

(123) Ref: Secretary (TW)'s minutes at paras 114-115/N at page 28/N.

(124) It is regarding inclusion of Karen Community in the list of STs. On a memorandum dated 18.1.2003 submitted to the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India during his visit to the A & N Islands in January 2003 by the Youth Organization, which was received vide letter dated 6.7.2003 at p-74/C of the Deputy Director, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi, the issue has already been examined vide notes at paras 61-68/N on pages 16-17/N. Accordingly, a reply has been sent to the Govt. of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi vide this Administration's letter dated 1.4.2003 at page -97/C. The gist of the Administration's stand as contained in the above letter is reproduced below.

(125) " that the Karens were far more developed than even the Nicobarese, let alone the other five Primitive Tribes and the Karens already are getting preference in recruitment to Group-C and D posts under the Administration alongwith the other locals. So classifying them as a ST in respect of this UT would be detrimental to the interests of the Scheduled Tribes of this UT. Therefore the Administration did not recommend classification of Karens as ST earlier. The same view is still held by the Administration so far as according ST status to the Karens is concerned as the aboriginal tribes of this UT are much backward when compared to the Karens. Moreover, the Karens are not original inhabitants of this UT unlike the six STs namely - Great Andamanese, Onges, Jarawas, Sentinelese, Nicobarese and Shompens. The Karens were brought to this UT by the British colonial Administration to work as labourers in the forest in 1925-26 and subsequently settled."

(126) Now the Hon'ble MP vide his letter dated 28.9.2003 at page 136/C addressed to the Hon'ble Lt. Governor, A & N Administration Islands has stated that he has received a DO letter dated 13.8.2003 from the Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs that the Karen Community is yet to become eligible for inclusion in the list of STs of the A&N Islands. He has further stated that the above reply is based on the report of the Administration. He has requested the Hon'ble Lt. Governor to look into the matter and reconsider the case.

(127) He has sent another letter dated 28.9.2003 at page 135/C addressed to the Secretary (TW) asking for a copy of the Administration's letter sent to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs regarding inclusion of the Karen Community in the list of STs. Obviously he is referring to the Administration's letter dated 1.4.2003 at P-97/C reiterating the stand taken by the Administration with regard to inclusion of the Karen in the list of the STs way back in 1994.