

Sixteenth Loksabha

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Title: Regarding final notification on western ghats relating to ecologically sensitive areas.

SHRI ANTO ANTONY (PATHANAMTHITTA): I request the Government to kindly issue the final notification on the Western Ghats. People in Kerala are concerned about the grave implications of the Expert Panel reports on Western Ghats headed by Prof. Madhav Gadgil and Dr. K. Kasturirangan. Both reports ignored the ground realities in Kerala while relying on remote sensing techniques. As a result, plantations and agricultural lands were identified as Ecologically Sensitive Areas (ESAs). Today densely populated 123 villages in Kerala are identified as ESAs, and the inhabitants in these villages are deprived of their right of development. Having understood the gravity of the issue, the Government of Kerala conducted a serious study and submitted its detailed report to the Government of India. Therefore, I request the Government to issue the final notification on the Western Ghats by considering the report submitted by the Government of Kerala in this regard.