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Title: Regarding Draft National Forest Policy.

ADV. JOICE GEORGE (IDUKKI): The Ministry of environment, Forest and Climate Change issued a draft National Forest Policy on 16 June 2016 and invited comments till 30 June 2016. However, the draft was withdrawn from the ministry's website after a week with a clarification that the documents were only a study report. The document was prepared by financial assistance from UNDP. The primary objective of the document was to implement landscape level conservation projects and also animal corridor establishment and also to convert one third of the land area to forests. Landscape level projects are confusing with hidden motives to jolt the rights of the people over land, as in the case of India High Range Mountain Landscape (HRML) Project in Kerala, part of Western Ghats. The project was withheld due to stiff opposition from stakeholders. Hence, I urge upon the Government to conduct an inquiry as to how such a document as uploaded on the Government website.

14.32 hours

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS ...Contd.