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Title: Need to stop the reckless reclamation of backwaters and haphazard construction in and around Cochin in Kerala.

SHRI CHARLES DIAS (NOMINATED): During the last more than twenty five years, large scale reclamation of backwaters in and around Cochin has taken place. First, this was for constructing a marine drive in an area facing the sea. But, later reckless reclamation of backwaters has taken place, discarding all norms of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) regulations. Various parties interested only in commercial aspects have come to the scene and instead of a marine drive this area became a concrete-jungle and only a narrow stretch of walk-way was provided. Even though there were protests from the side of environmental protection groups and citizens of the area, all these were ignored by the developers and builders. At the same time, the proposed extension of the marine drive towards the northern part of the city could not take place.

Now, the town-planners to protect the interest of builder's lobby has made the so called Cochin Marine Drive area as a continuous wall obstructing even the passing of sea-breeze. The studies and reports reveals that the automobile and atmospheric pollutions in Cochin city to a considerable extent were curbed by the sea-breeze and now the atmospheric pollution is alarmingly high in this city.

I urge the Government to intervene in the above matter and take suitable measures to control reckless reclamation of backwaters and unimaginative constructions so as to protect the environment and to let free passage of air.