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Title: Need to accord approval to the Maharashtra Government's proposal for developing eco-tourism at Agashiva Hills on National Highway No. 4 near Karad town in Satara District.- Laid.

SHRI SHRINWAS DADASAHEB PATIL (KARAD): Agashiva Hills is located on National Highway No. 4 (Pune-Bangalore) near Karad town in Satara district of Maharashtra. The entire hill is under forest department. The hill is having ancient Budha Caves of Satavahana period which are of historic and religious importance. The caves resemble world famous Ajanta – Ellora caves and are of the same era. In order to attract more tourists and as the hill is under forest department, a eco-tourism project is prepared by the forest department on the demand of people's representative and the public at large. The project proposal is costing Rs. 30 crores and it includes setting up of a rope-way, erection of two windmills, medicinal plant garden, botanical garden, watch towers, rose garden, development of ancient caves, etc. The proposal has been forwarded to the Central Government through Government of Maharashtra.

I request the Central Government to accord sanction to the proposal early.