

In the context it may be mentioned here that nearly, 649 Sq. Kms. of reserve forest has been declared as a Tribal Reserves on the western side of the Middle Andaman Island and South Andaman Island. Keeping in view the estimated population of Jarawas i.e. 300 to 500, the present extent of reserve area appears to be adequate. Further, more this area has got vast sea-coast as well and the Jarawas have an access to this marine food resources.

Administration has already started the program of enrichment of the existing tribal reserve area through the scientific method, which includes raising of the dispersed plantation of local varieties of the fruit bearing trees in the available open spaces in the reserve areas, sea ranching and sea creek ranching. These programs will further augment the food resource for the Jarawas.

The administration is enforcing the strict vigilance against the poaching in the tribal reserve areas. With all this, there would not be any shortage of food for the Jarawas. Therefore, there does not appear to be an absolute necessity to up-root the rehabilitated Bengali refugees from the Andaman Islands to restore the reserve to the original 1957 limits.

The traffic on the Andaman Trunk Road is strictly regulated by the Administration with a view to avoid disturbance to the Jarawas. Further, all measures are taken to prevent possible entry of the encroaches into the tribal reserves through the Andaman Trunk Road. Moreover it is through this Andaman Trunk Road only, land communication to other Islands and settlements of the general public is possible. So the closing of the Andaman Trunk Road would amount to dislocation of the system. As such closure of ATR at this stage appears to be not needed.

The Administration is fully aware of the cultural aspects of the Jarawas. We are not going to impose our own values and systems on the Jarawas. The Administration is not going to repeat the colonial mistakes committed on the Andamanese and Onges, while dealing with the Jarawa issue now.

However it is an endeavor of the Administration to equip the Jarawas against possible competition by the un-scrupulous civilized people and to enable them to co-exist with the advanced society / civilization. This will be only through the process of acculturation of the Jarawas themselves.