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Title : Need to protect and maintain the wakf properties for the benefit of the socially and economically backward Muslim Community.

SHRI THOL THIRUMAAVALAVAN (CHIDAMBARAM): Wakf properties in the country have got a traditional history of about 800 years and they were granted by the Islamic rulers of yesteryears to benefit the poor and the deprived sections of the society. Wakf Boards have got huge assets next only to Defence and Railways. More than 70 per cent of those properties have either been encroached or taken away by unscrupulous people over the years. Many of the problems like poverty, unemployment and educational opportunities of the minority community could have been solved even with the 30 per cent of available Wakf properties. Guided by the Wakf Board Act of 1954 and 1995, 35 Wakf Boards have been constituted throughout the country of which many are defunct. Now, there is a need to have a re-look at the management of these properties throughout the country so that the Islamic minority community will be really benefited. This is urgent and necessary in the wake of poor management by certain Wakf Boards in some States. For instance, in Bangalore, a hotel worth Rs. 500 crore is paying a meagre sum of Rs. 12,000 to the Wakf Board as monthly rent for the 5 acres of land on which that star hotel has been raised. In Mumbai, a prime land measuring 4,532 sq. ft. has been sold by the Wakf Board for a meagre Rs. 16 lakh to a mega corporate body. In Andhra Pradesh, the State Government itself has taken over about 6,000 acres of Wakf land giving away a considerable size of land to NTPC.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to take effective steps to protect and maintain these properties for the benefit of the socially and economically backward people from this minority community.

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