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Title : Need to review the law prohibiting construction work within 300 metres of ancient monuments particularly in Kancheepuram Parliamentary Constituency, Tamil Nadu.

SHRI P. VISWANATHAN (KANCHEEPURAM): Kancheepuram is one of the seven ancient and beautiful cities in the world. Lord Bhudha perceived the Panchaseela principle in Kancheepuram. Dharmabala yogi lived in this city.

The city of Kancheepuram is not only the Silk City but also the City of Thousand Temples with thousand ponds facing lot of problems in housing due to ASI monuments. The people of this city are living in and around temples for centuries. Their life and existence are connected with these temples.

Due to ASI's notification of several temples as monuments, the local administration refuses to provide water, electricity and building approval, quoting the restriction of 300 meters stipulation. The people of this city are facing lot of hardship in getting permission for their basic amenities from the local authorities. The cut-off limit of 300 meters may be reduced to 100 meters without obtaining clearance from National Monument Authority.

Mahabalipuram was the capital and port city for the Pallavas. The similar situation is also faced by the residents of Mahabalipuram which is one of the tourist destinations for all over the world. The tourism industry can flourish and bring more foreign exchange earnings unless and until sufficient residential accommodation can be provided with commercial establishments to cater to the needs of the foreign tourists.

The Ministry of Culture should review the situation and relax the rules to give way for the convenience of the general public without affecting the sanctity of the ancient temples. Kancheepuram city is thickly populated and co-existed with temple activities for centuries. The Ministry should consult the ASI and give some relaxation in their rules for the betterment of the general public.

Not only the people of Mahabalipuram, Thiruporur, Uthiramerur, Kancheepuram, Pallavaram and Tirukalukunram, but the entire Kancheepuram Parliamentary Constituency is facing these hardships. Neither they are able to repair, construct nor able to obtain electricity connection due to the stipulated safe zone.

I request the Government to look into the matter seriously to restore the original stipulation of 100 meters in the interest of public.