

Seminar on Western Ghats sees greens from across country

Rajendra P Kerkar

Keri: There is an urgent need to undertake developmental activities by giving priority to environment protection and conservation. Locals should benefit from the natural resources available in their vicinity. While undertaking development projects, people's participation in decision-making is needed, said Vinayak Raut, a politician from Vile Parle, Mumbai in Maharashtra.

Raut, who represents Ratnagiri-Sindhudurg constituency in the 16th Lok Sabha as a member of parliament, was speaking as chief guest at the inaugural session of a two-day national-level seminar on Western Ghats, the world her-



itage: Environment and development'. The seminar was organized by the department of geography of the College of Arts, Commerce and Science at Dodamarg.

Raut said, "Since a lot of misconceptions were spread over a report on the status of the Western Ghats submitted

by professor Madhav Gadgil, there was opposition from various quarters. The report highlighting the present and past status of the Ghats was research-oriented and highlighted the ecological significance and sustainable development there. There is an urgent need to take people in-

to confidence over issues regarding ecologically sensitive areas. We have to protect our biological wealth. Today, water resources have been destroyed due to mining in Kalane. People in Jaitapur and surrounding areas are opposing an atomic power plant as they are worried about pollution and other ill effects."

In his key note address, professor Hemant Pednekar stressed on how developmental activities resulted in environmental degradation.

Researchers and environmentalists from Goa, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala took part in the seminar and presented papers on various aspects of the Western Ghats.

Nil
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