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A STUDY ON AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIES IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS**Dr. J. SIDDIQUE****GUEST LECTURER****P.G. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE****JNRM GOVERNMENT COLLEGE****PORT BLIAR SOUTH ANDAMAN****ABSTRACT**

Economic development of any country depends greatly on the growth and development of its Agro-Based Industrial Units and such is also the case of Andaman and Nicobar Industrial growth, in majority of cases, is the most potent dynamic factor in the process of accelerated economic development. Industry plays an important role in development of backward areas and in removing disparity. Further, AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units offer ever-widening employment opportunities. Surprisingly, such important sectors of the economy of the A&N Islands have been given little attention by the authorities and the academicians. Government of India has been announcing a lot of subsidies, incentives to the industrial units particularly to the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units. But the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units could not increase their production due to many problems. So the problems of Agro-Based Industrial Units are, to be approached systematically to solve their problems and to recognize and treat them as equal among the other sectors. Andaman & Nicobar Island one of the Union Territory of India has been taken as a study area for the present work it is situated in Bay of Bengal surrounded by Burma, Thailand, Malasia and Indonesia. The total no of Island in this territory is 572 including rocks and Islands it is really, very rich in resources only the few of the resources have been explored and plenty of resources are yet to be explored; the people of this territory have been facing acute shortage of goods and services since long. They depend greatly on the mainland of India and prices of these goods sometimes are double or triple that of the prices prevailing in the mainland. As for as the resources are concerned, forest and marine resources are available in abundance in this territory. No of tourist has been increasing every Year both A & N administration at the Govt of India have been announcing many no of incentives and subsidies but still no of industrial units, employment generation, investment made in agro based industries and the production of the agro based units have not been increased hence, a detailed research has been conducted at micro level to explore, trace out and elicit the problems confronted by the agro based units in this study.

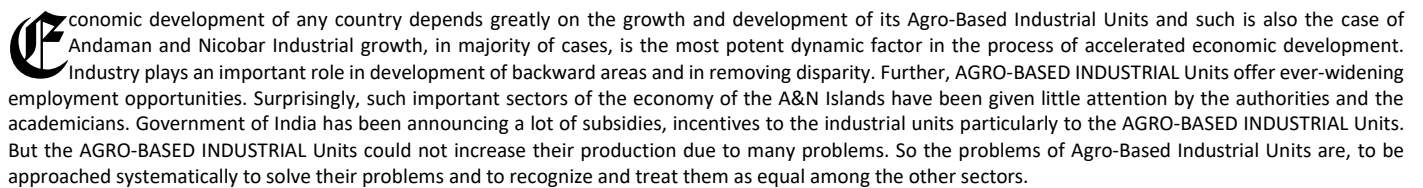
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INTRODUCTION

Economic development of any country depends greatly on the growth and development of its Agro-Based Industrial Units and such is also the case of Andaman and Nicobar Industrial growth, in majority of cases, is the most potent dynamic factor in the process of accelerated economic development. Industry plays an important role in development of backward areas and in removing disparity. Further, AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units offer ever-widening employment opportunities. Surprisingly, such important sectors of the economy of the A&N Islands have been given little attention by the authorities and the academicians. Government of India has been announcing a lot of subsidies, incentives to the industrial units particularly to the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units. But the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units could not increase their production due to many problems. So the problems of Agro-Based Industrial Units are, to be approached systematically to solve their problems and to recognize and treat them as equal among the other sectors.

STUDY AREA

Andaman and Nicobar Islands, one of the Union Territories of India, has been taken as the study area for the present work. It is situated in the Bay of Bengal surrounded by Burma, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. The total number of islands in this territory is 572 including rocks and islands. This study area consists of two groups namely Andaman Group and Nicobar Group. There are three districts namely 1). South Andaman District 2) North and Middle Andaman District and 3) Nicobar district, and eight sub-Division namely Port Blair, Ferrargunj, Rangat, Mayabunder, Diglipur, Nancowry, Car Nicobar and Campbell Bay.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To trace of growth, present workings and classification of Agro-Based Industry in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
2. To analyze the Structural factors of Agro-Based Industry in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
3. To explore the problems faced by the Agro-Based Industrial Units in Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

AGRO-BASED INDUSTRY STATUS IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

A&N Islands is industrially very backward. The planning Commission, Government of India, has identified 300 districts as specified Backward Areas and classified them into A, B and C categories depending on the degree of backwardness. 'A' Category districts – 131 in all include 93 “No Industry Districts” (NIDs). The A&N Islands is one of such districts included under 'A' category of districts. The entire territory had been declared as a No Industry Area. Till 1978, there was no full-fledged Industries Department in A&N Islands.

The Directorate of Industries was established only in March 1978. During the same year, a District Industries Centre (DIC) was also set up at Port Blair. There is no District Industries Centre in the Nicobar District. An Advisory Board of Khadi and Village Industries has also been set up at Port Blair. The ranks of the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units based in terms of the number of units are given in the table.

RANKING OF THE SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIAL UNITS IN A & N ISLANDS

TABLE 1

Sl. No	Type of Units	Grand Total	Rank
1.	Engineering Based	346	I
2.	Wood based	243	II
3.	Agro Based	137	III
4.	Food Based	136	IV
5.	Textile Based	120	V
6.	Mineral Based	89	VI
7.	Marine Based	65	VII
8.	Chemical Based	45	VIII
9.	Leather Based	9	IX
10.	Coir Based	3	X
11.	Others	570	XI
	Total	1763	

Source: Compiled from the data collected from DIC, Port Blair

Engineering Based Units (EBU) stands **FIRST**. Wood Based Units (WBU) stands **SECOND**, followed by Agro Based Units (ABU) ranks **THIRD**, Food Based Units (FBU) stands **FOURTH**, Textile Based Units (TBU) **FIFTH**, Mineral Based Units (MIBU) **SIXTH**, Marine Based Units (MBU) **SEVENTH**, Chemical Based Units (CHBU) **EIGHTH**, Leather Based Units (LBU) is in **NINTH** and the Coir Based Units stands (COBU) **TENTH** and the others are in cluster and hence it is not calculated for the rank.

PROBLEMS

Sale of manufactured goods by the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units is something different from the Sale of the goods by the middlemen. Problems facing the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units are the obstacles of the growth and development of the economy of any region. It will not allow the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Sector and the other sectors to grow. The problems will absorb all the investments. The problems will make every activity as unproductive and the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL entrepreneurs as so tired. So it is decided to conduct a study at micro level to explore the problems in the Activities of the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units facing the entrepreneurs in A & N Islands. The following tables give the result of the study.

TABLE 2: PROBLEMS FACING THE AGRO-BASED UNITS

Sl. No.	Problems	No. of Respondents Expressed as		
		YES	NO	Total
01	Financial Problems	173 (100.0)	00 (00.0)	173 (100.00)
02	Labour Problems	142 (82.1)	31 (17.9)	173 (100.0)
03	Marketing Problems	125 (72.3)	48 (27.7)	173 (100.0)
04	Other Problems	59 (34.1)	114 (65.9)	173 (100.0)
05	Production Problems	136 (78.6)	37 (21.4)	173 (100.0)
06	Transport Problems	119 (68.8)	54 (31.2)	173 (100.0)

Source: Primary Data

The table shows that the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units face the Problems in the areas of the Finance, Marketing Related Activities, Transport, Communication, Labour and Production Problems. Of all the above-mentioned problems, the communication problems seem to be very less because only 81 representing 46.8 percent of the total respondents expressed that they face the communication problem. The reason for this is the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units is located in a very interior place where they face really communication problem.

Their main problem is unable to contact the customer as well as market information. For this purpose, they have to come to the nearby place where such facilities are available. On the other hand, 92 units representing 53.2 percent have given a negative response.

All the 173 respondents have expressed that they face terrible financial problems.

125 respondents constituting 72.3 percent of the total respondents have expressed that they face intolerable Marketing Related Problems. Another set of 119 respondents recording 68.8 percent have told that they face Transport Problem. 142 sample units representing 82.1 percent of the total respondents have recorded that they face over expensive Labour problems.

59 respondents representing 34.1 percent of the total sample face the other problems like power problems, absence of postal services, non-availability of the Petrol, diesel and other lubricating oil, absence of hospital, non-availability of hire vehicle, filthy conditions of the roads, absence of hospital etc. These problems are discussed in detail below through different tables.

SUGGESTIONS

The following are the suggestions offered based on the research work conducted by the researcher on the basis of the Empirical Analysis on the Study on the Agro-Based Industry in A & N Islands.

- The problems of Agro-Based Industry in A&N Islands both at the promotional and operational stages have been discussed in the earlier paragraphs. No Industry in the world is problem free. Some problems of industry cannot be solved at any time. Some can be solved within a short period and others can be in course of time only. To overcome those problems identified the following suggestions are made.
- Industrial Estates are to be set up and developed in Campbell Bay, Diglipur and Mayabunder regions.
- A guidance cell may be created in the District Industries Centre, Port Blair, headed by a person not below the rank of Deputy Manager to advise entrepreneurs on all aspects of project formulation and implementation. Such guidance cell may engage camps to different regions like Rangat, Mayabunder, Diglipur, Car Nicobar, Nancowry, etc. It is also suggested that they may drive away the frustrations in the minds of the entrepreneurs due to inordinate delay.
- The A&N Administration may create a machinery to co-ordinate the activities of different agencies. The machinery may implement a time-bound program for process Agro-Based Industries the applications of the entrepreneurs. It is suggested that the District Industries Centre, Port Blair, which is a promotional agency in A&N Islands, may acts as the coordinating machinery. The Industrial Promotion Officer of the Nicobar District may be given powers in this regard by taking into consideration the geographical disadvantages of the distance between the Islands of the Nicobar District and Port Blair.

- The feasibility of an entrepreneur submitting his application as one package to a single Agency namely, District Industries Centre instead of submitting to various agencies may be examined. It is also suggested that the A&N Administration may consider the possibility of a single application that an entrepreneur has to submit instead of one for each agency.
- To minimize the difficulties in getting power connection, water connection, etc. It is suggested that the General Manager, District Industries Centre may be assigned authority to receive applications from the entrepreneurs and to get the water connection, power connection etc., sanctioned within 30 days. The present method is that a letter is written by the General Manager to the Superintendent, Electricity Department, Port Blair to get the speedy connection.
- The Banks, both commercial and co-operative, may speed up the sanction and disbursement of loans. The procedures in getting loan are to be simplified so that there may not be any delay in sanctioning the loans. It is also suggested that the applications and the guideline booklets or at least the guideline booklets may be in four languages – Hindi, Tamil, Bengali and English – so that the entrepreneur may not face any language difficulties.
- A committee, free from political influence headed by the General Manager and consisting of officials from Banks, Electricity Department, Andaman Public Works Department, Central Public Work Department, representatives from the various industries-particularly the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL Units, Forest Supplies Department, may be formed. The Committee should meet once in a fortnight at the office of the District Industries Centre. The applicants may be invited to participate in the discuss on Agro-Based Industries. All approvals, licenses and certificates may be issued in the meeting itself or within 15 days after taking a decision in the meeting with regard to reasonable cases. Such a co-ordination mechanism will provide answer to the promotional problems of the Industry in A&N Islands.
- Regarding the conversion of land for Industrial Purpose, the A&N Administration may identify, by completing all formalities like soil test, water test, approvals from the Government of India etc. well in advance, the particular places which are fit for Industrial purposes. This can be advertised or circulated to the promotional agencies. It is also suggested that the A&N Administration may clearly state the places that are reserved for particular purposes so that the entrepreneurs may not think about those places. The District Industries Centre may take speedy steps in this regard.
- The A&N Administration may immediately look into the Electricity problem. It may install new generators both in Port Blair and in the other Islands. Since the industrial units frequently experience the power shortage, it is suggested that the Industries particularly Agro-Based Units may be exempted from power cuts at least for the first 5 years from its inception. The existing industries concentrated in a particular place may be encouraged to install common generators and more subsidy may be granted for this purpose. The post of Manager (Economic and Investigation) in the DIC, Port Blair, may conduct a survey of the areas where there is concentration of units and may explore the possibility of installing common generators, The DIC and the Directorate of Industries may take a lead in this direction.
- Junglighat, Dairy Farm Junction is selected by the Researcher to install the common generators by the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL units and the traders. The A&N Administration may think of giving subsidy and incentives for the same.
- The Bank Managers may have personal interviews with the borrowers and the required facts may be recorded and signed by the borrowers in order to speed up the procedure. The Branch Managers may be advised not to show an over bearing attitudes towards the borrowers. The Managers and the other officers of the banks may first try to understand the problems of the borrowers. It is further recommended that the managers may sanction the loan within 10 days from the date of receipt of the application. For this purpose, the Bank Manager may be delegated with the necessary sanctioning powers. A **Loan Syndicate** is suggested in the A & N Islands. The Lead Bank in Port Blair may start this work.
- It is recommended that all the departments, banks co-operative societies may be instructed/ordered to buy only the locally manufactured products for their routine work. The practice of compelling the departments to buy the goods and services produced locally may be followed in the A&N Islands to have an assured and steady market for the Industrial units in A&N Islands. In this regard it is further recommended that the price increase allowed to the AGRO-BASED INDUSTRIAL may be enhanced considering the increase in the cost of raw materials, labour transport and other inputs in the recent years.
- The A&N Administration may establish commercial estates just like industrial estates for the sale of products of the industrial units in the A&N Islands exclusively to the consumers directly. The Industry may explore new market in rural areas.

CONCLUSION

So the only hope today for the Socio-economic development of A & N Islands is the Agro-Based Industry (AGRO-BASED). The contribution of AGRO-BASED to job creation and economic development has been largely ignored or underestimated for many years in the A & N Islands. The Eco-tourism potential provides many opportunities for both the protection of the environment and the development of tourism based economic activities on this huge natural resource. For that, there should be a wide publicity and advertisement about A&N islands, a provision to show the visitors/tourists a glimpse of the socio cultural life of this Mini India (A & N Islands) and to make them feel that the A&N islands is the place for National Integration in the world. Popular lectures and shows should be arranged in these islands about the available resources to start the AGRO-BASED Units inviting them for the Venture.

Hence, the Agro-Based Industry is the basis for all the activities and transactions of not only the Business Sector but also the Service Sector, trade and commerce sector. This is more true in the Agro-Based Sector. Andaman and Nicobar Islands with its rich unexploited resources invite the entrepreneurs to start industrial ventures in this green paradise. The local government and the Govt. of India have been announcing a plenty of incentives and subsidies. In spite of these facilities, the production of the Agro-Based Industrial Units has not been satisfactory. Hence, it is strongly thought that the AGRO-BASED Units face many problems and as such it is decided to conduct a research at micro level and it has been conducted also. Results of the Analysis have proved that the AGRO-BASED Units have not been functioning effectively due to a lot of drawbacks and problems which are given above. The suitable measures to solve the problems are also given under the suggestions.

Thus, it can be said that once the impediments in the path of the development of the AGRO-BASED units in the A & N Islands are removed, an effective strategy can be formulated in the light of the suggestions given and the same can effectively be implemented through the Knowledgeable, Disciplined, Hardworking, Dedicated and God Fearing Real Human Asset, which shall contribute significantly to the overall development of the economy of Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

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