

» TODAY'S PAPER » NATIONAL

Published: August 6, 2015 00:00 IST | Updated: August 6, 2015 05:52 IST BENGALURU, August 6, 2015

Karnataka to get institute on conservation of Western Ghats



• [Nagesh Prabhu](#)

The Centre has agreed to sanction Western Ghats Development Institute to Karnataka for conservation of the ecologically sensitive areas of Western Ghats in six States.

The institute would be set up on 117 acres at Chakra in Shivamogga district for undertaking research and management of the Western Ghats, one of the eight biodiversity hotspots in the world.

Management of

eco-system

Karnataka Forest Minister B. Ramanath Rai, who submitted a proposal to the Centre seeking sanctioning of the institute, told presspersons that the Centre would grant funds for monitoring and management of eco-system in the Western Ghats. It would also enable expansion of green cover in the region.

'No truth in charges'

The institute would take up environment management with active participation of locals, Mr. Rai said and termed there was no truth in allegations made by BJP MP Shobha Karandlaje that the State Government had not given its comments to the Centre on the K. Kasturirangan report on conservation of Western Ghats.

The State had given its comments on the report on April 24, 2015 to the Centre, he said.

All States, including Kerala and Maharashtra, have copied Karnataka's comments in their reports, Mr. Rai claimed.

The State Government has agreed to a complete ban on mining. However, it has demanded regulation of sand mining and quarrying to meet local development needs.

The State had opposed establishment of new thermal and hydro power projects. It has favoured regulation of construction of hospitals and other public utilities. As large number of temples existed in the region, the government wanted reasonable restrictions on the movement of people and vehicles.

Eco-tourism in Western Ghats to be promoted with the regulatory mechanism, Mr. Rai said.

Printable version | Jan 7, 2016 11:20:14 AM | <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/karnataka-to-get-institute-on-conservation-of-western-ghats/article7505048.ece>

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