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Title: Demand for further development of the west coast canal inland for waterways transport in Chalakudy Parliamentary Constituency, Kerala.

SHRI BENNY BEHANAN (CHALAKUDY): Sir, I am raising a matter of urgent public importance. Kerala State Inland Waterways consists of navigable coastal and cross canals, having a length of approximately 1,680 kilometres. It includes 590 kilometres of main arterial inland waterways in Kerala with West Coast Canal stretching from Kasaragod in the North to Kovalam in the South. Further development of West Coast Canal to Kollam – which is your Constituency, Mr Chairman, Sir -- in the South, and from Kozhikode to Kasaragod in the North by linking the two ends of the West Coast Canal to the existing National Waterways-III, has the potential to bring transformational development in the State both in economic terms and in providing connectivity to cheaper modes of transportation.

In Kerala, the rail utility and road utility is more than 100 per cent but land acquisition is nearly impossible. In that situation, waterways is the only possible way of easy connectivity. It is also the cheapest mode of transport. For example, the transport charge for goods movement for one tonne per kilometre by road is Rs. 2.50. By road, it is Rupee one; and by waterways, it is only 45 paise. So, mode of transportation by waterways is economically and environmentally a viable proposition.

So, I would request the Government to please consider further development of the West Coast Canal as early as possible, and allot adequate funds for this. Thank you.

