

Assam pluckers earn accolades in fight of life

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Guwahati: She leads from the front and gives her best despite facing adversities.

Kajal Tanti, winner of the best plucker award from Diglibari division of Apeejay Tea's Kharjan tea estate in Dibrugarh, is a fighter. "A mother of three, one of whom is a special child, she lost her husband, a sub-staff at Kharjan hospital. The single mother has bravely combated the odds, educating her sons in schools at the estate and also giving her best at work.

"Kajal came to Kharjan as a bride and has given 16 years of service," a garden

official said.

Kajal thanked the company for giving her the best pluckers' award for exemplary service and skills. The awards were given to 90 pluckers in 45 divisions of the company's 17 gardens this month. Nearly 21,000 pluckers, mostly women, participated in the process.

Durgamoni Orang, who won the best plucker award for Sessa tea estate in Dibrugarh, did not let the loss of her husband in a wild elephant attack in 2011 deter her and won kudos for her plucking skills. "I am happy to win the award and request all my colleagues to do good work in the field so that the



Kajal Tanti (second from right) receives the best plucker award at Kharjan tea estate in Dibrugarh

company can prosper. This will secure the lives and families of employees," she said.

Sahachari Udeswar, winner from Kherbari division of Khobong tea estate in Tinsukia, has nearly two

decades of experience in plucking and is the fourth generation in her family working in the garden. A mother of four, her eldest child, Heina, 31, works with her in the Khobong garden,

another is pursuing graduation and the youngest is in Class X.

Bobita Robin, winner from No 12 side division of Budlabeta tea estate, who never went to school, is ensuring the education of her three siblings.

The Apeejay Tea Best Plucker Award identifies a winner every 60 days in both permanent and casual categories, in a total of 45 divisions across its 17 gardens. The winners have a chance to bag the Champion of the Season award if they win two more awards in 180 days. The second awards will be given in August for the plucking period from June to

July, the third in October for plucking from August to September and the fourth will be given in December for plucking from October to November.

Ramakrishn Ghosh, general manager, human resources, said, "The Champion of the Season will be decided after finalising the best plucker award in December and champion pluckers identified for each cluster and felicitated in a special ceremony along with their families in the cold season. All awards are in cash, accompanied by a certificate for the best pluckers and a trophy for the Champion of the Season."