

Need to constitute a statutory Kuttanad Development Authority to safeguard the Kuttanad wetland-agricultural heritage system in Kerala.-laid

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): I seek to raise a matter of urgent public importance regarding the establishment of a statutory Kuttanad Development Authority for the integrated, science-based management of Kuttanad. Kuttanad forms part of the ecologically fragile Vembanad-Kol Wetland, a designated Ramsar Site under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, recognizing its international ecological significance. Further, the below-sea-level farming system of Kuttanad has been recognized as a Food and Agriculture Organization-designated Globally Important Agricultural Heritage System (GIAHS), acknowledging its unique agro-hydrological practices and traditional water management. These recognitions impose a heightened responsibility for conservation and climate-resilient development. Large areas lie 1-2 meters below mean sea level, regulated by structures such as the Thanneermukkom Bund. The region faces recurrent flooding, saline intrusion, sedimentation, eutrophication, wetland degradation, and increasing climate variability. Fragmented interventions, in the absence of basin-level governance, have limited long-term sustainability. Given its Ramsar and GIAHS status, a statutory authority with multidisciplinary expertise must adopt Integrated Water Resources Management, real-time flood forecasting, salinity control modernization, scientific sediment management, GIS-based monitoring, and ecological restoration aligned with livelihood resilience. I urge the Government of India to constitute a Kuttanad Development Authority with statutory backing, technical autonomy, and assured financial support to safeguard this globally significant wetland-agricultural landscape.