

# 'Wood plant can upset Sabarimala's ecology'

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Kochi:** The plan to convert coconut husks, piling up at Sabarimala, into wood with the participation of Coconut Development Board will disturb the ecology of the forest, the forest department has contended.

Through an affidavit filed on Wednesday, the department has submitted that such a plan would upset the wild life in the forest area. The department has also highlighted that operation of a plant would require electricity whereas the area doesn't have any power arrangements now.

When the issue came up on January 5, Coconut Development Board had submitted to the Kerala high court that coconut husk piling up at the hilltop shrine can be utilized to make wood. The board stated that the technology and the process for making wood out of coconut husks can be implemented through any agency.

While considering a petition by a coconut vendor challenging an earlier direction by the high court banning the dumping of coconut husks here, the court had asked the forest depart-

Forest department contended that the operation of the plant, converting coconut husks to wood, would require electricity, whereas the area doesn't have any power arrangements now

ment and the board to suggest ways to dispose coconut husks scientifically.

Division bench of Justice Thottathil B Radhakrishnan and Justice CT Ravikumar had asked Coconut Development Board to propose scientific ways for disposing waste of tender coconuts on the ways to the hilltop shrine.

Tender coconut vendor, Gopi Moozhikkal, approached the court after an earlier order resulted in banning of tender coconut and pineapple vendors from Sabarimala premises. The order has indirectly helped the bottled water business in Sabarimala, whereas the original order only stated about removal of coconut husk, the petition stated.