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Title: Need to Declare Erumeli in Kerala as a National Pilgrim Centre.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (CALICUT): Madam Chairman, Erumeli, a small town in Kottayam District of Kerala is the gateway to the world renowned Sabarimala temple. Here pilgrims from all parts of the country, more particularly from the southern States like Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh come to offer prayers at a small temple of Lord Ayyapa and then go over to the Mosque to visit Waver before visiting Sabarimala temple. This is, perhaps, the only place in the country where Hindu Pilgrims offer prayers and offer at a mosque. Every year during pilgrim season millions of devotees visiting Sabarimala pass through Erumeli which causes acute shortage of drinking water, accommodation, parking space, traffic constraints and severe pollution. The problem is mounting every year with manifold increase in the number of pilgrims. Even though local administration has taken certain measures to cope with the problems, yet because of resource constraints, inadequacies could not be addressed properly on a long term basis. The people of the area feel that the above problems can be dealt with effectively if Erumeli is declared as a National Pilgrim Centre.

I, therefore, urge the Government to take note of the sentiments of the people of that area and with a view to provide better amenities to pilgrims, declare Erumeli as a National Pilgrim centre.