

PANEL HAD WARNED MHA ON LAKSHADWEEP

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Government policies & interventions for development in various Sectors and issues arising out of their design & implementation incl. Housing

The Parliamentary panel on Home Affairs, headed by Congress leader Anand Sharma, had warned the Union Home Ministry to ensure that any decision on the development of Lakshadweep is taken after consultations with all stakeholders and elected representatives.

Mr. Sharma said in his letter to the Home Minister that the Parliamentary Panel, in its report tabled in March this year, had pointed out that while the development of the islands was necessary, decision-making should follow a thorough process.

The latest rules, framed by the Lakshadweep administrator, Praful K. Patel, have put the island dwellers in a tizzy.

Among his many decisions are banning the sale and consumption of beef and relaxing restrictions on liquor.

“The MHA may hold periodic meetings on development of Lakshadweep as it is a highly eco-sensitive region. The MHA may take up matters of structured planning and overall economic development with the UT administration, agencies concerned, member of Parliament of the UT and other elected representatives. This will also help in finding a way forward and amicable solution to the developmental problems of the UT,” the standing committee had said in its report.

Mr. Sharma has urged the Home Minister to intervene. “The Ministry of Home Affairs may urgently appoint a panel of experts to examine all the developmental issues, instead of leaving it entirely to the administration,” he wrote.

‘Violation of rights’

The draft Lakshadweep Development Authority Regulation, 2021, which gives unhindered power to the administrator to remove or relocate islanders from their property without their consent and without giving justification for the proposed activities, is another big point of contention. This is a violation, Mr. Sharma said, of “Right to Livelihood,” a fundamental right.

“Large scale of acquisitions of land, in total disregard of the interest and demand of the people of the island, will adversely affect their livelihood, particularly of the fishing communities,” he wrote.

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