

Tirur dated 29 Nov 2013

To

The Executive Secretary
AAJVS, Port Blair

Sir,

A field note on the situation in Tirur pertaining to Jarawa

A month of my stint in Tirur has been completed. During this period I experienced and observed some facts worthy of reporting to the authority.

Submitted that –

A narrow creek flows from Collinpur ghat to a wide mouth which is exposed to the Constance Bay (Southern point of Jarawa Reserve). We travelled through this creek regularly and mostly with the Jarawas. The creek takes about 30 minutes to reach the wide mouth wherein previously JPP4 was located now washed away. There are about more than 30 houses located along the creek. These settlers (not all) openly wave their hands, show different signs to the Jarawas, and through hand signals offer and/or show eatables to the Jarawas without minding our presence. Their silent interactions in different ways and manners unleash serious impact on the ethnic pattern of Jarawa behaviour. They are well aware that their these activities can never be construed as OFFENCES. The Jarawas also do converse with them. They reach to their dinghies by swimming in crocodile fetched creek. I do recall that near old JPP4 in Dec 2005 a Jarawa boy Tawai Tepohane 8 yrs died in doing this. He was killed by a crocodile when trying to reach a gathering of villagers on the other side of the creek.

One day, in midst of the way on an edge of mangrove a Jarawa boy was standing and at the moment at about 10 metres away from there a fishing dinghy was anchored. At mouth of the Herbertabad creek few Jarawa girls are camped. These girls are in communication often with the local fishermen. We cannot take action against them and the reasons are crystal clear that 1) They don't get down from their dinghy but entice/coerce the Jarawas in the manner that the tribes themselves come to them and secondly 2) They camp along the edges of the reserve.

In many cases when we interrogate any fisherman, the Jarawas come aggressively in defence of them. Sometimes they (Jarawas) use abusive filthy words in Hindi against the AAJVS and Police. They threatened and physically attacked many of our staffs in different instances.

The interactions between the Jarawas and the fishers can never be traced out and controlled all times and in all conditions. On the other hand the fishermen going out to sea near Jhaokona (Jarawa Reserve) through creek are unchecked by the Jarawa Protection Police-4 now based at Collinpur.

On 31st Oct 2013 self alongwith Deputy Director (Tribal Health) and medical staffs reached old JPP4 location and Jhaokona to extend medical services among the Jarawas. During the visit we found few fishermen were camped within 100 mrtres distance from the Jarawa huts. The Jarawas were waving their hands to them and these fishermen could have gone little distance ahead or back; but they adamantly pitched at the same spot to enjoy the scene or disturb the Jarawas or shall we say mutely inviting the Jarawas(?). This has now become scenario of any day.

After my joining here, I accelerated the patrol jointly with 'Police' and 'Forest' through the creek and in sea around the Jhaokona Reserve. As sprouting result the regular poachers/offenders faced disturbances in their works. The other fishermen began to follow our instructions. My increasing courage and enthusiasm suddenly subsided with a new move in the scenario. As I have said that the interactions between the Jarawas and the offenders can never be traced out all times and in all conditions. Somebody surely coerced/enticed the Jarawas to leave the Jhaokona area and come at Tirur (near settlement) to stay. All the Jarawas nearing 100 reached Tirur and camped at 2-3 locations near settlement. For the next 2-3 days we became too much tired of controlling them in their several attempts of looting activities. During these days self experienced and noted dubious behaviour of some settlers. Some villagers do not come to inform us when Jarawas enter their house/premises. During a night patrolling on 15-11-2013 we got 4 Jarawa boys and 2 girls namely Tatudu, Thabateba, Hounda, Kunnu, Urpathaley and Hone sleeping in a vacant house but the owner distantly living never came to inform us. After few days on my asking the owner said in Bengali "Ora to shob shomay Odikey aashey" means "they often come there" but to my surprise the owner never tried to bring this into our knowledge before our asking. The same thing repeated by another resident namely Shri Narayan Ojha. On a morning we found in his house some Jarawas who left the place on seeing us there. On my asking, the house owner said in Bengali "Aera Eikhaney aashley kichhoo nokshaan korey na"