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Title: Alleged non-payment of Provident Fund collected from tea estate workers in Valparai in Tamil Nadu.

*SHRI K. SUGUMAR (POLLACHI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Valparai estate in my constituency has got several hectares of tea plantations run by business conglomerates and corporate houses. Though there have been continuous plantation activity and tea processing, the workers are paid meagerly. The daily wages have to be increased from Rs. 104 to Rs. 145 recently at the instance of our Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who has taken over as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu in the last hustings. Considering the high risk factor involved in their occupation due to the presence of wild animals in the estate area, there is still a need and an urge to increase it further to Rs. 300 to be in commensurate with the minimum wages. The Union Government may kindly intervene with its contribution to help the underpaid estate labour. Apart from this, I would like to highlight a greater problem faced by about 1000 tea estate workers who have been working with NEPC and High Forest Estate. The provident fund contribution by the workers have not been properly accounted for and deposited with the banks by these two corporate houses resulting in huge problem caused to the workers who are not able to get the pensionary benefits in the evening of their life. I urge upon the Union Labour Minister to see that suitable action is taken against these two estate owners and come out with a positive intervention measure to see that the poor superannuated estate workers get social security cover in the form of pension and other related benefits.