

Title: Need for rehabilitation of people in Meghalaya particularly in Khasi and Jaintia hills affected by ban on felling and transporting of timber-Laid.

SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH (SHILLONG): Consequent upon the Supreme Court order banning the felling and transporting of timber outside the State of Meghalaya, the tribal people, particularly those who live in Khasi and Jaintia hills, whose livelihood depends entirely on forest plantation and its produce, have become unemployed and jobless and their economic conditions adversely affected. It is estimated that about two lakh people, who live on the forest, have been thrown out of employment and are in extreme hardship. The Government of India owes responsibility to come to the rescue of these poor tribal people by extending relief and economic rehabilitation to them. Special economic programmes which open up opportunities for gainful employment are called for. Meanwhile, I request the Government to take immediate steps to render succour to the suffering people by opening up productive and economic schemes without delay. I also request the Government of India to encourage planned plantation schemes of timber to enable the people to exploit the timber in an economic and commercial manner, keeping in view the need to maintain the environment.