

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding constitution of Modality Committee in Tripura.

SHRI JITENDRA CHAUDHURY (TRIPURA EAST): Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir, today is World Indigenous Day. I am bringing up here the issue of tribals in my State and also in the entire North-Eastern region.

You know that under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution Autonomous District Councils have been formed. In Tripura, Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram, there are ten districts. Our experience in Tripura is of 36 years and in Assam is of more than 40 years. What had been assured under the Sixth Schedule to protect land, for socio-economic development, etc. have not been fulfilled. That is why there has been a popular demand. Our party CPI (M) and the Gana Mukti Parishad have been demanding for a very long time that the provision of the Sixth Schedule should be reviewed totally and by amending the Constitution more empowerment and source of funds from Central Ministries should be ensured.

Here, I would like to mention that there is a very direct bearing on our hon. Prime Minister and our hon. Home Minister. I want to mention that on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> January, on the eve of the State Assembly elections, they had made categorical assurances to one of our regional parties in the State; and now that political outfit is a coalition partner of the Government of the day. The promises made to that political outfit were widely carried by the State and national media.

The assurances and promises were that a modality committee comprising of senior officers of the Central Government and experts would be constituted by the month of January itself to examine and recommend the perspectives of socio-economic and linguistic development of the tribal people and overall development of the State; a comprehensive package would be declared for development of Kok-Borok, the mother tongue of the largest tribal population of the State along with languages and culture of all other smaller groups; and the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council would be upgraded to such a status by amending the provisions of the Sixth Schedule that the tribal people could steer themselves to the height of self-reliance. But with the utter dismay, I rise to share here the sentiments of the 38 lakh people of the State. Since 4<sup>th</sup> January, when the meeting was held with the

hon. Home Minister and the next day with the Prime Minister, seven months and six days have elapsed till today but no modality committee or high-powered committee has been constituted as yet.

There is no official communication issued from the end of the Central or State Government except some blank rhetoric. I demand a categorical statement from our Prime Minister or our Home Minister in this House. They should kindly come forward to fulfil the commitments made and give justice by amending the Constitution not only to the Autonomous District Council in the State of Tripura but also to the other nine such ADCs of the North-Eastern region. The tribal people should feel empowered and feel that they are proud Indians.

Today, on the occasion of World Indigenous Day, I am raising this issue. Thank you.

HON. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Md. Badruddoza Khan is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Jitendra Chaudhury.