

जयराम रमेश
JAIRAM RAMESH



राज्य मंत्री (स्वतंत्र प्रभार)
पर्यावरण एवं वन
भारत सरकार
नई दिल्ली-110003
MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
NEW DELHI - 110 003

30th July 2010

Dear Shri. Shivraj Singhji -

As you are aware, the cheetah is the only large Indian animal that we have lost since independence. The last cheetahs were found in Madhya Pradesh, on its borders with Chhattisgarh and it is from here that they became extinct. I am sure you and the state of Madhya Pradesh would be as keen, if not more than the rest of the country, to bring back this lost natural heritage of India and of Madhya Pradesh. The reintroduction of the cheetah would not just be restoration of a lost species, but also a restoration of some of our degraded but invaluable ecosystems and the varied fauna and flora depended upon them. Of all the large cats, the cheetah would cause the least conflict with people, as there is no record whatsoever of a cheetah ever causing injury to humans and they do not attack cattle.

The Ministry of Environment & Forests had commissioned a special study of ten sites in four states, to ascertain the feasibility of cheetah reintroduction. The report of this investigation has clearly indicated that cheetah can be reintroduced at three sites - Kuno-Palpur in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh, Shahgarh in Jaisalmar district of Rajasthan and Nauradehi in the Sagar district of Madhya Pradesh.

Madhya Pradesh has always been at the forefront of the country's conservation endeavours. It has been able to save the largest areas of forests and the largest number of protected areas in the country, some of which such as Kanha, Bandhavgarh and Pench are amongst the greatest conservation successes in Asia.

Of the two sites chosen in Madhya Pradesh for cheetah reintroduction, Kuno-Palpur already received substantial investments from both the Central and State Governments. A number of villages have been relocated and the habitat and the faunal population have greatly improved. While we are pursuing the Government of Gujarat to give lions to Kuno and there is a PIL pending in this regard with the Supreme court, we could readily go ahead with cheetah reintroduction into Kuno-Palpur with very little extra investment, at an early date. Lion reintroduction could always take place after the cheetah have been established in Kuno, as the cheetah experts are categorical in their opinion that if the cheetah are introduced first and the lions thereafter, both could live in co-existence. If, however, the lions come first, they will not allow the cheetah to establish.

Therefore, my earnest request to you would be to agree to the reintroduction of the cheetah in both Kuno-Palpur and Nauradehi, while we await the arrival of the lions in Kuno at a future date, and thereby also utilize all the efforts and investments that have made to shift the villages from Kuno and the sacrifice of the villagers. The experts are of the opinion that the reintroduction should be undertaken at three sites, though perhaps not all at the very same time, for this would enable us to manage the three populations by interchange of specimens to prevent inbreeding. Nauradehi is a large sanctuary with a good prey species population and not heavily populated. The villagers here also are keen to move out from the core area of the sanctuary and they could be given the same generous package as is given under Project Tiger.

The entire cost of the cheetah reintroduction would be borne by the Ministry of Environment & Forests.

I would, therefore, request you to kindly agree in principle to the proposal of cheetah reintroduction in Kuno-Palpur and in Nauradehi, both in Madhya Pradesh, so that we could go ahead with the preparation of more detailed plans for reintroduction, which would be prepared in collaboration with representatives of your State Government. If you so wish, I could request Dr. Ranjitsinh, a retired IAS officer of the Madhya Pradesh Cadre, to meet you and your officers to explain the project in greater detail. In the meanwhile, I am herewith forwarding the report on the feasibility of cheetah reintroduction, for your perusal.

incom personal
With regard-

Yours sincerely,

Jairam Ramesh
(Jairam Ramesh)

Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan,
Chief Minister
Government of Madhya Pradesh

Encl: as above