

KAREN YOUTH ORGANISATION

Registered Under Societies Registration Act 1860

Registration No. 829

Head Office : Webi Vill & P. O. Mayabunder - 744 204

NORTH ANDAMAN INDIA

51

Ref. No. _____

Date _____

-2-

Sub: Inclusion of the Karen in the list of Scheduled Tribes in Andaman & 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:-

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

That, Karen is a tribe of Mongoloid origin. They were brought down to Andamans from Burma now Myanmar (a very 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. Lugi 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 capacitate 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 Karen 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 Karen were given land at Webi and nearby areas in Middle Andaman for cultivation and to start their own settlement .The 1951 census shows that there were 384 Karen and were considered naturalized 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 settlement spread out in eight villages. Total Karen population is about 2200.

That, Karen are peace loving, honest and hard working people. They have lived all these years peacefully with very few demands. Cultivation of paddy is the main occupation