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existing here-in the homogenous and casteless society of A&N Islands. The Bengalee refugees do not suffer from any kind of social disabilities like un-touchability, deprivation from use of public places and places of worship and other social boycotts unlike the SCs of other parts of the country. They have equal status in the society here.

In the absence of a proper survey the ethnographic details of Bengalee refugees are not readily available. However, it is understood that their numbers would be roughly to the tune of 57, 948 in the A&N Islands.

With regard to their educational and economic backwardness, it is stated that they are being provided with various facilities like free education to their children, seats for higher education/professional courses in the mainland, scholarship, preference in employment in services under the A & N Administration. Besides they have been identified as OBC by the A & N Commission for OBC as per its report submitted to this Administration. Once the report is accepted and they are notified as OBC, they will be provided with reservation of jobs in Government services.

This issues with the approval of Secretary (TW), A&N Administration.

Yours faithfully,

[Signature]
24.9.03
Research Officer (TW)
(CP: TI-refugees)

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