

Title: Need to review the ban imposed on collection of sea-sand in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. – Laid.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS): I would like to draw the attention of this House and the Government of India about a serious situation created due to total ban on sea sand collection in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It is astonishing that in the name of protection of environment, the sea sand collection has been totally banned thereby affecting the construction activities and other road construction or any other building construction for public and private in the A & N Islands. Time and again the matter was raised before different authorities concerned without any result. The Minister for Environment and Forests is fully aware of it. Unemployment in the construction industry in the Islands shot up and no alternative employment has been provided to the workers connected with the sea sand collection. I strongly urge upon the Government to immediately release sea sand collection so that the development activities could continue and in case there is need to completely ban the collection of sea sand, Government should provide the transport subsidy which is required for transportation of sand from the Mainland. For hundreds of years, the sea sand collection was done for all these construction works without any environmental problem. I request the Government to come out for the protection of the Islanders.