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Title: Regarding development of land around Kanyakumari Sanctuary as Eco-Sensitive Zone -laid.

**SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR (KANYAKUMARI):** Kanyakumari, which is located at the southernmost part of India, is a small district. The total area of the district is 1700 square kilometers, but the total forest cover of the district is nearly 500 square kilometers. It is learnt that there is a proposal to increase the forest cover.

The district is industrially backward, and rubber is produced in plenty. If the forest cover is increased, there will be very less land available for industrialization. Main occupation of the people of the district is fishing. Fishing is a very risky job. Every year hundreds of fishermen are killed during fishing activities. Thousands of youth remain unemployed due to lack of industries. If the proposal is implemented, more than 80 villages and large number of rubber gardens and Kothiyar Hydro power generation plant will be affected. Further, more than 69 villages located on Western Ghats and 18 Panchayat Unions will also be affected. It is not understood why all these factors were not taken into account while formulating the proposal.

I, therefore, request the Government to immediately withdraw this proposal of development of land around Kanyakumari Sanctuary as Eco-Sensitive Zone.