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Title: Issue regarding recommendations of Dr. Meenakumari Committee.

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Madam Speaker, I would like to raise a very serious matter concerning the fishermen in the country.

The recommendation of Dr. Meenakumari Committee is against the interest of fisher folk in the country. To achieve optimum returns from the waters beyond 500 metres depth, the Committee recommends that 1178 deep sea fishing vessels are to be deployed in the Exclusive Economic Zone including the existing vessels and an additional 270 vessels.

The Committee also recommends that 200 metres to 500 metres of depth has to be kept as a buffer zone so that no fishing will be possible. If these recommendations are accepted, it will be adversely affecting fishermen in the country.

Also, the suggestion is that Indian crew is not qualified enough to man operations in these waters and foreign hands should be deployed. The panel ignored the fact that Indian fishermen are already operating in waters beyond 500 metres. The recommendations of the Committee are against the spirit of the Murari Committee also.

My submission is, the present Report is only helpful to lease out the marine territory of India to foreign ships and foreign crews. So, my humble submission to the Government, through you, is the recommendations of the Committee have to be rejected in toto. That is my submission. Thank you very much.

HON. SPEAKER:

Shri K.C. Venugopal is allowed to associate with the matter raised by Shri N.K. Premachandran.