

Information was received (verbally) from I.G.P that a tourist resort was under construction at Collinpur, just beside the Jarawa Reserve at Tirur. I visited the site on 8-7-2007 Sunday along with Assistant Commissioner (TW) and Research Officer to verify the facts.

As per the information provided by a person at the site, M/s Barefoot at Havelock, which is already running a resort in Havelock, has purchased approximately 13 bighas of land (survey No.118/1,118/2,105) in Collinpur, for construction of a tourist resort. The construction has not begun, but we were told that they have obtained the permission to convert part of this land for commercial use for tourism purposes.

The ramifications of this project are enormous. The A&N Administration is already in a defensive position trying to justify the existence and use of the Andaman Trunk Road (A.T.R). Various national & international organizations have campaigned for its closure on the grounds that traffic on this road encourages contact between mainstream settlers & tourists on the one hand, and the Jarawas on the other, thereby disturbing the life style and cultural patterns of the latter. The Administration has tacitly decided to explore alternatives to the ATR, such as shipping services to Baratang and other places of tourist interest around the tribal reserve, at least for the tourists, who have an intense curiosity about this Primitive Tribal Group.

A tourist resort in such close proximity to the Jarawa reserve, located along their traditional paths from Zhau Kona to Collinpur which they use during low-tide, would have as its USP (Unique Selling Point) the sighting and interaction with Jarawas because there is no other tourist attraction at this site, the beach being small and ordinary. Barefoot Group has a strong foreign clientele who will further exacerbate the cross cultural tensions, leading to a situation that may be difficult to handle in the future. Some of the different scenarios that could emerge are touched upon detailed below:-

- a) The "me too" effect will catch up with other resort and hotel owners, and more of such similar resorts will come up in the area.
- b) Going by past experience with the Onges and Great Andamanese, the increase in contact with outsiders will automatically lead to inter-breeding, the consequences of which are the death-knell for the race.