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KALPAVRIKSH



Environmental
Action Group

Dr. S.A Awaradi,
Director, Tribal Welfare,
Secretariat
Port Blair-744101

January 17, 2006

Sub: Jarawa Tribal Reserve, Andaman Islands

Dear Dr. Awaradi

I am writing to you in the context of a project titled 'Preparation of a dossier on the Jarawa Tribal Reserve that is spread over South and Middle Andaman Islands'. Kalpavriksh has been recently commissioned by UNESCO to put together the dossier as part of a project within the framework of the UNESCO's Coasts and Small Islands Platform, and its contribution to the Joint Mainline of Action on Enhancing Linkages between Biological and Cultural Diversity. Kalpavriksh is an environmental NGO that has been working on issues in the islands for more than a decade. The project is being done in collaboration with anthropologist Dr. Vishvajit Pandya.

The main purpose of this project is to identify and understand some of the key and intricate linkages between cultural and biological diversity in the islands in general and in the context of the Jarawa community in particular. A more detailed concept note on the project is attached here for your reference.

As part of the project we are hoping that we will be able to draw upon a wide range of diverse experiences, expertise and knowledge that already exists. We already have inputs from a number of individuals and certain agencies like the National Remote Sensing Agency (NRS) for the purpose. I have also written to the A&N Administration, the Forest Department in the Islands, the Anthropological Survey of India and the Planning Commission for their inputs and collaborations. Since there are various agencies involved in various aspects related to the Jarawas and the Jarawa Reserve, the idea is to bring all relevant information and perspectives in a single place. It is hoped that the document will become an useful tool and information source for planning, policy and decision making in matters related to the Jarawas and the Jarawa Reserve.

We are all aware of the fact that some of the best and least disturbed forests in the Andaman islands now survive in only those parts of South and Middle Andaman Islands that have been designated as the Jarawa Tribal Reserve under the Andaman & Nicobar Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Regulation (ANPATR) - 1956.

Your perspective and understanding of the Jarawa Tribal Reserve would therefore be very critical in the process of compiling this dossier and this is the broad framework within which I am writing to you.

Importantly, and as the note explains, the basic attempt of the dossier is to put together INFORMATION that helps us all better understand the situation of the ground today.