

96) PUC is a letter from JS (UT) request<sup>ing</sup> our comments on a note received from Secretary NAC. In this regard it is added that certain issues on Jarawa protection were raised by the Secretary NAC in her letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> August 2010 (page 82/c) and then in another letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010 (256/c) which was subsequent to the status note on protection of Jarawas sent vide our letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> October 2010 (page 202/c). We again sent a para wise reply vide our letter dated 18<sup>th</sup> Nov 2010 (page 268/c). Many of the observation of Sh. Dhiraj Srivastava, PS to Chairperson NAC after his field visit on 11-12 November 2011 given in the PUC, are already addressed in our para wise reply. However as discussed, we may send the following para wise reply to MHA on salient observations and issues raised by Sh. Dhiraj Srivastava in his report to NAC;

97) **Para 1-** Administration continues to regularly monitor the websites and publicity material of the tour operators/travel agencies to weed out any mention of our vulnerable tribes. As pointed out in the tour notes, publicity material promoting *Jarawa tourism* do not appear to be in circulation anymore. Further, provision for penal action has been included in the proposed amendment to the PAT Regulation, to punish those who misuse information, photos etc of our vulnerable tribes.

98) **Paras 2, 3 and 4-** The Andaman Trunk Road (ATR) is the lifeline of the Andaman group of islands, connecting South Andamans, Baratang, Middle Andamans and North Andamans. The main traffic on the road is of essential commodities (including items of daily use), agricultural produce from the outlying villages to Port Blair, construction material for household/ development purposes, local passenger traffic. Tourist traffic represents a small portion of the total load, and that too mostly restricted to the Port Blair- Baratang sector. To close the road would negate decades of development for the residents of these islands, and would also be counter-productive from the point of view of the Jarawa policy as it would make policing the borders of the Jarawa Reserve more difficult. Regulation of traffic including tourist traffic on the Andaman Trunk Road (ATR) which provides access to Baratang, Middle and North Andaman islands, is as per the policy of Jarawa Protection and various directives of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and Kolkata High Court. After the ban on commercial use of timber from the islands in 2002 and damage caused by the mega earthquake and the resultant tsunami of December 2004, the effort of government has been to promote nature based tourism in the islands. Accordingly steps have been taken to further develop tourist and related infrastructure. Due to various measures taken by the administration and GOI, the number of tourists coming to the islands started increasing after 2006. It has since then has grown at a healthy annual rate of about 20%. However A & N Administration is making all efforts to regulate and control traffic on ATR. Considering increasing tourist flow, some measures such as not allowing vehicles on the same day to reduce traffic on ATR, which were taken up earlier needs to be reworked. Also the large number of tourists has resulted in congestion of traffic and its proper movement on ATR as at two places vehicles have to cross the creeks by vehicle ferry.

99) We are presently looking at the traffic pattern and fresh ways to reduce number of vehicles and chances of any incidental interaction between the Jarawas and visitors using the ATR passing through the Reserve. However for maintenance of ATR, there is deployment of workers and vehicles on ATR during day time only and this sometime leads to their meeting with Jarawas. It has been observed in recent times, that the younger generation of Jarawas are coming out more, interacting with villagers outside the Jarawa Reserve, coming onto the road and nearby jetties including where tourists frequent and are sometime seen whetting their curiosity seeing the modern equipment and technology. The time has come for a review our policy of 'no' or 'least' interference, for whether we like it or not, the days of the Jarawa preferring isolation and no contact with the outside world are over. If we do not equip the Jarawas with the capabilities required to cope up with our society, the consequences would be tragic for them. As with the Nôcobarese who are able to navigate their way through 'modern' society with considerable confidence, without loss of tribal identity and without being reduced to dependency on government handouts, we need to empower the Jarawas to fend