

7. The question of resumption of construction on the present gap of 23 kms i.e. 87 kms - 110 kms is to be viewed in the foregoing context. The Andaman Trunk Road forms the eastern boundary of the Jarawa Reserve in South Andaman Island from its 46 kms point to 110 km point. Hence any activity on this road is likely to affect the flow of life in the Jarawa Reserve. At the same time, the portion of the road abutting the Jarawa reserve forms a part of a trunk-line from south of Port Blair in the South Andaman Island to right upto arial Jetty in the North Andaman Island and an investment of about Rs 12 crores is reported to have been already made in this road. But on account of the gap between 87 and 110 kms the trunk road has remained virtually unoperational. We have been impressed by the argument that although the trunk road has been in use in parts, its full utility from 0 km at Chidiatapu to Arial Jetty will be possible only if the gap of 23 km is bridged. This will allow optimal transport of human and goods commerce, both from the mainland and between the islands. During the discussions we held with the Island Councillors and the Administration officials, they placed emphasis on the role of the Andaman Trunk Road in the Island's economy. In fact, its contribution to the overall development cannot be discounted; the potentiality of the road for the total economy and development in the Andamans is fully appreciated. This inclines us in favour of an uninterrupted link-up of communication from the South Andaman to North Andaman Islands.