

**THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH):** (a) to (c) The scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forests Rights) Bill, 2005 introduced by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in the Lok Sabha on 13th December, 2005, was received by a Joint Committee of Parliament and passed as the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 in the Winter Session, 2006 of Parliament. Wide scale consultations were made with all stakeholders at the time of drafting of the Bill by the Ministry before its introduction in the Lok Sabha on 13.12.2005 and by the Joint Committee of Parliament when the same was referred to them and revised. The comments and objections received were duly considered.

(d) To carry out the provisions of the Act, the Ministry had framed the draft Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Rules, 2007 and pre-published the same in the Gazette of India on 19.6.2007 for seeking comments, objections and suggestions from the public and other stakeholders before finalisation, as required under the Act. The comments received from the public and other stakeholders on the draft Rules pre-published on 19.6.2007 have been considered.

#### **Scheduled Tribes status to Koch Rajbonshi Communities of Assam**

**1459. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS:** Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Koch Rajbonshi Communities of Assam was granted the scheduled tribes (ST) status which was withdrawn at a later date;

(b) whether Government is also aware of the fact that the organizations like Koch Rajbonshi Students Union and All Assam Rajbonshi Sammillan are agitating since a long time demanding the status of ST to that community;

(c) whether Government proposes to declare the community as a schedule tribe;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. R. KYNDIAH):** (a) On 27.1.96, an Ordinance effecting the inclusion of Koch Rajbonshi in the list of Scheduled Tribes of Assam (excluding autonomous districts of Assam) was promulgated. The Ordinance was re-promulgated thrice on 27.3.1996, 27.6.1996 and 9.1.1997 for giving continued effect to the inclusion. The Ordinance lapsed on 2.4.1997.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) to (e) The modalities approved by the Government on 15/06/1999 for determining the claims for inclusion in/exclusion from and other modifications in Orders specifying Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list require consent of the concerned State Government; Registrar General of India; and the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes and this process takes time, therefore, no specific time-frame can be mentioned at present.