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Title: Need to issue final notification on western ghats as per the recommendations of Dr. Kasthurirangan Committee report.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMTHITTA): Madam, I would request the Government to redress the concerns of the people of Kerala regarding the impact of the recommendations of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel.

It should be noted that the tenure of the Draft Notification on Ecologically Sensitive Area in Western Ghats region ended on 4th of March, 2017, based on Dr. Kasturirangan's Report. It is learnt that some States are yet to submit their report which is causing the delay in issuing the final Notification. This creates a lot of trouble to the people living in places demarcated under the Ecologically Sensitive Area. The Government of Kerala has demarcated the entire protected forest land in the State. Kerala is protecting its forest land which comes to around 29 per cent, but the same at the national level is 22 per cent. The State Government has also given separate Survey Numbers for agricultural land, plantation land and inhabited land of 123 villages and the same has been informed to the Central Government.

In the above circumstances, it may kindly be noted that the final Notification for the State of Kerala alone may be issued in the meantime. The hon. National Green Tribunal has made it clear that the Ministry of Environment and Forests can issue the final Notification State-wise as well.

Madam, the State of Kerala has carried out the physical verification process and has submitted its report way back in 2014. The Ministry of Environment and Forests was pleased to accept the same and it was kind enough to exclude an area of 3,115 square kilometres while issuing the Draft Notification on 10th March, 2014. Now, it is learnt that the MoEF has a suggestion treating the entire village as a unit. However, this may not be practical in the case of the State of Kerala in view of the high density of population.

Under such circumstances, we would request your goodself to issue necessary directions to the authorities concerned to accept the present report submitted by the State of Kerala and to issue the final Notification on ESI accordingly. Thank you. â€¦(व्यवधान)

माननीय अध्यक्ष : आपका भी नाम है।

SHRI JOSE K. MANI (KOTTAYAM): Madam, I would just like to raise one point.

As per the Draft Notification of March 10, 2014, 123 villages falling under the Ecologically Sensitive Area (ESA) have been exempted and it has been accepted by the Central Government also. It was renewed again on September 4, 2015 and it expired on March 4, 2017.

Our request to the Government of India is that the final Notification should be issued as early as possible. It should not wait for the Tamil Nadu Government or any other Government because they have not given their reports, and our Government and our farmers should not suffer because of this. Hence, the final Notification should be issued. ...(*Interruptions*)