

measures that are being implemented for the welfare of the Jarawas. The Administration reiterates that ATR is required for movement of essential goods and medicines and also for evacuation of patients from the remote islands to Port Blair. The road connection is also required for strategic reasons and for deployment of troops, paramilitary force or police in times of emergency or for regular exercises. The road is also required for effective mobility of staff engaged in protection of forests & wildlife, prevention of poaching, encroachments and illegal felling inside the tribal reserves, which are also Reserved Forests. Closure of the road planned and developed since 1958 with an expenditure of Rs.45.52 crores over the years will at best only put constraints on the non-tribals, but will be inadequate for protection of the Jarawas.

26. That the recommendation (28) for preparation of a plan for conservation and protection of forests and ecosystems which should envisage constitution of all unworked forests in the Diglipur, Mayabunder, Middle Andaman and Baratang into National Parks and consolidation of small isolated islands and sanctuaries into larger units encompassing the marine area surrounding them, needs to be examined in detail. The Administration submits that all the forest areas are either already covered by the Working Plans or other Management plans. Besides, the UT Forestry Action Programme has already