

periodically visiting their areas as has been the practice over the last 25 years. It may be mentioned here that Shri Enmay and Smti Enmay had also been introduced to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee at Port Blair on 31st December, 1998 and again on 1st January, 1999.

From the month of September, 1998 onwards large numbers of Jarawas, including women and children began to appear at Tirur outpost in South Andaman, and also along the Andaman Trunk Road (ATR) in South and Middle Andaman Islands (The ATR which runs along the length of South Andaman, Baratang Island in the Middle Andaman group, Middle Andaman Island and a portion in North Andaman, is the only link between Chidyatapu, the southernmost point in South Andaman, and Diglipur in North Andaman, a distance of about 330 kms. In between the road is cut by the Middle Strait separating the South Andaman from Baratang Island, Humfray Strait separating Baratang from Middle Andaman, and Austin Strait separating Middle from North Andaman Islands.) This road is not a recently constructed one, and was actually commenced in the 1960s and completed in the late 1970s. It was built by the Border Road Organisation (Yatrik). For a distance of about 120 kms it runs along the eastern periphery of the Jarawa reserve. Towards the end of 1998 the Jarawa had been appearing in large numbers at a time along the ATR. Their interaction with non-tribal settlements on the periphery of the ATR have not been hostile but one of aggressive curiosity. On a few occasions the Jarawas have also entered non-tribal settlements which are well away from the forest, usually at night and aggressively demanded various household articles, arousing resentment among those in the settlements. The Jarawas do not, as yet have a clear understanding of ownership and right to property, and therefore tend to snatch articles.

To study these developments the Administration has created a task force of officers including the Inspector General of Police, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Director (Tribal Welfare), some local experts who are long time residents of these islands with experience of working on Jarawa related schemes, Director of the Anthropological Survey of India Dr. R.K.Bhattacharjee (based at Calcutta), the local representative of the Anthropological Survey of India, Dr. Kanchan Mukhopadhyaya, Director of Health Services and