

KERALA

KC (M) seeks creation of ESZs inside forests

STAFF REPORTER

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Jose K. Mani and Thomas Chazhikadan also urged the CEC chairman to initiate a physical verification for collecting all relevant data including the structures, cultivation and human habitation within one km of the ESZs



Calling for creation of Eco Sensitive Zones (ESZ) for all forests within the reserve forests itself, the Kerala Congress (M) has urged the Central Empowerment Committee...

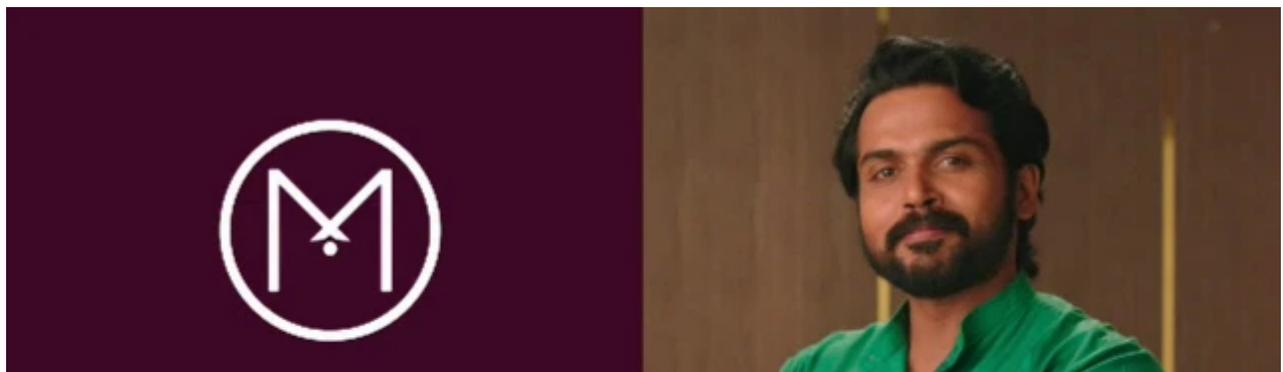
In a petition, the party chairman and Rajya Sabha member Jose K. Mani and Lok Sabha member Thomas Chazhikadan, also urged the CEC chairman to initiate a physical verification for collecting all relevant data including the structures , cultivation and human habitation within one km of the ESZs.

Noting that the above exercises will take time, the party has also requested the CEC to approach the Supreme Court of India to allow three more months from September 3 to submit the details called for in its earlier judgment.

Pointing to the significant pressures on per capital land availability and the decline in availability of land for agriculture, it held that a further regulatory regime proposal on the effective land area for habitation and development like ESZ would be grossly unjustifiable. Absence of a detailed inventory on the proposed zones, which was acknowledged by the head of the State Forest Department is a serious lapse.

Holding that more than 65% of the reserve forests adjoining the existing wildlife sanctuaries are free for expansion, it also pointed out that the location of these sanctuaries and national parks can be relocated to the central part of the surrounding reserve forests so than even a 10 km wide `shock absorber' could be created for them.

ADVT





ADVT

It further relies on the data growth of wild animals between 1993 and 2011 to assert that the existing human habitations around forests do not harm the growth of wild animals in Kerala.

“Though `Ex Citu` conservation is being practiced all over the world, by relocating the boundaries of the existing wildlife sanctuaries and national parks inside the existing reserve forests and even expanding it inside the reserve forests , `In Citu` conversion is very much possible in Kerala without affecting the livelihoods or land of the farmers and general public. The Periyar Tiger Reserve and its tigers are the result of `Ex citu` conservation”, read the petition.

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