

Tea Industry Considers Using Drones for Effective Crop Management

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The tea industry has begun talks on the prospects of application of drones in agriculture as well as plantation crops monitoring.

A discussion regarding the same was held in Guwahati where the Director of Geoinformatics Center of the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) in Bangkok, Dr. Manzul Kumar Hazarika said that drones can be a great surveillance tool for examining Agriculture and Plantation Crops regularly at a reasonable price.

Dr Hazarika said that the main benefits of the drones are data acquisition at a very high spatial resolution at high accuracy, easy and quick to deploy on demand, no obstructions from clouds unlike earth-observation satellites.

He added that drones can add to the much needed speedy surveillance of the tea gardens for pest as well as insect attacks to take actions at the initial stage in order to reduce the reaction time and decrease in pesticide and insecticide volume.

Dr Hazarika further said, "Use of multi-spectral sensors, drones can also create images showing the situation of tea plants in terms of output as well as their maturity levels. Using very high resolution cameras and maps generated by drones will be helpful in planning and making decisions for plantings".

Adviser of North Eastern Tea Association (NETA), Bidyananda Barkakoty said, "We are finding possibilities of using Drones in tea plantations for Crop monitoring in case of pest attack, weed invasion etc, Surveillance & Spraying of Fertilizer & Pesticide and Land or Crop management.