

Upasi in pact with China tea body to boost sustainability

OUR BUREAU

Coimbatore, September 22

The United Planters' Association of Southern India (UPASI) and China Tea Marketing Association (CTMA) have inked an agreement to promote sustainability in the tea sector. Global sustainability Organisation Solidaridad is expected to provide technical and financial support for the implementation of the MoU. The agreement aims at incremental achievement of the UN-mandated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for the industry.

The MoU was signed with the support of the Indonesian Tea Authority and stakeholders.

According to a release issued here today, the MoU will focus on developing a mutually acceptable framework for tea sustainability in Asia based on the new SDGs, conservation of eco-systems and product safety, development of a common platform for consultations with stakeholders, including governments, organising campaigns to in-

crease consumption of high-quality green and black tea etc.

"This MoU is a first step towards greater regional cooperation between the Indian and Chinese tea industries. Both parties will support each other in technological innovation with the aim of expanding the worldwide consumer base for high-quality tea," said Upasi President NDharmaraj.

Nico Roozen, Executive Director, Solidaridad Network, stressed the importance of rewarding a high-quality tea with appropriate prices. The Western consumer pays 32 times more for a litre of coke than for a litre of tea.

Cheap tea bags or bottled tea, which dominate the Western markets, may have a sustainability seal on the packs, but they don't support or reward tea producers to make continuous improvements, he said. A working group has been formed comprising Upasi, CTMA and the Indonesian Tea Traders Association to develop clear roadmap and set milestones in order to achieve the vision set in the MoU.