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The Journey of Jarawa Territory - From The 'Land of Terror' To The 'Land of Tourists'

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Introduction

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands also known as the Emerald islands are unique in their own way. Shrouded in mystery for years these islands stretch over a length of over 700 kms floating on the blue waters of Bay of Bengal. Situated approximately 1100 kms away in the east of the Indian mainland these are a group of 572 islands amongst which 36 islets are inhabited and rest of them still reflect a sense of mystery to the outer world. (Source: <http://www.andamans.gov.in/>) Going back to the discovery of these islands it is said that it was in 1789 that Lieutenant Archibald Blair from the East India Company was the first person to have occupied the Andaman Islands to keep his ships safe in the rains. But then he abandoned these islands in 1796 because of unhygienic climate and expenses in maintaining the harbour. Later, the capital of the islands, Port Blair was named after him. It can be said that this would have brought these islands to the notice of the outside world but these islands had already accommodated there residents. This became clear when after the first war of independence, Britishers planned to construct the cellular jail in these islands where they had to face the Jarawa tribe. The fight for land resulted in displacing the Jarawa from Port Blair to Baratang Island which became their permanent residence. Further as the settlers started increasing in the islands the peripheral part of the Jarawa territory was occupied and the Andaman Trunk Road was constructed across the territory. This was a turning point for this hostile tribe which had changed their lifestyle and traditional practices, and the rest is history. Since then the tribe proves to be successful in making a prominent place in the headlines which instead of voicing their issues transformed the place into a tourist spot.

This paper narrates this journey of the Jarawa territory from being a 'land of hostile naked' to the land of 'hospitable neighbours'. The paper seeks to explore the reasons of this disastrous transformation. The paper is compiled with some secondary information collected from the internet and from the Andaman & Nicobar Islands during a month in October. This paper also has a prominent reflection of being well acquainted of the islands and describing this crucial journey with a pinch of firsthand lifetime experience. The initial part of the paper covers a brief archival outline of the Jarawa tribe from occupying the islands to getting displaced during the penal settlement. This describes the pre independent situation and the hardships suffered by the tribe. After which the paper gives a brief on the history of terror of the Jarawa tribe depicting various incidences of attack of different tribes on the outsiders and their reasons. Next part summarizes the post independent scenario i.e. the transformational phase of the tribe and their tragedy of being considered as an object to earn money which they are unaware of. The last part of the paper intends to develop curiosity and work out for a solution of this inevitable phase which the tribe is facing. This part would build in a curiosity and a sense of inquisitiveness to bring the tribe out of this vicious circle.

The Jarawas-An Archival Outline

The Jarawan story (here refers to the story of Jarawa) began long back around 1857. On records, it was the British people who from the mainland of India had the first encounters with the Jarawa tribe in these then considered 'forbidden islands'. This happened when after the first war of independence the British people planned to act even more cruelly and take the convicts along with them to the Andaman & Nicobar Islands. In 1858 the British government started the established of their penal settlement in the islands. The Port Blair was the main hub of the Britishers where they wanted to make their permanent settlement. In the early years of their residence they resided in the Ross Island which still has the remains of the Britishers. In the beginning of 1900s they had decided to construct the historical cellular jail in Port Blair when they had their first war with the Jarawa tribe and forced them to occupy the Baratang Island. Meanwhile the outbreak of diseases like measles and clashes with the other tribes resulted in the decline of population of the Jarawas; even then the Jarawas continued to be the major obstacle during the penal settlement in the islands. After the Britishers, the Japanese also for a year or two after the

end of World War II had invaded the islands which again resulted in a revolt with the tribals. On 23 Mar 1942, a Japanese force of one battalion of the 18th Division arrived, backed by a powerful naval fleet. (Source: http://ww2db.com/battle_spec.php?battle_id=190). There was a drastic decline in the population of the Jarawas and other tribes too. After all they only had some bows and arrows and the other side was an army equipped with all modern ammunitions who had come to invade the islands. The tribes were experiencing this on their so called 'own land'. Since the penal settlement Jarawas were changing places. When India got Independence in 1947, it was this lot of people who were still enslaved.

The boxes 1,2 and 3 depicts the historical milestones pre and post independence which consists of almost all the major events which took place in the life of the Jarawas which transformed their hostile nature to being quite hospitable to the outsiders.

1789: British East India Company decides to set up colony in the Andaman Islands; Lt Hyde Colebrooke visits the islands, meets native islanders and records some of their language - it is found out later that it belongs to the Jarawa; the colony that was set up was abandoned a few years later

1839: Earliest known exploration of flora of the Andamans by the Russian scientist, Dr Hefler; he lost his life to the hostility of the local inhabitants

1857: Sepoy mutiny, also known as the first war of Indian independence

1858: Establishment of the penal settlement in the Andamans by the British

1860: A track cut from Port Blair in the east to Port Mouat in the west by the British; Jarawas were occasionally met in peaceful interactions and reportedly took away some useful metal articles

1863: First reported attack on the British by the Jarawa; Rev Corbyn undertakes an expedition to the Jarawa area

1869: One of the first records/accounts of timber extraction from the Andaman forests

1875: First record of deaths in conflict with the Jarawa; six convicts and two Jarawas killed

1878: One Jarawa woman and two children captured during an expedition near Constance Bay

1880: Jarawas kill an Andamanese man at Port Campbell

From 1789 to 1999 there are records of a little over 300 conflict incidents between the Jarawa and the settlers many of which led to injuries and deaths.

1873: First record of Syphilis among the indigenous peoples of the islands

1883: a station established at Port Campbell at the Tarachang camp- later called the Tarachang home

1886: Epidemic of measles in the Andaman forests

1890s: Onges of Little Andaman Island contacted through gift giving expeditions by the British; also believed to be the time when the Jarawas first started occupying Middle Andaman Island

1891: Jarawas first occupy parts of Baratang Island

1896: Construction works of the Cellular Jail starts

1901: First census in the islands. Total population of the Andaman Islands: 18138; Jarawa population estimate: 585; Onge estimate: 672; Sentinelese estimate: 117; Great Andamanese actual count: 625; The Aka-Bea-Da, one of the ten groups constituting the Great Andamanese community go extinct

1902: Punitive expedition against the Jarawa by the British

1906: First Working Plan for the forests prepared by F.H. Todd; Construction work of Cellular Jail completed

Box1

The Journey of Jarawa Territory - From The 'Land of Terror' To The 'Land of Tourists'

1911: Jarawa population estimate: 114; Onge estimate: 631; Sentinelese estimate: 117; Great Andamanese actual count: 455; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 17,641

1921: Jarawa population estimate: 114; Onge estimate: 346; Sentinelese estimate: 117; Great Andamanese actual count: 209; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 17,814; clear felling system for extraction of timber introduced in the Andaman forests

1925: Establishment of the Karen village of Webi on Middle Andaman Island; the Moplahs were also settled in the Andamans around this time

1931: Jarawa population estimate: 70; Onge estimate: 250; Sentinelese estimate: 50; Great Andamanese actual count: 90; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 19,223

1941: Total population of the Andaman Islands: 21,316

1942: Occupation of the Andaman Islands by the Japanese

1947: India's Independence

1950: Remnants of Great Andamanese community (estimated to be a total of nineteen individuals) settled on Strait Island

1951: Jarawa population estimate: 50; Onge estimate: 150; Sentinelese estimate: 50; Great Andamanese actual count: 23; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 18,962

1952: Chengappa's Working Plan for the Andaman forests

1956: Notification of the 'Andaman and Nicobar Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Regulation (ANPATR) by the Government of India

1957 : Creation of tribal reserves in the names of the Jarawa, Onge and Sentinelese communities under the provision of the ANPATR; the Nicobar islands are also declared a tribal reserve; Bush Police outpost set up at Louis Islet

1961: Jarawa population estimate: 500; Onge actual count: 129; Sentinelese estimate : 50; Great Andamanese actual count: 19; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 48,985

1971: Jarawa population estimate: 250; Onge actual count: 112; Sentinelese estimate: 82; Great Andamanese actual count: 24; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 93,468

1974: First contact mission by the A&N Administration to establish friendly contact with the Jarawas along the west coast of the Jarawa Tribal Reserve

1977: Two Jarawa men, one with an old bullet wound were brought to Port Blair and then returned to the forest in the hope that they would carry the message of trust and goodwill

1979: Denotification of parts of the Jarawa Tribal Reserve to facilitate timber extraction, construction of the Andaman Trunk Road and clearing of forests for settlements, horticulture and agriculture

1981: Jarawa population estimate: 250; Onge actual count: 97; Sentinelese estimate: 100; Great Andamanese actual count: 26; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 1, 58,287

1988-89: Construction of the Andaman Trunk Road completed

1990: Master Plan 1991–2021 for Welfare of Primitive Tribes of Andaman and Nicobar Islands by S.A. Awaradi in the Kolkata High regarding the well-being and protection of the Jarawa Tribal Community; Measles epidemic amongst the Jarawa

Box 2

The Journey of Jarawa Territory - From The 'Land of Terror' To The 'Land of Tourists'

1991: Jarawa population estimate: 280; Onge actual count: 95; Sentinelese estimate: 100; Great Andamanese actual count: 45; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 2, 41,453; Jarawas attack the Bush Police Camp at Jirkatang and kill one policeman

1992: Jarawas attack the Bush Police Camp near Tirur

1996: 60–70 Jarawa surround timber extraction party at Puttatang killing some labourers and injuring some

1998 : Petition filed by three NGOs in the Kolkata High Court, Port Blair bench regarding timber logging in the Onge Tribal Reserve on Little Andaman Island

1999: Another petition filed by Port Blair-based lawyer

1998-99: Jarawa hostility to the outside world comes to a gradual end

2000: Jarawa raid on the settlement of Sippi Tikry in North Andaman Island

2001: Jarawa actual count: 240; Onge actual count: 96; Sentinelese estimate: 39; Great Andamanese actual count: 43; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 3,14,239

2002: Supreme Court of India orders for the closure of the Andaman Trunk Road in those parts that run through the forests of the Jarawa Tribal Reserve

2004: A 'Jarawa' Policy asking, mainly, for the Jarawa to be left alone is formulated in response to an order of the Kolkata High Court seeking a policy related to the Jarawa; area of Jarawa Tribal Reserve re-notified and increased to about 1,000 sq km; earthquake off the Sumatra coast, followed by the tsunami

2005: Eruption of volcano on Barren Island

2006: Another outbreak of measles reported amongst the Jarawa; Sub-group of experts on the Jarawa constituted by the Planning Commission submits its report. The group is chaired jointly by Dr Syeda Hameed, Member, Planning Commission and Mr Jairam Ramesh, Member, National Advisory Council

2007: A&N administration notifies a five kilometre buffer zone around the Jarawa Tribal Reserve

2010: Boa Sr, the 85 year woman believed to be the last speaker of the Bo language (in the Great Andamanese group) dies

2011: Jarawa actual count: 383; Great Andamanese actual count: 54; Total population of the Andaman Islands: 3, 80,581

2012: A controversy breaks out as the British newspaper Sunday Observer releases a short video showing six 'naked' Jarawa women dancing on the Andaman Trunk Road at the insistence of unseen male voices; A&N administration issues a modification diluting the buffer zone notification of 2007

2013: Buffer zone modified again, following which the SC orders closure of the Andaman Trunk Road for tourist traffic. A few weeks later the court re-allows all traffic on the Andaman Trunk Road; establishment of the Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute

Box 3

Source: The Last Wave: An Island Novel By Pankaj Sekhsaria (2014)

The Journey of Jarawa Territory - From The 'Land of Terror' To The 'Land of Tourists'



Figure 1: A photo of Jarawa ripping of the coconut

(Source: <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/tourism-be-prohibited-jarawa-reserve>)

The History of Terror

Sircar (2011): He highlighted that even before the first war of independence took place in India and the Britishers on their period of construction of cellular jail discovered some tribes in the 'Kala Pani' islands there was a recorded reference of the Jarawas in 1790. Lieutenant Robert Hyde Colebrook while making a survey around the Andamans in 1789-90 discovered the existence of Jarawas. Before this, only the great Andamanese Tribe was known to the world. Mr Sircar also mentioned that the Jarawas were misunderstood as a hostile tribe and tagged as 'unfriendly people' as they had already come in contact of the outsiders around 1884. He quotes in his book, "The history tells that before they came unfriendly towards the outsiders they came in contact of the outsiders with friendly gesture on several recorded occasions". What changed their attitude towards the outsiders was their fear of being thrown away from their own land.

Zubair Ahmed (2012) stated that in 1966, estimated the figures of Jarawas was around 300. Jarawa resistance towards the attitude of the colonizers was natural. Nobody would like to be pushed like this. The Jarawa attacks in 60s were not blind attacks. They would mark the person to be attacked

and planned the revenge. They would give sufficient warning signs before the attack. Jarawas never liked anybody hunting in their forests. This was not the scenario few years back when Jarawa was known to be a friendly tribe. It all changed when the Britishers and then the Japanese started invading the islands and displacing the tribe from their own habitat which they revered. The tribal population suddenly started decreasing. This might have been the reason when there were incidences of visitors who were murdered not only by the Jarawas but also by the other native tribes:

- Dr. Helfer, a Russian Geologist who was killed at Port Cornwallis in 1839.
- A pilot of a vessel anchored in a harbor of the island and his crews were attacked in 1839.
- Captain Caw was killed at Camorta.
- Brigadier Fateh Islam and his crew of about 21 members were murdered by the Nicobarese.
- ‘Emily’ and ‘Flying Fish’ two ships were wrecked off the western coast of Andaman Islands.
- Shri B. Lachana got injured by Jarawa arrow while travelling in a bus in 1995.
- In the same year, a girl was wounded by arrows on her wrist while she was in a running bus.

[Source: Jarawa: The Struggle Continues, Sircar (2011)]

During the second penal settlement, the Battle of Aberdeen was fought which is considered to be the deadliest of all wars between the tribes and the Britishers. The hostile nature of the tribes thus came out in front of the world which continued in frequent intervals whenever the tribes had an intuition of danger. There were incidences when the convicts used to escape from the British imprisonment and were killed by the aboriginals. The tribes used to attack the British army to claim their land but as the army was well equipped, the tribe would always fail. Over all it was a game of ‘Survival of the Fittest’.

Tribes	Census Years					
	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1961
Andamanese	625	455	209	90	23	19
Onge	672	631	346	250	150	129
Jarawa		114	114	70	50	

Tribes	Census Years					
	1901	1911	1921	1931	1941	1961
Sentinelese	385	117	117	50		
Total	6,501	8,818	9,292	10,240	12,009	14,563

(TABLE 1)

Source: L.P.Vidarthi(1971) Cultural Diversities in the Andaman And Nicobar Islands: A Preliminary Report

Tribes/ Years	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
Great Andamanese	23	19	24	26	45	43
Onges	150	129	112	97	95	96
Sentinelese		50			100	39
Jarawa	50	500	NE	31	(280)	(240)
Nicobarese	11,902	13,903	17,874	21,984	26,000	28,653
Shompens	20	71	92	223	250	398

(TABLE 2)

Note: NE is not estimated, figures in brackets are estimates

Source: Rethink Tourism in the Andamans (2008) by Equations “Basic Statistics”, 2005–2006, Directorate of Economics and Statistics (DES), A&NI Administration.

Sircar (2011) mentioned that the available data reveal that the cases of Jarawa hostility from 1950’s to 1970’s were only around 75 in number while about 189 cases of Jarawa violence recorded in a single decade between 1980 to 1990 against the construction of the Andaman trunk Road.

Inspite of the cannibal nature of the Jarawas the territory still attracted different people for different reasons. Pre independence, the Britishers, post independence the researchers, as things started getting discovered here, poachers for the endemic flora and fauna species and at last the tourists who posed even more dangerous than any of these visitors.

The Andaman Trunk Road (Atr) – A Bloody Construction

The Jarawas had resisted any non tribal or inter tribal contacts since 1891. They were known to be one of the most hostile and mysterious tribal groups of the world which was getting ready to become the guinea pigs for the anthropologists, researches and scientists. In 1947, 700 aboriginal negrito hunter and gatherers and 19,000-non tribals in the Andaman Islands, in the Bay of Bengal became citizens of free India (Pandya, 2002). As the five year plans of the government started developing the rest

of India, the infrastructure of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands too was undergoing a significant change. As island started developing consequently the population started increasing. The convicts which were brought by the Britishers during their rule (who are now given the name as 'Pre 42' group of people), the settlers who started coming from the mainland to settle in the islands for different reasons and the central government employees who were sent from the mainland for bureaucratic and other government jobs formed a mixed population of the islands. Samir Acharya in the Jarawa Tribal Reserve Dossier by Kalpavriksha (2002) states that the induction of the new settlers into the islands brought with it the need for transportation and communication between the headquarters at Port Blair and the settlements and also between one village and another. With the increasing population and limited space in the island, needs emerged for land, accommodation, transportation routes and means of communication. This was the time when the government felt the need to connect all the major establishments of the islands through any possible way. The Jarawa tribe who was already displaced from their natural habitat during the penal settlement was in target again. The government planned to draw a route to connect the headquarters Port Blair to the northern parts of Andaman and the best possible way came out to be through the Jarawa Territory in Baratang. The tribes were considered not less than animals which can be just shooed off the way. No one realized that the people who were being displaced for the construction to comfort the outsiders were the owners of that land. The Jarawa Tribal reserve Dossier by Kalpavriksha (2002) mentioned that the construction started around 1978 when the Jarawas were made deprived of their resources and their land. The Jarawas were traumatised by the large-scale tree-felling and use of noisy heavy machinery for construction of the road, which probably also drove away their prey species. The road also effectively cut off their free access to the east coast resulting in further loss of habitat and shrinkage of their area available for resource gathering. There were incidences when the non tribal labourers became the victim of the tribes and were found to be dead the next day but nothing could stop the settlers. The construction area was even electrocuted which resulted in the death of many wild elephants and the Jarawas too. The year 1988 marked the completion of the Andaman Trunk Road.

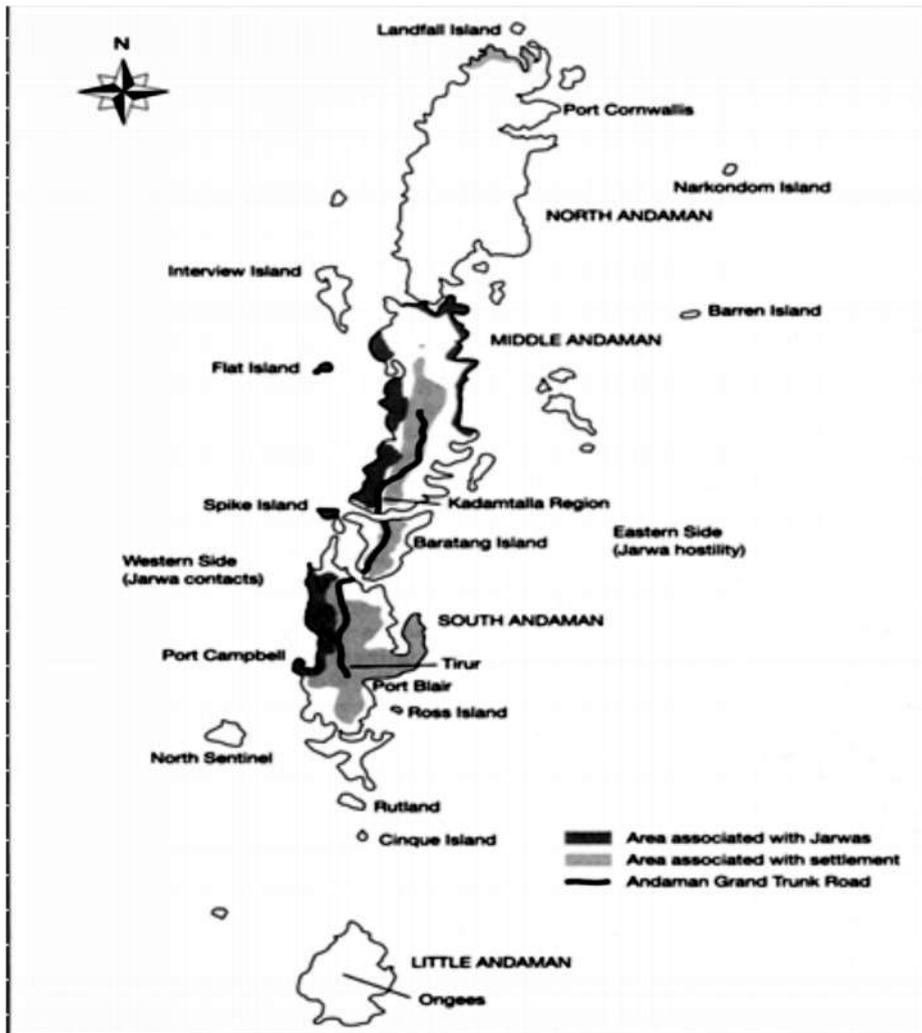


Figure 2: A screenshot showing Jarawa territory and ATR

(Source: Contacts, images and imagination: The impact of a road in the Jarwa reserve forest, Andaman Islands, Vishvajit Pandya (2002))

It took quite long as it was constructed in phases because of the inclement weather conditions and other obstacles like high cost of construction, thick rain forest, difficult terrain and hostile resistance offered by the tribals. Many agencies kept an eye on the consequences of the construction of the road from the middle of the Jarawa Territory with regard to environment degradation as well as the humane acts taking place. During the construction environment was one of the aspects which was getting exploited. Trees were chopped off, forests were burnt and animals died

off the electrocution done at night around the construction. If this was the case with the environment, imagine the innocent Jarawas who were treated like objects on their own land. Although there was a constant protest from the Jarawas through the showers of their sharp poisonous arrows, yet the construction was on full swing. Sircar (2011) stated that several APWD workers; Kalimuthu, Bhimbahadur (21.04.1969), Joseph Kujur, Emil Bara, Markose Tigga, Philmon Dundung, Mangal Kujur and Budha Munda on 29.01.1971 and Dawood Kiro on 7.5.1972 were attacked by the Jarawas when they were engaged in construction of ATR. Hundreds of Jarawas in turn were electrocuted and died. Surprisingly, the Jarawa Forest Area where all these incidences were taking place was declared Reserve Forest in 1975 by the then Chief Commissioner of the islands. In spite of providing it a status of reserve the construction and the death fair continued.

Many anthropologists, researchers and organizations raised voice for ceasing of the construction and protection of this traditional living treasure. Sircar (2011) mentioned that a report even said that the construction was under query by Smt. Indira Gandhi on the grounds of its running through a forest reserve. But the construction was way more important to the settlers and the government than the environment and the lives of tribals and their workers.

While the population of the outsiders and settlers was increasing, the population of the tribal community was dwindling. The increasing population on the islands began to cause a crunch to the natural resources and the tribal communities of the island simultaneously.

Consequences of The Atr Construction – The Transformational Phase

The construction was complete in 1988-89 and the islanders started traversing through the reserve. It was not only the transportation which was taking place in the reserve. Poaching and encroachment was a frequent activity taking place simultaneously. It seemed like the way was made for the poachers and it was used by the people to travel to other islands. The government had actually made it easy for the poachers and encroachers to collect the endangered species of the flora and fauna from the reserve forest. The reserve became a region to generate money. On one hand the poachers were approaching and on the other hand the Jarawa Tourism was planning to emerge. The construction of the road had done its job

of breaking the ice between the islanders and the tribe. Rest of the part was being done by the poachers who were frequently seen in the forest and by the buses and other vehicles carrying passengers. Jarawas had attacked people in running bus initially but later they became acquainted with the outsiders seen in their territory. Moreover the islanders had also constructed their houses around the reserve which was another step forward to mingle with the tribe. As curiosity is a human tendency, it was evolving on both the sides. There were incidences when the Jarawas used to enter the gardens and backyards of the houses and steal fruits and other objects which seemed attractive to them. The shopkeepers had complaints that they pick eatables from the shops and they stand helpless. The Jarawas posed no longer to be hostile to the outsiders. They had suffered enough and were becoming habituated of the picking up new things everyday from their neighbour which was no crime according to them.

As the Jarawas continued to be a part of the headlines, apart from the researchers there existed a different lot of people who were keenly waiting to be a part of the audience. The tourists visiting these islands started demanding to get a glance of the tribe which fell on the way to the lime stone caves. It all initiated when the tourists started throwing bananas and clothes from their vehicles. This attracted the tribals to collect food and the tourists clicked the photographs of them to be taken as a souvenir to their place. Such was the scene in 1997, on the roadside; the Jarawas could be seen wearing sunglasses and colourful t-shirts, with every other traditional aspect of attire such as their body paints, baskets, bows and arrows. They started waiting on the road side for the vehicles and buses carrying tourists to grab eatables and clothes. Local shopkeepers started their business near the jetties for selling eatables to attract the Jarawas. Vishvajit Pandya (2002) stated in his paper that people spend money at these shops to buy things for the Jarawas. Over last three years, the practice is so institutionalized that shopkeepers have in fact trained Jarawas in a new form of foraging. Whatever the passengers give to the Jarawas, Jarawas carefully bring back to deposit with the shopkeepers. The Jarawa territory was turning down to become a 'Human Zoo'. Tourists started coming only to see how their ancestors used to be in the age of early man. The main disaster which was taking place here was the change in the culture of Jarawas. Feeding them with biscuits, chocolates, pan (Indian mouth freshener), alcohol giving them colourful t-shirts and sunglasses to wear, providing them medical aids were the unnecessary things provided by the people and the government

to those who were already self sufficient. International organizations such as Survival International raised voice to treat the Jarawas as human beings and let them live as they want. Allotment of special Jarawa police force and creation of buffer zone around the reserve forest area were some of the measures which were taken in order to protect this culturally rich tribe. In 2002 the Supreme Court had passed orders to stop the transportation on the ATR and close the reserve forest for any outsider but the game continued. It was the source of income for the locals there which they were not ready to stop at any cost. It was now the Jarawa protection police who used to bring tourists to the tribe and earn money by allowing them to interact with them and shoot their videos. The Jarawas who were once another name of terror for the people became the main source of income and entertainment. The innocent Jarawas had no idea what was happening to them in lieu of some fruits and pieces of clothes. When the tribes got used to the pans and alcohols given to them, they knew that if they would entertain anybody on the way they would get what they wanted. And the barter system on the ATR started. “Entertain us (in any possible way) and we’ll give whatever you want” was the ATR slogan. The scenario had changed. It all started from being scared of them to making friendly relationship with them to selling them. This gave rise to the controversial break out of 2012 when the tourists had shot the videos of the naked Jarawa women and it went viral on the web. When all this was protested by different NGOs and other agencies tourists still were not stopped from entering the region. A convoy system was introduced to prevent extra influx of tourists and stoppage in between the reserve. As one of the USPs of the islands, the limestone caves, had their way through the reserve, the tourists had to pass these areas where as the islanders for inter island travel used this way. It’s all still the same even now. Anything that has changed is the Jarawa community.

Year	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Total Tourists
1980	7,500	2,096	9,596
1981	8,835	1,170	10,005
1982	13,444	1,102	14,546
1983	14,020	1,817	15,837
1984	16,000	3,152	19,152

Year	Domestic Tourists	Foreign Tourists	Total Tourists
1985	20,291	1,264	21,555
1986	20,942	1,791	22,733
1987	31,591	2,085	33,676
1988	34,589	3,663	38,252
1989	39,967	2,392	42,359
1990	27,019	6,697	33,716
1991	32,242	2,248	34,490
1992	35,817	2,435	38,252
1993	35,000	1,771	36,771
1994	50,737	3,798	54,535
1995	64,490	3,849	68,339
1996	67,958	5,796	73,754
1997	73,558	4,724	78,282
1998	74,732	4,915	79,647
1999	77,448	6,035	83,483
2000	81,432	4,684	86,116
2001	85,866	5,249	91,115
2002	90,629	4,707	95,336
2003	93,899	4,281	98,180
2004	1,05,004	4,578	1,09,582
2005	30,225	2,156	32,381
2006	1,18,648	9,051	1,27,504

Figure 3: A screenshot of tourist arrivals from 1980 to 2006

(Source: Rethink tourism in the Andamans. Towards building a base of sustainable tourism. (2008) Equations by Department of Information, Publicity and Tourism (IP&T), Andaman & Nicobar Islands Administration, 2006)

Conclusion – A Question Mark (?)

Remains.....

The Jarawas, unfortunate to say, was once a tribe which was self sufficient and so much rich in traditional practices that the world would have got the answers of its many unknown quests. A major part of the biodiversity

who revere the endangered species of flora and fauna to protect them, who knew all traditional ways of curing the tiniest disease to undertaking a delivery with no complications without any modern technology or medical aid, are today being made dependant on us by us. Who are we trying to help? Do they need our help or is it we, who are in need of help? Have we failed to understand them or we don't want to understand them? The 340 km long road is said to be the only route which connects the other islands with the Port Blair but nowhere any attention was paid the report that an Environmental Impact Assessment taken up by the centre of taxonomy studies declared that waterways should be used as the more viable alternative to the road considering that the road hindered the natural environment. This deadly road happens to have triggered a disastrous change, a change which was not for good. Was the comfort of the islanders more important to the world than the life of the Jarawas?

The government provided medical aids to the tribe. Several agencies argued on the issue that the tribes are deprived of modern facilities which we enjoy and they are backward. Let us ponder upon this issue critically. The tribe who are much healthier than us, who cures of all deadly diseases through the herbs in the forest, who get early intuition of the natural calamities about to happen, can they be really called as backward people?. Are they in need of any of the technologies that we use today?

These are some of the questions which if not answered in the near future can create a catastrophe which would further cause either the tribe to extinct, biodiversity misbalanced or make the world devoid of a treasure of ravishing and precious cultural knowledge.



Figure 4:

The Journey of Jarawa Territory - From The 'Land of Terror' To The 'Land of Tourists'

One of the warnings posted by authorities along the Andaman Trunk Road going along the Jarawas' territory (Source: Times of India, 2014).

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