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**PUC-I** –The Director, FRA Division, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi has requested to furnish the latest information of the number of forest villages, old habitation, unsurveyed villages and other villages in forests whether recorded, notified or not, converted into revenue villages so far under Section 3(1) (h) of the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006, to monitor the implementation of Forest Rights Act, 2006.

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In this connection, it is submitted that the area inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands has been declared as Reserved Areas under the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956 and their interests are fully protected under the said Regulation by exclusively preserving the area for them in which they enjoy unfettered rights to use forest products for their bonafide use under the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006.

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Recently, the A&N Administration has filed the Reply Affidavit of Writ Petition (civil) No.50 of 2008 titled Wildlife Trust of India and Others -vs- Union Of India and others pending before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, in which, we have committed that the interest and ownership rights of the Scheduled Tribes in Andaman and Nicobar islands are fully protected under A&N Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulations, 1956 and in absence of other traditional forest dwellers further vesting of any forest rights under FRA, 2006 does not arise in A&N Islands.

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In view of the above, it is to be noted that the tribes and tribal situation of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands cannot be compared with the tribes of other part of India because the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956, promulgated by the President of India provides for protection of the interests of aboriginal tribes and declaration of the geographical area as reserved areas for the exclusive community ownership of the tribes. This Regulation has overriding effect over other laws under Section 11 of Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956.

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Such being the case, a draft reply on the above lines is placed alongside for kind perusal.

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**PUC-II** – The Secretary to Govt of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt of India has cited the reference of Hon'ble Supreme Court's order dated 28.2.2019 in the matter of Writ Petition (civil) No.50 of 2008 titled Wildlife Trust of India and Others -vs- Union Of India, regarding eviction of rejected cases under Forest Rights Act, 2006.