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NEWS


NORTH BENGAL

## HC rejects plea of tea workers

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# Siliguri Times

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**The Calcutta High Court today declined to hear a petition moved on behalf of workers of six tea gardens owned by the Duncans Industries Limited to allow them to be made a party to a case filed by the company challenging the Centre's takeover of the estates.**

**The Centre had on January 28 asked the Tea Board of India to take over the management control of seven gardens of the G.P. Goenka-owned Duncans Group saying they "are being managed in a manner highly detrimental to the tea industry and to public interest".**

**While six of the gardens belong to the Duncans Industries Limited, the other one is owned by the Shantipara Tea Company promoted by Goenka. The Duncans Group moved a petition before the high court challenging the acquisition of the six estates.**

**When the case was being heard by Justice Sanjib Banerjee today, advocate Debapriya Mukherjee who appeared for the labourers told the court: "My clients are jobless for long. They are not getting salaries. They want to add themselves as a party to the case so that the court takes steps for the disbursal of their dues and regular jobs in gardens."**

**Hearing Mukherjee's plea, Justice Banerjee told the lawyer: "This case is on a separate issue. Here the company has challenged the legality of the central government's notifications of taking over the control of some of its tea gardens in north Bengal. If your clients have something to say about the said notification, only then can I allow them to be added as a party to the case. Otherwise, I cannot allow their prayer."**

**Advocate Mukherjee still said: "My clients are less concerned about the notices. They want regular jobs and salaries."**

**Then, the judge asked the lawyer to sit down.**

**The government pleader, Abhratosh Majumdar, made submissions in the case today.**

**Telegraph**