p.a.

iv). For Development Loans above 25 Lakhs: At 6% p.a.

2. Exempt Plantations from SARFAESI as they are agriculture properties.

3. Exclude plantations from CIBIL as plantation advances are agricultural advances.

4. Include plantations under the MSME.

5. Plantation companies be allowed to carry forward and set-off tax losses.

6. Exemption or Reduction of customs duty on import of agricultural equipments OR Collaboration to manufacture them under 'Make in India' policy of GOI.

7. Include Coffee under PM Fasal Bima Yojana weather insurance scheme.

8. Increase Budget for Research Institutions and to Commodity Boards.

9. Extend Financial Support for "Certification of plantations".

10. Central & State Governments share social costs on plantations as the entire burden are borne by the plantation managements.

11. Convergence of MGNREGA scheme with Coffee Board schemes like convergence of MGNREGS scheme with Rubber Board schemes.

12. Amendment to Para 26 of EPF Scheme for restoring earlier qualifying period of service of 60 days attendance within a period of 3 months.

ii). Government of Karnataka:

i). Release more funds to the forest department to address Man Wild Animal Conflict.

ii). Sanction funds for KPA-UPASI research Project on clonal selection in Coffee.

iii). Exempt Electricity Tax on Captive Generators.

iv). Provide Three phase uninterrupted power supply to the plantations from November till May end to operate pulpers and IP sets for Blossom & Backing.

v). Not to insist conversion of revenue lands for putting up of plantation infrastructure.

8. **Memorandum to Sri V. Sunil Kumar, Hon'ble Energy Minister, GOK on providing 3 phase uninterrupted Power Supply to plantation areas on 28th November 2023.**

This Memorandum was sent appealing to provide Three phase uninterrupted Power Supply to the plantation areas for irrigating for Blossom and Backing and to operate the pulpers and other plantation machineries.

Later a letter was sent by Executive Engineer, Chikmagalur to Asst Executive Engineers Aldur, Mudigere and Koppa Dtd.4-2-2023 to look into the issue and take suitable action on the Memorandum sent to the energy Minister.

**9. Memorandum to the Minister of Forest Department on Human - Wild Elephant/ Wild Animal Conflict on 15th December 2022.**

Taking note of severe incidence of Human - Wild Elephant /Wild Animal Conflict KPA had written to the Chief Minister of Karnataka on 15th December 2022. The Chief Minister Secretariat has referred our Memorandum to the Add'l Chief Secretary (Forest, Environment & Ecology) for action and to inform the action taken.

**10. Interactive meeting by Shri Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, New Delhi on 9th January 2023 with Coffee Stakeholders.**



Executive Committee Member Mr. Yeshwant Gurjer and I had attended the meeting at the Coffee Board, Bangalore. UPASI and other plantation associations from Karnataka had attended the meeting.

Dr. K.G. Jagadeesha, Secretary and CEO, Coffee Board made a presentation on the current Coffee scenario and the issues that need to be addressed. Sri Neeraj Gaba, Director, plantations, Dept of Commerce was present. The following points were brought to their attention:

- \* Filling up vacant positions and to include representatives of Coffee Associations on commodity boards.
- \* Approve Coffee Board's Development plan in the Medium Term Framework period.
- \* Provide borrowing from Banks at low cost and provide interest subsidy.
- \* Introduce weather based crop insurance scheme for Coffee.
- \* Strengthen research to release of Coffee varieties, Mechanization and sanction sufficient funds.
- \* Allow coffee growers to participate in international exhibitions. Send information well in advance with proper planning.
- \* Use the Slogan "Incredible India" for branding and marketing of Indian Coffees.
- \* Provide travel assistance to exhibitors, Coffee growers and exporters.

- \* Increase rates of RODTEP scheme.
- \* Set up core stakeholders group to liaison with the Coffee Board / MOC& I.
- \* Initiate a comprehensive study on increasing domestic consumption.
- \* Facilitate providing information and details on availing carbon trading in Coffee.

### **11. Heavy Rains in the Plantation Districts.**

I was shocked and distressed to note heavy unseasonal rains lashing the plantation districts of Chikmagalur, Kodagu and Hassan districts in December 2022 and January 2023. The heavy rains are continuation of heavy monsoon rains received during 2022. This time it rained heavily when the Coffee harvest was in progress in December 2022 and January 2023 and simultaneously the Coffee buds had blossomed. Growers incurred severe loss as harvesting Coffee resulted in coffee blossoms dropping. Due to heavy rains the coffee fruits had dropped due to fruit rot and black rot diseases and the quality of coffee had deteriorated.

### **12. Meeting by Revenue Minister with the Coffee Growers on 4th February 2023.**

A felicitation to the State Revenue Minister Sri R. Ashok was held by the Coffee Growers on 4th February 2023 at the AIT College at Chikmagalur for his initiative in publishing of the Gazette Notification notifying leasing the Government lands in possession of Coffee growers.



### **13. 65<sup>th</sup> KPA Budget General Meeting:**

The 65th Budget General Meeting of the Association would be held on 9th March 2023 at the Kadur Club at Chikmagalur. The Budget Estimate for the year 2023-24 and Revised Budget Estimate for the year 2022-23 of the Association and other agenda subjects will be discussed at the meeting and approved. I request all members to attend.

#### **14. UPASI Meetings:**

I had attended the UPASI Trustees, Combined Meeting of the Coffee and other Commodities and the EC Meeting held on 23th and 24th January, 2022 at UPASI, Coonoor. The Commodity situation, UPASI's Budget proposals for tabling at the UPASI BGM and other plantation issues were discussed at the meetings.

#### **15. KPA Circulars:**

The following circulars were sent from the KPA office by e-mail and post. I request members to go through the same.

- i). Compulsory Contribution to the Karnataka Labour Welfare Fund.
- ii). List of KPA Office Holidays for the year 2023.
- iii). Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) to Staff from 01-01-2023 to 31-03-2023.
- iv). List of Members of the Executive Committee – 2022-23.
- v). Speciality Coffee Processing Session on 6th January, 2023.
- vi). Rainfall Data recorded in Member Estates.
- vii). Coffee Krishi Taranga.
- viii). Coffee Cupping Workshop on 16th February, 2023.
- ix). Cup Score Facility.
- x). Soil Analysis Facility.

With Best Wishes & Warm Regards,

Yours sincerely,

**Mahesh Shashidhar**

Chairman

Date: 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2023

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