

Title: Need to develop Sunderbans in West Bengal as a tourist resort.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (JOYNAGAR): Sir, Sundarbans has a unique and magnificent scenic beauty. It is the biggest delta of Asia. The Centre has already declared Sunderbans as National Park. Sundarbans is also known for the Royal Bengal Tiger and the world's largest mangrove swamp. This beautiful delta can be converted into a tourist spot. The local people will not only benefit from this, but the Government of India can also earn huge foreign exchange. But lack of development due to shortage of resources has affected the tourist potential of Sundarbans. It is now passing through a difficult period. The State Government has taken some measures but these are not enough.

The road and waterways are to be improved. A large number of domestic and international tourists visit Calcutta. But they can be attracted to Sundarbans if we are able to develop roadways, waterways and construct some good hotels. I have several times demanded to declare Sundarbans rivers as National Waterways, but so far no steps have been taken.

I demand that the Centre should immediately intervene and declare Sundarbans as an international tourist spot. This will enhance the social, economic and cultural development of the local people and, at the same time, the international tourist inflow would help the Central Government earn foreign exchange.