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Title: Need to bring the management of sick tea gardens under the control of the Central Government and expand the purview of various welfare schemes to the tea garden workers.

SHRI MAHENDRA KUMAR ROY (JALPAIGURI): The Supreme Court have directed the Government on 6 August, 2010 to take over the Management of ailing tea gardens across the country within six months by involving the Tea Act, 1953. Over 30,000 workers in these sick Tea Gardens are living in a pathetic situation. More than 100 tea gardens workers had died and their dues such as gratuity and provident fund have not been cleared. The tea garden owners owe a hefty Rs. 3000 crore to the workers.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S.H. Kapadia passed the order directing the Government to deal with the problems according to the provision of the Tea Act, 1953 under section 16 B, C and E. The Act entitles it to investigate the affairs of tea gardens and even take it over in case it fails to pay workers' dues.

Hence, I urge upon the Government for implementation of Tea Act, 1953 within six months and also provide the benefit of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme to the workers of tea gardens who have not been paid the wages and gratuity for almost ten years and also extend their benefits under ICDS scheme and the Public Distribution System to the workers of sick tea gardens.