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Kerala

Waking up to Nilgiri's problems

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Call for inter-State efforts, public participation

MUTHANGA (WAYANAD): S. Satheesh Chandran Nair, renowned environmental scientist, has said that to revive the degenerated ecological system of Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve (NBR), active participation of the public in the area is essential.

He was addressing the concluding ceremony of the two-day South Indian Environmental Meet, a first attempt of the environmental organisations in south India to discuss the issues faced by the NBR, at the forest conference hall here on Sunday.

Wildfire threat during summer, vanishing elephant corridors, pollution due to excessive usage of pesticides in plantations near NBR, unrestrained inflow of tourist vehicles inside the sanctuary, were cited as major environmental issues related to NBR.

S. Jayachandran, Secretary, Tamil Nadu Green Movement, Ooty, said that the proposed Neutrino Observatory at Singara, near Mudumali, would damage the eco system of NBR.

Neutrinos are sub-atomic particles, which hold the key to fundamental questions on the origin of the universe and energy production in stars. But the observatory will be built underground in the middle of the forest, which is the habitat of Asiatic elephants, leopards and tigers. Since the observatory is to be built at least 1,000 metres under the ground, the process would damage the environment, he added. The meet passed a resolution demanding that the proposal be given up.

Poaching cases

Pandu Ranga Hegde, Chairman, APPICO movement, Karnataka, said that the number of poaching cases had increased of late. To curb these activities forest officials of southern States should coordinate regularly, he said.

The meet also demanded that check-posts inside the Wayanad Wild Life sanctuary be relocated to outside the forest.

Objection was raised to 'tourism zones' in the Muthanga and Tholpetty sanctuaries under the Wayanad wildlife sanctuary.

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