

KAREN YOUTH ORGANISATION

Registered under societies Registration act 1860
Registration No. 829
Head Office : Webi Vill & P. O. Mayabunder-744204
NORTH ANDAMAN INDIA

Ref. No.

- 2 -

Date

Sub: Inclusion of the Karens in the list of Scheduled Tribes in Andaman and Nicobar Islands for the purpose of preserving the distinct culture, language and Ancestral Traditions of the Karen and reservation of seats in academic/professional, technical institutions and in job opportunities- Pray for - Reg:-
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Hon'ble Sir,

With utmost respect and humility, I, on behalf of the Karen community living in Andaman Islands take this opportunity to enlighten Your Hon'ble Goodself on the long pending genuine grievance of this down trodden community for your kind perusal and for sympathetic consideration and favourable action please:

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE KAREN TRIBE IN ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS

Karens are a tribe of mongeloid origin. They were brought down to Andamans from Burma now Myanmar a part and parcel of British India in April 1925 by the then British Govt. of India. Initially a batch of 12 families came under the leadership of Rev. Lugyi and Thra Sanba. The second batch of 50 families came down in 1926. They were engaged in forest works which was found laborious, dangerous and capacited in deep forest timber extraction and plantation. They also handled elephants of the Forest Department. Some have worked in Chatham Saw Mill and few were engaged in leveling the Gymkhana Ground at Port Blair.

As the years passed by, the tempo of the forest work had slowed down and some Karens started going back to Burma. By 1937 a large number had gone back. In 1967 more went back and those who stayed back have opted for Indian Citizenship. Subsequently the Karens were given land at Webi and nearby areas in Middle Andamans for cultivation and to start their own settlement. The 1951 Census shows that there were 384 Karens and were considered naturalised Indians by the Andaman & Nicobar Administration and the Govt. of India. After that no separate census for the Karen community was taken. Today, the Karen settlements spread out in eight villages. Total Karen population is about 2200.

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