**Light traps could control outbreak of Pine Lappet Moths**

Lappet Pine Moth, *Kunugia latipennis Walker*, is the major insect pest on pines in mid- altitudes of Meghalaya. Recently, an outbreak of Pine Lappet Moth was observed during May-June 2011 in Meghalaya's Ri-Bhoi district. The moth attacked pinus *kesiya* variety of the pines in the region.

Earlier in 1982, the pine moth outbreak caused extensive losses to pine forests in the region, later, some mild attacks were also observed by experts. The life cycle of a lappet pine moth starts with eggs followed by a voracious feeding stage called caterpillars gnawing conical of pine.

Consequently, under-fruiting of pine trees occur leading to less development of pine trees. The female in two weeks time lays around 350-400 eggs on the walls of residential complexes, outdoor hanging cloths and parked vehicles outside.

After 8-days-incubation period, the newly hatched larvae were seen wandering here and there. Both the larvae and the pupa have allergic effects on skin of some people, still they have been used as nutritious supplement by major northeastern tribes such as *Khasis*, *Garo* and *Jaintia* in the region.

In May 2011, larger numbers of moths were seen dead on the roads and streets of Ri-Bhoi district. There were several biotic and abiotic factors that have caused the outbreak. During the outbreak, the pine moths were seen grouped near light sources and they were eaten by cats, dogs, birds and ants.

Lappet moths (*kunugia latipennis*) are difficult to control by chemicals or other means. So far as the light traps are effective ways to control lappet moths. Furthermore, the study of eco-biology and behavior of pine moth would help in understanding its full control, stressed the study published in an online edition of the journal 'Phytoparasitca' in April- May issue.

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