

order is referred as "Supreme Court order" for short). The relevant portions of this order are quoted below:

**Para 2.** There does not seem to be any objection to this Court in accepting the Report of Shri Shekar Singh that some modifications have been suggested. We therefore, in the first instance, accept the Report of Shri Shekar Singh.

**Recommendation No. 20:** specific actions shall be undertaken by Ministry of Environment & Forests/Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration on the other recommendations of Shri Shekhar Singh Report which are not specifically dealt with in above orders. Ministry of Environment & forests and the Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration shall file an affidavit within three months giving details of action taken by them on each of such recommendations.

It appears necessary to quote here below the relevant portion of Shekar Singh Report which reads as below:

**"25) The forest department should be strengthened and appropriate village institutions set up for the purpose, as detailed later;**

#### **D. ROAD THROUGH THE JARAWA TRIBAL RESERVE**

Perhaps the best remaining natural forest in the Andaman Islands are in the tribal reserves. The most significant of these are the Jarawa Reserve in South and Middle Andaman and the Onge Reserve in Little Andaman. Due to the earlier hostility of the Jarawas, these areas were left alone. However, in recent years the Andaman Trunk Road has opened up and passes contiguous to and in some cases through the tribal reserve (map at annex 21). This road, and the increased access to the Jarawas, poses a major threat not only to the Jarawa tribals but also to the forests that they have protected for so many years. The road has also made it easier for encroachments to take place in the forests by following easy access to many forest areas that were earlier not easily approachable.

Interestingly, a high level committee constituted at the behest of the then Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi, had suggested in the early 1980s that, as regards the Andaman Trunk Road:

- i) though the absence of any road would be the ideal condition for the Jarawa, the next alternative would be
- ii) to realign the road so as to orient it as far away from the boundary for the Jarawa Reserve as possible."

#### **Recommendation**

**26) The Andaman Trunk Road should be closed to all vehicular traffic from Miletalak in South Andaman to the northern boundary of the S. Andamn Island. Similarly, it should be closed to all traffic from Kadamtala (corresponding to Prolobjig camp No.3) in Middle Andaman upto Kausalya Nagar (corresponding to Porlobjig camp No.15). This should be done within three months. Further, no person except for the Jarawas living in the Reserve should be allowed to enter the Reserve by any means unless**