

6. Cultural Identity of Hindu Bengali Settlers:

The policy of A & N Administration is to maintain the existing social harmony and continuing a casteless society in these Islands. It is advisable that this status quo be maintained in future also.

7. Demand for reservation of 27% for OBCs and 15% for SCs.

The A & N Commission for OBC is the authority to identify the social backwardness of any community and to recommend the percentage of reservation and has recommended for reservation of 38% of jobs and services under A & N Administration for OBCs of A & N Islands. Therefore, demand for any hike/reduction in percentage of reservation cannot be acceded.

8. OBC Commission of A & N Administration

The Andaman and Nicobar Commission for Other Backward Classes was set up as a permanent body vide Notification No. 12/F.No.1-611/93-TW dated 23.2.1994, consisting:

- (a) A Chairperson who is or has been a judge of a High Court or the Supreme Court
- (b) Chairperson, A & N Social Welfare Advisory Board (Member Ex-officio)
- (c) Two non-official members, who have special knowledge in matters relating to backward classes, to be nominated by the Administration.
- (d) Secretary (TW) A & N Administration (Member Secretary Ex-officio)

The Commission is authorised to regulate its own procedure. On recommendation of the Commission, A & N Administration has notified the following communities viz. Pre-1942 settlers of A & N Islands comprising of the (i) Local Borns (ii) Bhatus or the Bhantus (iii) the Moplahs and (iv) the Karens and (v) Post - 1942 Bengali Settlers settled in the islands under various rehabilitation schemes of the Central Government as OBCs in respect of A & N Islands vide Notification No. 343/3/2005 dated 16.12.2005, and as further amended vide notification No. 75/2006 dated 19/4/2006, making eligible for 38% reservation in recruitment to Group-C and D posts under A & N Administration. Therefore A & N Administration does not agree to the BAANI's claim of declaring the Bengali Settlers as OBCs "highly unethical and undemocratic".

9, 10, 11: Bengali Settlers are the first humane/civilized Indians to be settled in Andaman Islands.

The Bengal Settlers stated to be belonging to SC category in the mainland were settled in these islands under the approved rehabilitation schemes of the Government of India. Hence no comments to offer in this issue.