

Title: Need to give relaxation to fishing folk engaged in domestic shell collection by increasing Shell Fishing Zone in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS): Sir, there are many handicrafts small scale industries set up in various parts of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, dealing in handicrafts from sea shells, generating employment to more than 2000 families directly or indirectly. The main activities of these units are to collect sea shells/marine time recovered from sea, manufacture/process then export it as handicrafts to mainland etc. The infrastructural investment has been done by the local artisans, entrepreneurs, and self-employed youth from their own resources and from loan taken from various financial institutions. It is learnt that the area allowed for the shell fishing zone is merely 200 sq. Kms., whereas Andaman & Nicobar Islands has a coastline of 9000 sq. kms. Nearly 8000 sq. kms., remain unexplored and untouched. You will agree with me that the collection of 15 mts. of shells is such a vast coastline does not affect the environment. It is relevant from the notification dated 08.03.1979, Schedule 1 Rule 5(2) clearly denotes that it is assumed that the Islands have the potential of collecting 135 mts. of Trochus and Turbo Shells, whereas the fishing folks collect hardly 8 mts of Trochus and Turbo Shells for handicrafts purpose under restrictions. The authorities concerned in Andamans do not allow the fishing folks to collect these shells. Therefore, it is desired Sir, the local Shells viz. Trochus, Nautilus, Clamp, Shank and Punja be exempted from the list of banned items. I urge upon the Government of India, to consider giving relaxation to domestic shells as enumerated above for the purpose of encouraging in handicrafts in the Islands for rehabilitation of rural families.