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Title: Need to accord Presidential assent to the Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2011.

SHRIMATI J. HELEN DAVIDSON (KANYAKUMARI): I have been requesting the Hon'ble Minister of Home Affairs during the past one year to get the assent of Hon'ble President of India to the Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2011. The Bill as passed by Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly has been reserved for assent by the President.

The Home Ministry has also informed that the Legislative Department of Ministry of Law and Justice had furnished their comments on the said bill, but the comments of the Ministry of Environment and Forests are still pending.

It is understood that this Bill can be processed only after getting the reply from the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Most of farmers in Vilavancode, Kalkulam and Thovalai Taluks depend upon rubber harvest since several years. These farmers have no other source of income except the rubber plantation. Kanyakumari is only rubber growing district in Tamil Nadu. In Kanyakumari district 19233 hectare rubber plantation are available which produce 24020 tonnes of rubber annually.

In Kanyakumari District, the largest producer is Arasu (Govt) Rubber Corporation. It provides direct employment to around 2000 people and indirect employment to around 2000 people. Other than Arasu (Govt) Rubber Corporation in Kanyakumari District, there are 65 nos. of large growers and 570 nos. of small growers. The total area of 19233 hectare covered under rubber cultivation in Kanyakumari District.

The Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest Act of 1949 was extended to Kanyakumari District in 1979. Because of this Act Government of Tamil Nadu recently classified rubber plantations on Patta land in Kanyakumari District as Private forest. Rubber plantation area in Patta Lands in Kanyakumari District should be exempted from Preservation of Private Forest Act. Ordinary poor farmers suffer a lot.

The poor farmers in my Kanyakumari Constituency are unable to sell/purchase their land and obtain any loan out of it. Hence the Government of Tamil Nadu approached the Home Ministry to get the assent from Honb'le President of India in Preservation of Private Forests (Amendment) Bill 2011.

I request the Hon'ble Minister to look into the matter and fulfill the genuine demand of our people by expediting the assent of the President to Tamil Nadu Preservation of Private Forest (Amendment) Bill, 2011 (L.A. Bill No. 7 of 2011).