

"the deforestation of land for settlement may result in denudation of fragile soils and render them liable to severe soil erosion due to high disintegrating effects of the tropical climate. The snapping of a single link in the long food chain of the tropical eco-system may result in unimaginable consequences. Serious views have therefore been expressed against the deforestation in these islands".

13. The Project Report sets out that the Andaman and Nicobar forests are:

" of the highest scientific significance as they are still virgin forest and may be the last bastion of precious gene reserves of rare species of plants".

14. Despite this the Project envisaged:

"large scale harvesting of forest produces..."

"introduction of mechanised logging and extraction operations..."

c) x x x

d) "immediate increase in timber availability to meet an increasing demand"

15. The Project envisaged the setting up of many industries based on forest produce such as saw mills and plywood and veneer factories.

16. Clause 4.8 of the Project proposal blatantly spoke of construction activity required to

" open up the island for exploitation of commercial timber"

#### 18 Lakh Trees Cut Over Last 20 Years

17. As a result of illegal logging done by the Forest Corporation from 1.4.1977 at the rate of approximately 800 ha every year, six lakh trees have already been cut by the Corporation alone during the last 20 years. In addition the forest department directly cuts approximately 2000 ha every year i.e. 2 lakh trees over the last 20 years. Thus the