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Title: Need to take steps for early inclusion of Koch Rajbongshi Tribal Community of Assam in Scheduled Tribes list.

SHRI MADHAB RAJBANSHI (MANGALDAI): The people of Koch Rajbongshi Tribal Community of Assam are poorest amongst the poor, economically, intellectually backward, ethnically and historically the oldest sons of the soil. With the great demand from the people since 1967, the Koch Rajbongshi Community of Assam was enlisted as ST(P) vide Ordinance No.9, 1996 dated 27 January, was repromulgated vide Ordinance No.19, 1996 and Ordinance No.30, 1996 and Ordinance No.3 of 1997. In spite of continuous repromulgation of the said ordinance for the fourth time, it was not enacted in time leading to its lapses. As a result, those candidates of the Koch Rajbongshi who appeared in the A.P.S.C. entrance examinations for Medical/Engineering and other jobs of the Government of Assam as ST(P), were suddenly deprived even after their selection as ST(P) candidates as the concerned authorities denied the admissions/appointments due to expiry of tenure of the Ordinance under the provisions of the Constitution. The last Ordinance No.3, 1997 was lapsed. This way, a great injustice has been done to the Koch Rajbongshi Community of Assam by denying the fundamental rights under the Constitution of India as the issue under reference is still hanging.

It is observed that all the Ordinances pertaining to the inclusion of the communities as SC/ST in the past were replaced by the Bills within a maximum period of six months after the promulgation of the Ordinance. But in the case of Koch Rajbongshi community of Assam, even after lapse of two years, the promulgation of the 1st Ordinance No. 9, 1996 dated 27 January, 1996 is yet to be replaced by a Bill. The Parliamentary Select Committee has submitted its report in the month of April, 1997 recommending for the inclusion of Koch Rajbongshi Community as ST(P). The Government of Assam had also submitted their opinion on the report the Parliamentary Select Committee recommending for the inclusion of Koch Rajbongshi Community as ST(P) vide their letter No.TAD/ST/98/92/PT.V/266 Dated 15 November, 1997. In the event of the Bill could not be reintroduced in the current session of the Parliament and to remove the constitutional crisis, the Ordinance which has been promulgated four times may kindly be repromulgated to meet the immediate end. The Koch Rajbongshi Community is now hanging between the ST(P) and OBC. Hence, I appeal to the Government to initiate the matter immediately to instil the confidence in the people of the most backward tribal community of Assam. The Koch Rajbongshi of West Bengal, Tripura and Meghalaya had already been enscheduled but not in the case of Koch Rajbongshi of Assam.