

COMPREHENSIVE NOTE ON USE OF ANDAMAN TRUNK ROAD

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The Andaman Trunk Road (ATR) is having a length of 333 Km and a part of it, is passing through Jarawa Reserve in two small segments together having an extent of 56 Km. The ATR is being used by settlers numbering about 1.5 Lac, settled in North and Middle Andaman Islands. The segment of ATR passing through a portion of Jarawa Reserve is also used by Eco Tourists, to visit Mud Volcano and Lime Stone Cave situated at Baratang Island. The tourist population which uses this segment of ATR roughly amounts to 10% of the total ATR users. The ATR is the only land route available to transport materials required for the livelihood of settlers living in North and Middle Andaman Islands. Most of the settlement villages are not directly connected to coast line and therefore the ATR has become the only lifeline available for the settlers.

2) On the directions of the Hon'ble Circuit Bench of Calcutta High Court in a PIL (WP No. 048 of 1999), the Central Government notified Jarawa Policy, 2004 vide Andaman and Nicobar Gazette Notification No. 210 dated 21.12.2004 and the same is being implemented strictly to ensure protection and welfare of Jarawas. The policy mandates the A&N Administration to protect and secure Jarawas, who are the only human heritage available in the world. The notified Jarawa Policy envisaged on ATR regulation as indicated below: -

- (a) Traffic on Andaman Trunk Road will be regulated strictly limiting the traffic to the essential purposes of public transport, supplies and emergency evacuation of patients and to ensure that it is an innocent and harmless passage and not a source of trouble to Jarawas.
- (b) Vehicles on Andaman Trunk Road will be allowed to move only in restricted hours and in convoy under notified speed limit to avert possible road accidents and to avoid any sort of interaction of travelers with Jarawas.
- (c) Facilities for travel by boat/ ship will be strengthened and transportation/ travel by sea will be encouraged.
- (d) Maintenance of the Andaman Trunk Road will be carried out by a mobile maintenance team bringing men, machine and materials from Ferrargunj/ Jirkatang and carry out the job only during day time.
- (e) The tourist traffic on Andaman Trunk Road will be strictly monitored to ensure that there is no interaction between the Jarawas and the tourists.

3) The movement of vehicles in the ATR is being regulated by a convoy system under the direct supervision of a Senior Police Officer, presently in the rank of Inspector General. Only 4 (four) convoys on either side of the segment of ATR passing through Jarawa Reserve are permitted in a day. The convoy timing is maintained very strictly without any deviation or any consideration to anyone, the only exception given to Ambulance carrying serious referral patients to GB