

Seventeenth Loksabha

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Title: Request to preserve the Mollem reserve forest in Goa.

**SUSHRI MAHUA MOITRA (KRISHNANAGAR):** Sir, I thank you very much for allowing me to speak. It is very apt that today while we are discussing climate change and environment, I bring up the issue which has been brought up by my esteemed colleague as well.

The issue is that of the Mollem Reserve Forest in Goa which is one of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots. Over there, three projects have been done which are responsible for felling 52,000 trees or more. One is a double tracking of a railway line from Castle Rock to Vasco, the second is a power plant, and the third is the extension of the National Highway 4A.

We understand that all these are infrastructure projects but the Supreme Court Empowered Committee gave a Report saying that none of these need to be done through the forests.

Therefore, I would really urge the hon. Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change to rethink on this issue and see how we can preserve the Mollem Forest for future generations.