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Title:Need to allot more lands to provide facilities to devotees and declare Sabarimala as a national pilgrimage centre.

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): Sir, I would like to invite the attention of the august House on the problems faced by the pilgrims visiting Sabarimala, the abode of Lord Ayyappa. Every year millions of devotees visit Sabarimala in Pathanamthitta district, Kerala. It is one of the temples situated inside the dense forest and the devotees visit the shrine after 41 days of rigorous fasting and other rituals. Over the years, the devotees are complaining about the limited facilities at Sannidhanam in Sabarimala and at Pamba, the entry point. Every year, the number of devotees are increasing but there is no place for enhancing the facilities.

The Government of Kerala and various devotees organizations like Ayyappa Sewa Sangam and others are requesting the Central Government to allot more land for providing facilities to devotees. Even though the Government has assured that the facilities will be made without disturbing the eco-system of Sabarimala hills, yet no action has been taken to release more land. Similarly, there is a huge demand from the Government of Kerala and the general public to declare Sabarimala as a national pilgrimage centre. Concerned Ministry in the Central Government is not taking any positive action in this regard.

Thousands of devotees from Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu are visiting Sabarimala and are facing huge problems. That is why I am raising this issue. Another major demand of the people is transportation facility – that is also very important – from Chenganur, Kottayam and Erumeli to reach Pampa is very difficult. Road condition is very bad. Hence, we need more land for construction of roads. This aspect should also be taken into consideration by the Government of India.