

Port Blair, dated 13th October, 2004

Dear Shri Singh,

Please refer to your letter No. 3/5/2004-SSW-V dated 26th August, 2004 regarding report on the matter, of inclusion of Balmiki Community as Scheduled Caste in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The matter has been discussed at length with the concerned officers. It has been reported that identification of any caste among the local population of A & N Islands is not feasible. Due to the special circumstances of the settlement of these Islands, most of the local population did not identify as belonging to any specific caste.

2. No Scheduled Caste has been notified in the A&N Islands. Even the Safai Karmachari of the Municipality have not sought the status of Scheduled Caste. There is no caste based discrimination in the A & N Islands.

3. Further, there is no data available relating to specific castes. Census of Castes is not feasible since the Registrar General of Census Operations (Govt. of India) have not issued any such instructions. Since no SC is notified in the Islands, it is not legally feasible to do any such caste-wise enumeration,

4. The identification of Balmiki Community, in particular, based on their social grouping, dialect, dress and food habits etc. is not feasible since they are not having any such distinct identity and characteristics in these Islands. A few of them, who may be there, may recall their place of origin or caste identity, but the present generation of local population does not have any characteristics and identification as belonging to any specific caste.