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Title : Need to take steps for reopening of Punalur Paper Mills Limited in Kerala with a view to protect the interests of the workers of the company.

SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN (ADOOR): The Punalur Paper Mill, a private limited company established in the year 1876 by a European was taken over by Shri L.N.Dalmia in the year 1968.

The company was locked out in the year 1985 due to attachment of the properties of the mill for default of payment of Sales Tax, Employment Provident Fund, contribution to E.S.I, besides the repayment of loan availed from various financial agencies. On filing a suit by the Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation India Limited before the Hon'ble High Court of Bombay, the court appointed Court Receiver to take charge of the company. From 08.05.86 onwards the Mill is under the charge of the Court Receiver.

Since 1986 several attempts were made to re-open the Mill Lastly the Government of Kerala entered into an Agreement with the Management of the company in 2002 according to which the Management agreed to re-open the company. But unfortunately the Management did not take any step to re-open the company till this date. At the same time the Kerala Government could not take any step against the Management for violation of the agreement. By this time the employees numbering about hundred committed suicide due to financial constraints.

The ex-employees numbering about 1000 were entitled to get huge amount towards gratuity, provident fund, wage arrears, Bonus etc., at the time of closure of the company. They were very hopeful about re-opening of the mill, all these days. So it is submitted that the Union Government may kindly extend the helping hand to the ex-employees of Punalpur paper Mills by way of either taking steps to reopen the Mill or to get their dues towards arrears of wages, Provident Fund, Gratuity etc., at the earliest.