

श्रीमती विजयलक्ष्मी साधौ (मध्य प्रदेश): महोदय, मैं स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

श्रीमती नाज़नीन फारूख (असम): महोदय, मैं स्वयं को इस विषय के साथ सम्बद्ध करती हूँ।

**Concern over the situation due to closed and abandoned tea gardens in
Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts**

SHRI SRINJOY BOSE (West Bengal): Respected Deputy Chairman, Sir, my Zero Hour mention is about the serious concern over the situation prevailing in the closed and abandoned tea gardens in Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts.

As of now, nearly 3500 workers in the five closed and abandoned tea gardens are facing a very uncertain future and are forced to undergo severe hardships. The tea gardens facing severe problems are Dheklapara in Birpara, Bundapani in Alipurduar, Redbank in Jalpaiguri, Surendranagar in Jalpaiguri and Raipur in Jalpaiguri district of West Bengal.

I seek immediate action under the relevant provisions of the Tea Act, 1953 which enables the Central Government Tea Board to hand over any closed tea units to new Management to ensure their reopening. Let me assure the Government of India that the Government of West Bengal will provide all possible administrative help and regulatory support for initiatives that the Government of India may like to take.

We also seek the immediate and effective implementation of the Rehabilitation Package announced by the Central Government for closed tea gardens. I am given to understand that the package envisages a slew of very positive measures including loan restructuring, moratoria on interest payments, waiver of penal interest, interest subsidies, waiver of Tea Board loans and providing subsidy under the Special Purpose Tea Fund (SPTF) Scheme for rejuvenation and replantation. The State Government has come with a significant set of interventions in the closed tea gardens. These include supply of subsidised foodgrains, provision of NREGS works, enhanced coverage under social security pensions, intensive health coverage and livelihood assistance in the form of backyard poultries, piggeries and goat-rearing units. I am also given to understand that the Ministry of Commerce is close to finalizing a special targeted intervention for the infrastructure development in tea garden areas. This too needs to be expedited. The Tea Board may also be asked to focus on its Labour Welfare Schemes with a special package for closed tea estates.

I urge upon the Government of India and specially the Ministry of Commerce to urgently call a meeting of all stakeholders in the next few weeks to address this matter and look for an immediate solution.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The names of Members, who are associating, will be added.

SHRI RITABRATA BANERJEE (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose.

SHRI SUKHENDU SEKHAR ROY (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose.

SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose.

SHRI P. RAJEEVE (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose.

SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose. As per the Tea Act, 1953, it is obligatory upon the Government of India to take care of the abandoned tea gardens which have been abandoned/closed for more than six months. I urge upon the Government of India to intervene immediately.

SHRI VIVEK GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose.

SHRI D. BANDYOPADHYAY (West Bengal): Sir, I also associate myself with the matter raised by Shri Srinjoy Bose.

Facilitation of production and marketing of rayon pulp industry in Warangal

SHRIMATI GUNDU SUDHARANI (Telangana): Sir, my request is regarding providing production and marketing facilities to Ballarpur industry in Warangal district.

Sir, A.P. Rayons Factory is the only heavy industry producing rayon pulp in Warangal district in Telangana area, which was established in the year 1977. It is the only leading industry in Warangal district. From the last 30 years, this factory had been supplying the rayon pulp to M/s. Grasim Birla Group of Industries, Madhya Pradesh. However, they stopped purchasing the pulp from this factory. They have started importing the same product from outside the country. So, the production work came to a standstill on 1st April, 2014. Due to this hurdle, 3,000 people directly and 10,000 people indirectly, who were earning their livelihood from this factory, have been affected. And they are suffering badly.

For their sake, I request the Central Government to intervene and save the livelihood of these employees and labourers and facilitate the marketing of this rayon pulp at the earliest. My request is that the rayon pulp marketing facility should be