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Title: Problems being faced by the cultivators in Periakulam Parliamentary Constituency of Tamil Nadu.

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID (PERIYAKULAM): Sir, Cardamom, clove, pepper and spices help us to earn foreign exchange for the country. Lakhs of people in my constituency are working in these plantations and tea estates where spices are also grown. Most of these plantation workers are people from the depressed and deprived sections of the society. Most of them are Scheduled Caste people. Daily wage workers and daily wage supervisors are two sets of workers engaged in these estates. In the neighbouring Kerala State there is a limit that only 16 kilogrammes of tea leaves can be culled by a worker in a day. But in Tamil

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

Nadu, Tea Estate workers are forced to pluck 33 kilogrammes a day. Temporary workers are made to gather 60 kilogrammes a day. They get a mere 50 paise per kilogramme as an additional payment when they are over exploited. Both men and women are affected by occupational hazards like cardiac and hernia complaints respectively. They are languishing and dying without any PF and insurance cover. They do not have means of transport and communication facilities. They live in unhygienic conditions and are subject to insect bites without proper health care. Their children do not have education facilities as there are no schools. Telecommunication facilities are not there. Hon. Minister for Communication, Shri Dayanidhi Maran, has provided a Telecom Centre and tower near highway hills at my behest. Duty on tea must be reduced. Minimum support price must be ensured. Remunerative prices should be available to the tea growers so that workers are benefited. Ceiling on bonus must be lifted and tea plantation workers must be paid 25% bonus. They must get medical facilities and protected drinking water for better health care and longevity.