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Title: Regarding need to take measures for welfare of honey-collectors in Sundarbans region of West Bengal.

SHRIMATI PRATIMA MONDAL (JAYANAGAR): Sundarbans is the world's largest continuous mangrove forest. It is known for its Royal Bengal Tiger, water ways, Mudflats, small islands of salt, low land mangroves forest. It has abundance of Sundari, Gewa, Goran and Keora trees. The permanent inhabitants of Sundarbans are basically involved in the profession like honey collection, fishing, catching crabs, shrimps and collecting snails. But the most difficult jobs with high risk is honey collection. The honey collectors (Mouli) mostly live in Gosaba, Hingalgangne and Basanti Blocks of Sundarbans. The Sunderbans is famous for the honey, it is produced in large cluster of natural beehives. They collect honey from the dense forest putting their lives at risk. For collection of honey, it requires good expenditure and as they are economically not sound they take loan from money-lenders (Mahajan) at high rate of interest. Even the Mahajans take a good share of collected quantity of honey from them or force them to sell the honey to the Mahajans with a fixed low rate which is very painful. Now, the pertinent question is as to how we can save these honey collectors in the fringe areas of Sundarbans where life is full of uncertainties and challenges.

In this regard, the Government should take the following measures :-

1. Government must equip them with protective arms;
2. Train them with scientific method of honey collection;
3. Loan against low interest ;
4. Formation of self help group;
5. Insurance policy; and
6. Ensuring them remunerative price of their produce and a good market for their produce.

Hence, I urge the Government to act upon these measures at the earliest.