

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6032
ANSWERED ON:03.05.2010
INCREASE IN DESERT AREAS
Rathwa Shri Ramsinhbhai Patalbhai

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware that the desert areas are increasing day-by-day in the country including Gujarat;
- (b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;
- (c) the reasons for the same;
- (d) the extent of land area affected by salinity ingress in coastal areas of Gujarat, rendering agricultural land useless; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to overcome the situation?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR KUMAR ADHIKARI)

- (a): 235 blocks in 40 districts of 7 States viz, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka & Rajasthan have been identified as desert prone. These States including Gujarat have informed that there is no evidence of increase in desert areas in the country.
- (b): Question does not arise.
- (c): Question does not arise.
- (d) & (e): As per the information received from State Government of Gujarat, an area of 32.94 lakh hectares has been affected by salinity ingress in coastal areas of Gujarat and various steps taken to overcome the situation include construction of structures preventing salinity ingress along the coastal belt, afforestation, restoration of degraded grasslands & saline lands and watershed approach.