

74 15 16 17
19. The concerns raised by the Applicant on negative impact of large scale commercial collection of forest produce is further corroborated by a press release issued by the Ministry of Environment & Forests through Press Information Bureau, Government of India dated 20th February 2008 titled "Non - Timber Forest Products: Future Scenario". Extracts from the above press release sum up the problem which has been raised in the Writ Petition as well in the present I.A.

"However, the current NTFP management practices are ecologically and socially unsustainable. The forest dwellers are by and large conservation oriented but due to unscrupulous elements such as middle men and traders are pushing them to resort to unsustainable and destructive harvesting. Large pharmaceutical industries are also abetting the process of destruction of this important element of forest biodiversity".

"At present India is witnessing coalition Governments in States as well as at the central level. There is an emergence of strong regional / local political outfits formed on the basis of local issues. The regional imbalances have disappointed the voters and therefore, they aspire for quick social economic developments through their support to local political parties. The local issues are landless, poverty and underdevelopment. The political agenda of the local parties therefore, is to address these issues. In the process these regional political outfits are compelled to take up issues of distribution of land, water,