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are being carried out purely by the departmental agency. Intrusions inside the Jarawa Reserve for illicit fellings and illicit collection of forest products could have been possible only if private agencies were allowed to work in those areas.

The present estimated population of the Jarawa is believed to be near about 250 and the total area of the Jarawa Reserve notified by the Local Administration in 1979 covers an area of 765 sq.km. In addition to this, the Administration has already made provision for a cushioning zone of 200 metres in width all along the boundary of the Jarawa Reserve. Hence banning of activities beyond such limit will only jeopardise the economic development of these islands, because any further expansion of Jarawa Reserve will leave hardly any significant area for working by the Forest Department. The total geographical area of the South and Middle Andaman islands works out to approximately 2400 sq.km., out of which area of the productive forests after excluding the mangrove swamps and revenue area works out to only about 2000 sq.km. Even, out of this 2000 sq.km. under productive forest, an area of 765 sq.km. has been set aside as Jarawa Reserve. In the remaining 1235 sq.km. area available for working, about 75% of the area has already been worked in the past and contains young regenerated crop. Thus, any further reduction in the working area will simply amount to closing down of forestry operations in South and Middle Andaman Islands, which will ultimately will have several immediate serious repercussions such as :-

- (a) Retrenchment of about 1000 permanent workers deployed in the forestry sector. *(By Mr. Magdoo)* (25)
- (b) Drastic reduction in the availability of timber to the local woodbased industries as against the commitment made, which will also ultimately result in reduction in the number of work force employed by them. (26)
- (c) Prescriptions of the Working Plans approved by the Govt of India regarding harvesting of timber on sustained yield basis will be completely thrown out of gear. (27)