Request to the Minister regarding development of legislative measures for declaration of floods and erosion as National Calamities.

**SHRI ABDUL KHALEQUE (BARPETA):** Thank you so much, Chairman Sir. I would like to draw the kind attention of the House towards a grave concern that has plagued the State of Assam for far too long, that is, the relentless issue of flood and erosion. The State bears the burden of approximately 31.05 lakh hectares of flood prone area as identified by the Rashtriya Barh Ayog, constituting a staggering 39.58 per cent of the total land area of the State, whereas the rest of the country?s combined flood prone area stands at about 10.2 per cent only.

The gravity of the situation cannot be overstated when it is seen that the floodprone area of Assam is four times the national mark of the flood-prone area of the country.

The Assam?s Government projects an increase in extreme rainfall events by five per cent to 35 per cent and an increase in the rise of flood events by more than 25 per cent due to climate change. Natural forces cannot be tamed, but communities can be equipped to pre-empt large-scale disasters. The Government is majorly investing in rescue and relief measures during the floods. While these immediate and short-term actions are necessary, there has been no long-term measures in sight to mitigate the issue.

Similarly, since 1950, over 4.27 lakh hectares -- that is 7.40 per cent of the Assam?s total area -- have eroded along the Brahmaputra and its tributaries with an annual average loss of nearly 8,000 hectares. This has led to the disappearance of 2,500 villages affecting lakhs of people who reside on the embankments. Even with such severity of the situation in Assam, the absence of a proper framework to officially declare floods and erosion as national calamities hinders in combating these recurring challenges effectively.

Therefore, I urge the hon. Union Home Minister to immediately spearhead the development of necessary legislative measures that can enable the formal declaration of floods and erosion as national calamities. Thank you.