

le: Regarding participation in public hearing

**KUMARI CHANDRANI MURMU (KEONJHAR):** Thank you, Chairperson, Sir. Public hearing plays an important part towards development of local areas where industries and mines are located or are about to be set up to address environmental issue. People have their own concerns especially when business and environment become the point of contention. Health and wealth are directly associated with environment.

**12.34 hrs**

*At this stage, Shrimati Harsimrat Kaur Badal  
went back to her seat.*

**KUMARI CHANDRANI MURMU:** It is necessary to inform you that my parliamentary constituency, Keonjhar, Odisha is enriched with natural resources like iron ore, manganese ore and others having a tribal density where tribals are surviving with a lot of difficulties for their livelihood even after 75 years of Independence.

All the big corporates like Tata, Jindal Steel & Power Limited, JSW, ArcelorMittal, Rungta Group and many more have their remarkable presence in my parliamentary constituency by means of their mining operation and mineral based industries. I feel proud by representing such a constituency.

But simultaneously, I have much more concern about forest and environment of my locality along with the health of my people. Many a time, I have received grievances from my people, mostly from my dear

tribals regarding forest, environment and health issues. Ignorance of such issues by the damagers is a major point which is really to be considered.

However, public hearings linked with such issues sound baseless if you analyse the current environment of my locality.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the esteemed Ministry to public hearings that took place during the extreme situation of COVID-19. In my constituency, ignoring the public interests, such events were arranged very irregularly.

Sir, my point is that during such public hearings, I, as a representative, am not allowed to participate. Public representatives can be the voice of local people, especially tribals. However, they are not valued in such public hearings meant to preserve forests, environment, and local interests. Public, many a time, look to their elected representatives for support or for leading them during such hearings. If local elected representatives are not allowed to participate in such proceedings, who else are entitled to participate?

**HON. CHAIRPERSON:** What is your demand?

**KUMARI CHANDRANI MURMU:** It is really sad that a system has been developed to keep the public representatives at bay and at the same time allow various other stakeholders to participate. At times, they allegedly arm-twist the public for their self-gain. Therefore, I urge upon the hon. Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change to look into the matter and make necessary changes so that public representatives like me, Members of Parliament, can take part in public hearings.