

91

(iii) This community is economically, socially and educationally backward. In the last fifty years hardly 1 or 2 students among this community has gone for higher education though they have quotas or got government jobs. 99% of this community are living on casual laborious work.

(iv) We are demanding the status of Scheduled Tribes as in mainland States. We may be recognized as Scheduled Tribes in Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(2) **Karens of Andamans are of Myanmarese origin**, and have been living in Andaman, before independence. They have their own distinct traits which are quite primitive in nature, for examples – Karens have traditional Male Delivery Assistants (Male Dai). They have a distinct language and own script. They are educationally, economically and socially backward. Hardly 1 or 2 persons are in good service or obtained higher professional courses seats. Their numbers are 2200 in A&N Islands. 99% of this community are living on fishing, collection of shells and NTFP products and casual laborious jobs. They are also demanding to be granted Scheduled Tribe status.

3. **Granting of Scheduled Caste status to (a) Bengalis, (b) Tamil, (c) and Telegu**, communities permanently settled over 40 years.

(a) **Bengalis** : In Andaman islands, Bengalis comprising of settlers under colonization schemes, and other East Bengal refugees, who originally came to West Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh under colonization schemes, due to hard life, left their original settlements and came to Andaman Islands to settle permanently more than 40 to 50 years.

(b) **Tamil Communities** – both Sri Lankan Repatriates and from Tamil Nadu. They are mainly poor labour class, who came to the islands 40 – 50 years ago. This community in the mainland has been granted Scheduled Caste status. They are educationally, socially and economically backward. Hardly 1% higher study seats have been obtained and they are very few in number in good jobs.

There have been persistent demands for the grant of scheduled caste status.

(4) **Telegu community** came since 40 to 50 years from Andhra Pradesh, particularly from Srikakulam, for laborious jobs and settled. This community are recognized in Andhra Pradesh as Scheduled Caste/OBC. They are educationally, socially and economically backward and hardly 1% of this community has been able to avail higher education and respectable jobs.

They have been demanding for quite a long time to get recognized as Scheduled Caste.