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Title: Need to construct a Canal/Channel along Rann of Kutch to link at Bakhasar, Rajasthan to Arabian Sea.

COL. SONARAM CHOUDHARY (BARMER): An immense salt water waste, Rann of Kutch extends from the Arabian Sea near Gujarat to Bakhasar in district Barmer, Rajasthan which I represent in this august House. It would be a pleasant surprise to my distinguished colleagues to know that it is possible to construct a canal/channel covering 300 kms along Rann of Kutch to link Rajasthan at Bakhasar in Barmer district to Arabian Sea. Rann's land is almost flat and there are no hindrances like huge rocks and hillocks. It is a barren land devoid of vegetation as well as human life. Its soil is a mixture of sand, mud and salt. As such, its construction is feasible like the Suez Canal in Egypt and Haldia port in West Bengal. The route of the canal/channel shall be via Gujarat. It would be a boon to Gujarat, Rajasthan and the country.

Geological evidences suggest that whole of western Barmer was under sea in earlier times and a Gulf existed between Rann of Kutch in Barmer upto South of Jaisalmer. The Sanchor-Barmer basin of Rajasthan is an extension of the Cambay Basin. Oil has been discovered in Barmer basin and is currently being produced by Cairn India Limited in partnership with the ONGC. Further, discoveries of oil and natural gas are imminent in this area.

Possible benefits from the sea-link are that it would help reclamation of salty land in Gujarat (nearly 20,000 Kms.), ii) It would strengthen the defence of India along the Rann, and iii) it would provide access of ships to Rajasthan and lessen the distance of North India particularly for crude oil, petroleum products including LPG and LNG from proposed refinery at Barmer. The port shall also provide easy access for export of minerals like gypsum, lignite, marble, granite, limestone, etc.

I, therefore, urge the Hon'ble Prime Minister to get a survey conducted for construction of a canal/channel along Rann of Kutch to link Rajasthan at Bakhasar to Arabian Sea like Mundra Port.