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Title: Need to ensure deposit of Provident Fund by the owners of tea gardens in Northern part of West Bengal.

SHRI MAHENDRA KUMAR ROY (JALPAIGURI): Thank you hon. Chairman, Sir, for your kind permission for me to speak during the 'Zero Hour'.

I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Labour, through you, to a serious fact of non-deposition of money by the owners of 19 tea gardens of Jalpaiguri in West Bengal.

In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that the owners of tea gardens have not deposited the money on account of PF for the last few years. It should be noted here that the PF dues include the money that the employers have deducted from the workers' wages as contribution towards provident fund. They have not deposited that money with the PF Commissioner. It is not understood as to what is preventing the Regional Provident Fund Commissioners of North Bengal from taking appropriate legal action against those owners of the tea gardens.

I would like to know from the Union Minister as to what action has been taken so far against the PF defaulters, that is, the tea garden employers of closed or abandoned tea gardens in Jalpaiguri District of North Bengal area. I have come to know that the PF dues owed to the workers of 19 tea plantations in North Bengal itself comes to over Rs. 168 crore.

I hope you will appreciate the seriousness of the case and will initiate necessary steps so that the workers may get their legal dues without any further delay.