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Title : Need to take steps for continuance of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Limited.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this House that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest and Plantation Development Corporation Limited has approximately 2000 employees on its roll and the monthly wages bill comes to around Rs.1.00 crore only. After the restrictions on timber harvesting, the Government of India on the directives of the hon. Supreme Court appointed a one man Commission, which recommended closure of the Corporation. But the Ministry of Environment and Forests has taken the decision to continue the Corporation by restructuring and down-sizing the manpower. Accordingly, M/s Tata Consultancy Services was engaged and they, after detailed spot study, submitted their report to the Ministry of Environment and Forests which projected two proposals, namely, (I) closure of Red Oil Palm and Rubber Plantation and reduction of manpower by 82.5 per cent and keeping 17.5 per cent for harvesting of timber; and (ii) closure of Rubber Plantation and reduction of manpower by 60 per cent and keeping 40 per cent for Red Oil Palm Plantation and harvesting of timber. I strongly oppose the proposal at ( i ) and recommend that the proposal ( ii ) be implemented adding the eco-tourism activities which has great potential in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

\*Treated as laid on the Table.

The Government of India has recently granted permission for cultivation of Red Oil Palm Plantation in the State of Tripura to circumvent the edible oil shortage in the country.

I, therefore, urge upon the Government of India not to take any step for closure of ANIFPDCL.