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Title: Need to include Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai, in World Heritage list.

SHRI R. GOPALAKRISHNAN (MADURAI): India is an active member State on the World Heritage from 1977 and has been working in close co-operation with other International agencies. There are 32 World Heritage Properties in India out of which 25 are Cultural Properties and 7 are Natural Properties. The List cannot be a complete one without the inclusion of the ancient architectural wonder, Sri Meenakshi Amman Temple at Madurai.

Sri Meenakshi Sundareswarar Temple, in the heart of Madurai, is the focal point of Madurai for the past 2500 years. The art and architectural marvel, the grandeur of gopurams, magnificent thousand Pillared Hall, 33000 statues, Sculptures, icons, Ancient paintings, Musical Pillars, Historical Inscriptions make the Temple the Grandest temple in the World.

Besides satisfying the emotional, religious and aesthetic aspirations of the people, Meenakshi Amman Temple is the centre of attraction for tourists and helps the government to generate foreign exchange.

Tamil Nadu Government has provided the most efficient Temple Management system which enabled it to get an ISO certification for the excellence in the maintenance of the Temple Administration and tourist facilitation.

Considering all the credentials of this greatest Temple of India, I urge upon the Government to take up the issue with UNESCO World Heritage committee in order to include Sri Meenakshi Temple in the World Heritage list so that it could get Rs. 100 crore from the World Heritage Fund.