

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:516
ANSWERED ON:09.12.2013
DIVERSION OF LAND IN KUTCH AREA
Kanubhai Patel Jayshreeben

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has received a proposal for diversion of land in Kutch Desert Sanctuary and Wild Ass Sanctuary for construction of road from Gadhuli- Santalpur in the State of Gujarat;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the response of the Government thereto in view of the strategic and security importance of this area; and
- (d) the time by which the permission is likely to be obtained from National Board for Wildlife?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN)

(a) to (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests had received a proposal from the Government of Gujarat for diversion of 79.474 ha of forest land in Kutch Desert Wildlife Sanctuary and Wild Ass Sanctuary for construction of Gaduli to Hajipur-Odma-Khavda-Kunaria-Dholavira-Maovana-Gadakbet-Santalpur Road (S.H. Road). The proposal involves development of new roads passing through Flamingo nesting area, ecologically important mangrove areas, to meet needs of the Border Security Forces (BSF). Since the proposal involves diversion of land from Wildlife Sanctuary, it was placed for consideration of the Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife in its meeting held on 25th April 2011.

The Committee decided to carry out a site inspection before taking a view in the matter. The Standing Committee of National Board for Wildlife considered the site inspection report in its 25th Meeting held on 13th June 2012, 26th meeting held on 31st October 2012, 27th meeting held on 12th December 2012 and 28th meeting held on 20th March 2013 and decided that the proposal in its present form can not be accepted, as it was having a serious impact on wildlife of the region, and the Shravan Kavadia mangrove area, which is unique being far away from the coast, would be affected.