

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding the pitiable condition of Tribals in Ranni Pathanamthitta Constituency in Kerala.

SHRIMATI MEENAKASHI LEKHI (NEW DELHI): Thank you very much Speaker, Sir. I have visited Kerala a few days ago and went to a tribal area of Attathodu which is in Ranni Pathanamthitta Constituency. The condition of tribals was so bad that it touched my heart. They sent their complaints. They have been historically deprived people even after 70 years of Independence and if we cannot give our tribal people toilets and basic facilities, it is shameful.

In Attathodu, these people live in two Blocks, 450 or 600 people on one side and each has to go to the other side by travelling for about 25 kilometres. They have no means of transport and the worse thing which I realised and learnt is this. Actually, Sabarimala has given Rs. 250 crore on yearly basis and yet the money has been taken away from the Temple precinct by the State Government but no money has been spent on the well-being of the tribals living in these areas to the extent they have no sanitation, no education and none of the facilities on paper. Their tribal chief, Mr. Narayanan told me, according to some RTI, Rs. 1 crore per person has been spent. But, if you go and look at their conditions, they are living in such impoverished condition which can put anyone to shame. They used to sell their produce when people would visit Sabarimala. But due to COVID conditions, the pilgrimage has been stopped so, they have not been able to, actually, sell their produce also.

Under these circumstances, I request the Central Government to put some scheme in order so that they get some drinking water facility. Their produce can be bought by the Tribal Affairs Ministry or some kind of Central intervention should happen to make their lives better.