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Title : Problems being faced due to landslides and cloud burst in Sikkim.

SHRI PREM DAS RAI (SIKKIM): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity. This is to bring to the notice of the Government and of this august House that Sikkim is presently facing and coping with one of the worst cases of widespread landslides due to torrential rain and cloud burst that has not yet abated.

Many people have lost their lives. Many people have been made homeless. Farmers have been affected very badly with standing crops being washed away at several locations.

The National Highway 31A, which is the only lifeline, has been breached at several places. Many remote locations have been cut off for days. The State capital was till recently cut off for over three days. Prices of commodities have risen. The poorer sections of our population have been hard hit.

I request the Government of India to immediately send a team to inspect the extent of damage to life, property and State assets and help the State Government in coping with this crisis. These are short-term measures that need to be taken up forthwith.

What in my opinion is a more important one are the long-term measures for securing the security of life and property in mountain States like Sikkim, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Arunachal Pradesh. Mountain specificities are clearly being ignored in current planning. More and more mountain specific planning and programmes need to be initiated in light of the fact that more and more of these cloud bursts and peculiar rainfall are happening in the mountain States. Delhi and the plain-centric thinking will only aggravate the situation.

I would like to request the hon. Speaker Madam for a full discussion on this issue during the next Session of Parliament on a priority basis.