

स फीस माफ होगी या नहीं।

डा० केशकर : वह तो उत्तर में बताया गये है कि फीस माफ नहीं हो सकती। उस का कारण मुख्यतया यह है कि अगर उस क्षेत्र में कुछ लोगों का हम एजेंडान दे दें, तो यह सवाल मुल्क में प्रौर दस जगह उठाया जायेगा प्रौर पी० एंड टी० डिपार्टमेंट के लिए यह एक बड़ा सवाल खड़ा हो जायेगा।

Shri Venkatasubbaiah: May I know whether Government will extend the same facilities to other States also where there are a large number of tribal people—I mean the giving of free community radio sets.

Dr. Keskar: The scheme of having free community radio sets is operating for tribal and backward areas today.

Mr. Speaker: All over the country?

Dr. Keskar: Yes, Sir.

Mismanaged Tea Gardens

*914. **Shri P. C. Borooah:** Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to sponsor a Bill for taking over the mismanaged tea gardens;

(b) whether the Industry Minister of Assam had made any suggestion to the Central Government on the above issue; and

(c) if so, the steps taken in the matter?

The Deputy Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Satish Chandra): (a) to (c). Sometime back the Assam Government drew the attention of the Government of India to a few cases of closure or threatened closure of small tea estates in Assam either due to financial difficulties, neglect or mismanagement and suggested that the Central Government may consider the desirability of assuming powers similar to those contained in the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 for dealing with such cases. No final decision has so far been taken.

Shri P. C. Borooah: What are the criteria of these mismanaged gardens?

Shri Satish Chandra: There are no fixed criteria. It was brought to our notice by the Assam Government that some gardens were closed down and some others were likely to close down. So, we consulted the Tea Board and the Tea Board deputed the Director of tea development to visit these gardens and he submitted a report. There are different problems in different gardens. In some the management is not proper and in some others the machinery is obsolete. He has made some recommendations and the Tea Board will have discussions with each proprietor.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know the number of tea gardens at present in the country and the number of tea gardens which have been closed?

Shri Satish Chandra: The number of gardens which were visited by the director of tea development was 18. But all of them are not closed down and the position is always fluid. Some gardens closed down but reopen after two or three months. Therefore, it is difficult to say how many are closed down at the present moment. But eighteen gardens have been visited by him.

Pandit J. P. Jyotishi: Looking to the loss that the country is put to because of the mismanagement, would it not be advisable to take some immediate steps?

Shri Satish Chandra: The problem is really small. The 18 gardens which I have mentioned are not always closed down and there are 7,000 tea gardens in the country. The number is very insignificant to require a general solution of this problem and so each case will have to be dealt with on individual basis.

Shri Hem Raj: What is the area that is covered by these 18 gardens?

Shri Satish Chandra: I have not got the figure. I have got a list of these gardens and the area of each garden. I can give it to the hon. Member after the Question Hour is over and he can total up.

Mr. Speaker: The idea is to know the percentage compared to the total.

Shri Satish Chandra: It is a very small percentage but will have to be calculated.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know if the working group on tea has made any recommendation that there should be some sort of legislation?

Shri Satish Chandra: The matter of legislation is under consideration and the Government has not come to any firm conclusion so far. So, the question is hypothetical.

Shri Hem Barua: Is it a fact that sometime back the Union Government suggested to the Assam Government to undertake legislation so as to bring the uneconomic tea gardens under the management of the Government and if so, at what stage does this proposal now stand?

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri): It is the other way round. In fact it is the Assam Government which has suggested that either the State Government or the Central Government should undertake some legislation. We had a discussion with the Chief Minister and the concerned Minister of Assam and they also came to the conclusion that if legislation has to be made, the Central Government should take the responsibility. We have consulted the other State Governments concerned. It is not only the Assam Government but there are other States which are concerned and it is somewhat surprising that other State Governments have not taken any interest in this. We have not received even replies from some of the State Governments. In the circumstances, the matter is still pending. But only a week back, I have written to the Industry Minister of Assam Government that as they are coming here in connection with the National Development Council meeting, I would be glad to discuss with them further.

Shri P. C. Borooah: May I know whether there are any instances in

Assam of closure on account of mismanagement.

Shri Satish Chandra: There are gardens which are either closed or not working satisfactorily due to mismanagement. For instance, the Director of tea development visited a tea estate and he recommended that they should appoint a manager with plantation experience and not an amateur picked up from anywhere. Obviously, the manager at the tea plantation is a friend or a relation of the proprietor and does not know much about tea.

Unemployment

+

*915. { **Shri S. M. Banerjee:**
Shri P. C. Borooah:
Shri Hem Barua:

Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to a press news to the effect the number of registered unemployed has gone upto 1.4 million recently;

(b) whether this figure is considered the highest since World War II;

(c) if so, the reasons for this abnormal increase;

(d) the steps taken by Government to ease the situation?

The Deputy Minister of Labour (Shri Abid Ali): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes.

(c) The reasons include an increase in the number of Exchanges, their greater use by employment-seekers, migration from rural to urban areas and population growth.

(d) Various development schemes under the Five Year Plans are creating employment opportunities. To ease the situation arising from temporary surpluses of personnel due to the completion of the projects, special machinery has been set up for their development in new projects.