

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Demand to put up a uniform legal and policy framework to offer rehabilitation and address the needs of the climate changes.

SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI (NAWGONG): Hon. Chairman Sir, global warming and climate change are for real and they have arrived in our country in a big way. But one is perturbed to note the lacklustre, apathy and indifference of the Government towards addressing the travails of the climate change.

Sir, I would like to draw your attention that, in my home State, the Brahmaputra water system is also acutely affected by the climate change. There is a large number of poor people who actually settle down in the riverine areas and the river island of Assam. These riverine areas and islands are routinely eroded because of the water flow fluctuations and erratic floods caused by climate change. As a result, all these communities who really settle down and live in the riverine areas and river islands become homeless, and these hapless people surreptitiously go and try to find some space to settle down.

On many occasions, they go and settle down the reserved forests and grazing land but the Government of Assam would always take them as victims and try to evict them ruthlessly. This is the moot question where would they go? These communities actually belong to the larger category of climate refugees. What is the Government doing about these climate refugees?

I would like to quote a figure. A Report was published in December last (2020) year by Climate Action Network South Asia and

Action Aid. The Report says that, because of environmental reasons, 1.4 crore people have been displaced by 2020 and this figure would increase to 4.5 crore in just another 28 years.

Similarly, there is an international NGO called the 'Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre' which found out that, in India alone, there are 4.73 lakh people who were displaced due to conflict reasons. But Sir, almost double, about 9.30 lakh people were displaced due to 'environmental reasons'. Today's tragedy is that both the Indian laws and the International Refugee Laws have failed to recognise the plight of the climate refugees in our times.

So, it is very important. I appeal to the Government of India for putting up a uniform legal and policy framework to offer rehabilitation of the Climate Refugees and address their plight compassionately.