

The Jarawa of the Andamans

*Rhea John and Harsh Mander**

India's Andaman Islands are home to some of the most ancient, and until recently the most isolated, peoples in the world. Today barely a few hundred of these peoples survive. This report is about one of these ancient communities of the Andaman Islands, the Jarawa, or as they describe themselves, the Ang.

Until the 1970s, and even to a degree until the 1990s, the Jarawa people fiercely and often violently defended their forest homelands, fighting off a diverse range of incursions and offers of 'friendly' contact—by other tribes-people, colonial rulers, convicts brought in from mainland India by the colonisers, the Japanese occupiers, independent India's administration, and mainland communities settled on the islands by the Indian government. Since the 1990s, two of the three main Ang communities have altered their relationship with the outsider of many hues, accepting their 'friendship' and all that came with it, including health care support, clothes, foods like rice and bananas that were never part of their hunting-gathering existence, trinkets, roads, a range of intoxicants, tourists, and sexual and economic exploitation.

The conundrum of reporting in an Exclusion Report about a community like the Jarawa is that, in many ways, what we conventionally describe as 'inclusion' is actually exclusion—or what

some scholars describe appropriately as 'adverse inclusion'.¹ The experience of other Andaman tribes like the Great Andamanese and the Onge highlight poignantly and sombrely the many harmful consequences of such inclusion.² The continued dogged resistance of the Sentinelese to any contact with outsiders makes them perhaps the most isolated people in the world. On the other hand, the early adverse consequences of exposure of the Jarawa people to diseases and sexual exploitation by outsiders, suggest that safeguarding many forms of 'exclusion' may paradoxically constitute the best chance for the just and humane 'inclusion' of these highly vulnerable communities.

However, the optimal balance between isolation and contact with the outside world of such indigenous communities is something that no government in the modern world has yet succeeded in establishing. Perspectives about what indeed is in the best interest of hitherto isolated hunting-gathering communities continue to vary hugely.

Methodological Note

Before we proceed further, another caveat is in order. Writing about people who do not participate in the discourse to which the text seeks to contribute

* Rhea John and Harsh Mander are the lead author and contributing author, respectively.

** Advisors for this chapter were Samir Acharya, Shekhar Singh and Alia Allana.

*** This chapter has been reviewed by Sophie Grig

necessarily runs the risk of misrepresentation. With the indigenous peoples lumped into the evolutionary-anthropological classification of ‘tribes’, taking their views into account has itself only recently become part of the approach adopted by academic and policy establishments. The discourse continues, for instance, to refer to the people studied in this chapter as the ‘Jarawa’ ignoring the name they use themselves—‘Ang’—and their right to decide what they are to be called. In the present chapter we have used the two names interchangeably, in an effort to acknowledge the history of this contact.

Despite the objective of this chapter being to represent the Jarawa as fairly as possible, its methodology is constrained not just by difficulties in understanding those whose language and culture are profoundly different from our own, but by the policies in place. To protect what is still officially a relatively uncontacted tribe, the administration proscribes interactions with the Jarawa except with a permit, or for members of the welfare society that forms the interface between the state and the tribe, the Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS). Given the problematic outcomes of their interactions with the ‘outsider’, including health problems, the restrictions on our meeting Jarawa people was not unreasonable, but became a major challenge to writing the chapter.

As a result, this account relies on secondary literature, interviews with those who interact with the Jarawa or have authority over them, as well as on some limited primary observation.

The administration was willing to discuss their work with the Jarawa, their policy and its outcomes. Even if speaking to the Jarawas directly had been officially permitted, there would still be many challenges, both practical and ethical. The translation—of not only language, but also cultural context—was impossible within the time and resource limitations of the study. We wished to accomplish the objective of the chapter—to describe the situation of the Jarawa specifically in relation to

their rights and the policies enacted by the state—without the disruptive interaction that such a study might impose on the tribe. It is hoped that this limited methodology would not be construed as ignoring the voice of the Jarawa. Our object has not been to cast an anthropological spotlight on a relatively isolated tribe³ but to critically evaluate state and society in the Andamans, in relation to a specific population with different rights and vulnerabilities from most of the rest.

Historical background

The Jarawa tribe, along with the Great Andamanese, Onge and Sentinelese, constitute the four major tribes of the Andaman Islands. Of these, the longest and most extensive colonial interaction was with the Great Andamanese, initially through violence and repression, and thereafter active assimilation, from the side of the colonialists. The Great Andamanese were resettled on Strait Island, but by then they had been exposed to diseases to which they had no prior exposure, and consciously to tobacco, alcohol and drugs to foster submissiveness, as a cumulative result of which they have seen a rapid decline in numbers. The Onge have lost most of their former territory to logging interests, and have been made dependent on regular handouts from the state administration for all their needs.⁴ The Sentinelese have persistently and fiercely rejected contact with the rest of the world till date.

The Ang or Jarawa occupy large forested tracts of Middle and South Andaman Islands, which are being reduced by both official and encroached settlements of outsiders. There are three main groups of Jarawas, each referred to by the name of the town closest to their location: Kadamtala Jarawas in the North, Middle Strait Jarawas close to Baratang, and Tirur Jarawas in the South of the reserve area. The groups visit and maintain relations with each other, but each defines itself as distinct from the others.

The reserve area was first created in 1956, but its size has changed multiple times over the years in the absence of clear demarcations on both maps and the ground. Today the reserve consists of 1,024 square km of forests, creeks and coastal waters (out of the A&N Islands' 8,073 square km). In 2007, a buffer zone of 5-kilometre radius was added, within which no large-scale commercial activity is permitted. Under the tribe's protection, the Jarawa reserve area remains the best-preserved ecosystem of the islands.

The Jarawa were considered a 'hostile' tribe by the British from the time of the initial settlement at Port Blair, as they were at war with the 'friendly' Great Andamanese tribes who occupied the same territory, and resisted all attempts by outsiders to enter their area. The Jarawa were also subjected to extreme violence during the Japanese occupation of the Islands during World War II, which further alienated them from outsiders.⁵ The Indian government, in an attempt to gain fuller control over this outlying territory, began to send 'friendly contact' expeditions to the western coast of the Jarawa territory with gifts of food, cloth and iron from the 1950s. In the meantime, thousands of people arriving in India as refugees after Partition were resettled by the Government along the uncertain borders of the Jarawa reserve. This settlement by the Indian government on territories adjacent to the Jarawa territory paved the way for their increasing interaction with outsiders, which has especially grown during the last three decades.

'First voluntary contact' by the Jarawa with outsiders was made in 1974, when some Jarawa emerged from their forest unarmed and met the expedition's boats to collect the gifts themselves. However, they continued to be suspicious of outsiders, and violent towards those entering the forest to use its resources. They also long opposed, with violent attacks and ambushes, the construction of the Andaman Trunk Road (hereafter ATR) through the reserve, which only accelerated the highly unequal interaction with the outside world.

If the Indian state had not taken the two crucial measures of resettlement and constructing the ATR, the current situation of the Jarawa—fraught in certain ways that we will observe—could have been avoided or at least minimised.

The construction of the highway was accompanied by temporary settlements of workers along it that became permanent villages over time, encroaching on the reserve territory. The Jarawa undertook punitive expeditions to surrounding settlements to protest the invasion of their space, even taking lives in the process. The Bush Police was formed before Independence, first to protect British interests, and then to protect settlers from the Jarawa. Today the Bush Police has been reaggregated as the Jarawa Protection Force to protect the Jarawa from outsiders. In 1975, the Andaman Adim Janjati Vikas Samiti (AAJVS) [The Andaman Primitive Tribes Development Society] was created under the aegis of the government to work directly with tribal groups for their welfare.

In 1998, for the first time, small groups of Jarawa began to initiate friendly contact with the outside world. They began to engage with the local administration and with travellers along the Andaman Trunk Road, asking for bananas and coconuts—familiar gifts from the contact missions—and later demanding rides on vehicles. The popular story used to explain this shift is of a Jarawa boy named Enmei who, having been treated for a broken leg in Port Blair for three months, returned to the reserve with positive news about the outsiders. He led the exuberant 'contact party' of the Jarawa who arrived at Uttara jetty unarmed, causing shock and panic among those present, and demanded coconuts from the policemen who were rushed there to handle the situation.^{6,7} However, at the time a vast majority of Jarawa remained in the forest and did not participate in these excursions.

Whatever the cause of the shift, its effects in terms of increased poaching and entry into the reserve were unmistakable. The administration fulfilled the

Jarawas' demands, trying on the one hand to prevent or minimise contact with outsiders, while on the other, considering demands to integrate the tribe into the mainstream. At the local level meanwhile, the newly sociable Jarawa had become a sensation among the local settlers, who had been brought up in fear of Jarawa arrows and with stories that they 'used blood to play *Holi*'.⁸

In 1999, Shyamali Ganguly, a lawyer from Port Blair, noticed the Jarawa 'begging', or accepting food from travellers, along the ATR and filed a Public Interest Litigation in the Calcutta High Court—in her view, to protect the tribe's interests. In the case, she pleaded that the administration cease its neglect of the Jarawa and begin providing them access to welfare provisions considered essential in mainstream society, such as food rations, education and health care,⁹ as well as clothes and modern amenities.¹⁰ Subsequent interventions in the case by Kalpavriksh and the Society for Andaman and Nicobar Ecology challenged two assumptions—of the administration not having played a part in bringing about the present situation, as well as of 'mainstreaming' being the most desirable outcome for the Jarawa people. The Court-commissioned report by the Anthropological Survey of India argued that the ATR had disrupted the Jarawa's lives, livelihoods and rights over their territory like a 'public thoroughfare through one's private courtyard'. Based on this, the Supreme Court ordered the closure of the Andaman Trunk Road in 2002.

This order, however, was never implemented, and remains breached even up to the time of writing this chapter, 13 years later. A new 'Jarawa policy' was introduced by the A&N administration in 2004 that advocated a stated policy of 'maximum autonomy to the Jarawas with minimum and regulated intervention', by which they would be left at liberty to develop 'according to their genius and at their own pace'. The stated intention was to protect the tribe from the 'harmful effects of exposure'.

However, the policy did not provide for the closure of the ATR, and instead prescribed only 'regulated' movement along it—allowing travellers to use the road only via a convoy system. Ironically, the Jarawa were to be protected from them by the same method which had previously been deployed to protect travellers from the Jarawa—while the road remained in use.

The justification offered by the administration for continuing movement on the ATR was that the settlers required the trunk road, and claimed that it was administratively unfeasible to separate the local settlers from the tourists. The latter used the bus convoy hoping to spot the Jarawa in the way tourists in tiger safaris scour the landscape for sightings of the tiger in the wild. Starting in the 2000s, Andaman tour operators began to promote what Survival International terms 'human safaris': travel along the Andaman Trunk Road with the specific intent of seeing and interacting with 'uncivilised tribes', or '*junglees*'.¹¹ Bribes to policemen could also purchase contact, dances by Jarawa women and photographs with them.¹²

Based on a case filed by an irate tourist resort, in 2012 the Supreme Court upheld a ban on all large-scale tourist and commercial activities within a 5-kilometre radius of the reserve, upholding the 2007 A&N administration notification creating a buffer zone in that area. The road, however, is still in use and there are continuing signs of other violations of the reserve such as encroachments, poaching, sexual exploitation, encouraging the use of intoxicants, and facilitating encounters with tourists through bribery.¹³ While the Andaman administration had given an assurance of developing an alternative sea-route to Middle and North Andaman by March 2015, the completion of this project is nowhere in sight.¹⁴

In 2012, a media storm broke out over videos made public by the *Guardian*, a UK-based newspaper, of Jarawa girls being made to dance by men in uniform—either police or armed forces.¹⁵

Investigation revealed that the video was actually shot in 2008, by a group of armed forces personnel who had been exempted from the convoy system.¹⁶ Locals were quick to point out that such exemptions are also regularly made for ‘VIP’ guests of the administration visiting the Islands.¹⁷ In 2014, a member of the tribe gave a controversial interview to the *Andaman Chronicle* describing frequent sexual exploitation by outsiders under the influence of intoxicants.¹⁸

At present, the actual level of interaction between the Jarawa and outsiders is unknown due to the government’s nominal—and imperfectly enforced—adherence to the policy of isolation. In November 2014, the administration issued a notification announcing a new ‘protocol of surveillance’ of the borders of the (JRA), based on ‘many instances of unauthorized contact by outsiders with the Jarawas’ having been brought to the notice of the administration.¹⁹ This policy has not yet become operational.

Context

1. The Policy Debate

Until recently, the Jarawa were part of an official category problematically titled ‘Primitive Tribal Groups’ (PTGs). These communities were only recently re-titled a more dignified Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups or PVTGs in official documents. With tribes that have been mostly isolated till date, like the Jarawa, the policy debate in India has largely oscillated between positions of ‘isolation’ and ‘integration’, with implicit and sometimes explicit calls for ‘assimilation’, while assuming the right to decide on behalf of the tribes in question.

The ‘isolation’ position argues that these tribes carry a unique ancient cultural heritage, one that needs to be preserved from the influence of the vastly more powerful mainstream society.

Jawaharlal Nehru and his advisor on this issue, the anthropologist Verrier Elwin, were of this persuasion, which consequently underlay independent India’s initial tribal policy, although Elwin did temper his views somewhat over time.²⁰

The ‘integration’ or assimilation side of the policy debate was represented, for instance, by the Indian anthropologist G S Ghurye. Ghurye argued that the stage of civilisational backwardness that these tribes’ lifestyles indicated should not be allowed to continue, as it amounted to depriving them of rights due to them as citizens. They deserved the benefits of modern technology, education and healthcare, and to allow them to continue without these was a denial of their humanity.²¹

Subsequent experience has moderated these positions, initially articulated in the 1950s and 1960s. It was realised that the integration of uncontacted tribes exposed them to diseases to which they had neither exposure nor resistance, leading to vast casualties—or as Meenakshi Mukherjee starkly put it, ‘assimilation is ethnocide.’²² Moreover, the attempt to subsequently absorb them into the mainstream economy, whether through cultivation or reservation in government services, left them at the very margins of the economy—as was the case with the Great Andamanese and Onge. These tribes were highly vulnerable to diseases, dependent on food items like rice, coconut and bananas which can only be grown, not hunted or gathered and, more harmfully, dependent on outside intoxicants. This left them culturally uprooted and alienated, sometimes in anomie and without the joy, self-confidence or hope that cultural mooring gave them in the past.

Being uprooted from their traditional lands and livelihoods left them culturally and economically adrift, eventually leading to a drastic fall in birth rates and the decimation of various tribes.²³ Nathan and Xaxa call this process ‘adverse inclusion.’²⁴ Of the Great Andamanese tribes, once the majority residents of the Andaman islands, only 44

individuals remain, and they remember little of their original culture and language. At the same time, the increasing value of the scarce natural resources now found almost solely in the well-preserved tribal reserve ecosystem has ensured that total isolation is no longer an option. Moreover, tribes like the Jarawas, who chose to end their self-imposed isolation and actively maintain links with settler individuals, have to be respected as agents in their own futures.

Survival International, the international organisation working for tribal rights, has been long advocating the closure of the Andaman Trunk Road, alongside many activists and researchers who have worked in the islands. They argue that their opposition to the ATR is not founded on an ideology of isolationism, but because the road forces the Jarawas into a degree and kind of unequal interaction with the outside world that they never agreed to and find difficult to cope with. The road opens up possibilities for incursions into the reserve all along its length, particularly from the numerous small settlements—mostly illegal—that have come up there. Apart from the fact that the Jarawas never agreed to outsiders entering their reserve at all, the road opened up a new frontier that was extremely difficult to police. The road enhanced the settler communities' familiarity with the reserve, which enables and incentivises them to find ways around the convoy system and the 'three-tier' patrolling of the coastal borders of the reserve by the AAJVS, Police and Coast Guard.

The famous quote by the anthropologist R. K. Bhattacharya on the ATR being 'like a public thoroughfare through one's private courtyard' highlights the question of ownership.²⁵ One of the ways in which Jarawa difference is most frequently illustrated is to assert that they have no conception of private property. This example is used to explain (almost to excuse) their tendency to raid villages for food and other items. The other implication of this assertion, however, is that Jarawas have no sense of ownership whatsoever.²⁶ This in turn feeds

into a view of the reserve area as government land on which the Jarawa are allowed to live based on the status quo in 1956 (when the A&N Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Regulation was enacted), rather than as land collectively owned by the tribe. This allows the government to redraw the boundaries of the reserve without consulting the Jarawa.²⁷ In the case of the Onge, Sekhsaria shows that the resettlements and deforestation in Little Andaman were recommended and carried out by the administration after the entire island had been declared a tribal reserve, actively violating the rights of the tribe.²⁸ While it is possible to argue that the Jarawa, being hostile at the time, could not be consulted about their opinion on the ATR, the latter case seems adequate proof that the administration at the time did not value the ownership rights of tribes over their reserves in any case. Moreover, the Jarawa demonstrated their opposition to the road by their violent ambushes, but the state chose to ignore their opposition. The ATR today is kept open despite there being research to show that it is mostly used by tourists and supply trucks (which could both be diverted to sea routes) rather than by the settlers along the road for their livelihood, whose rights the A&N Administration claims to be defending.²⁹ The Forest Rights Act (2006), a law that operationalises the rights of forest-dwellers over the territory they occupy, is yet to be notified in the Islands. On the ground, the AAJVS fieldworkers' efforts to 'persuade' Jarawas to stay away from the ATR, rather than limiting or stopping its use, shows consistent indifference to Jarawa rights of ownership over their territory.

We believe, with Survival International, that the Jarawa must have the right to decide on their futures, and on the degree and nature of their interaction with mainstream society. The freedom of their choice, in Survival's view, depends heavily on the security of their position: on the protection of their right to livelihood, and consequently, to the Jarawa Reserve Area itself. If the availability of these resources were to decline such that the Jarawa were

no longer able to sustain themselves by hunting and foraging, they would be forced into an unequal exchange with the outside world to ensure their own survival.

Samir Acharya, of the Society for Andaman and Nicobar Ecology, who has long battled for the rights of the Jarawa and the Islands' environment, worries about the situation today, in which curiosity has led at least some Jarawas to experiment with, and develop a taste for, outsider food, clothing and commodities. If the Jarawa were to start valuing these over their traditional resources, they would barter away priceless forest produce to gain access to these, particularly if they were not being allowed to purchase them openly (having no official access to money, ways of earning it or places to spend it). This practice is now widely observed: the exchange of, for instance, highly priced crabs caught by Jarawa women for plastic bottles filled with rice. While Dr Pandya of the Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute (ANTRI) considers barter one of the methods by which the Jarawa creatively negotiate with the pressures of mainstream society (and so need to be empowered to negotiate it better), Acharya considers it tentative proof of the final surrender of Jarawa culture: its devaluation by Jarawas themselves.³⁰ Survival counters this contention with the evidence of the Jarawas' refusal so far to give up their traditional livelihoods for the sake of passive consumerism, suggesting that an active choice is being made. But they simultaneously point out the urgency of communicating to the Ang the potential consequences of pursuing these disparate acts of consumption for the long-term sustenance of their livelihood and culture.

2. Policies on the Jarawas

As a signatory to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), India has formally recognised the rights of groups such

as the Jarawa to 'self-determination', meaning the right to pursue their economic, social and cultural development without outside interference.³¹ Domestic laws and policies in letter conform in part to the UN Declaration, but the practice falls short in significant ways.

2.1 Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956

Under this Regulation, the administration is authorised to reserve any area 'predominantly inhabited by' a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) for their use exclusively, and to demarcate boundaries within which ownership of land, conduct of trade or business in the products of the area, as well as entry into the area, are reserved for members of the tribe. After its amendment in 2012, the maximum punishment under ANPATR is imprisonment up to 7 years, and fine up to Rs 10,000.³² However, according to news reports, habitual offenders under this Act are regularly let off on bail extremely quickly, even with multiple cases pending, and even video testimonies by Jarawas have not been sufficient to ensure prosecution.³³

An especially instructive case was that of the French filmmakers of the documentary 'Organic Jarawa', who entered the reserve without permission and filmed Jarawa people multiple times over a period of three years. None of the agencies tasked with patrolling the reserve or maintaining contact with the tribe were aware of their existence. The Jarawas themselves, having been given food and other objects, did not mention it to officials. Embarrassed by the incident, the administration filed a case against the filmmakers, and international pressure from Survival International and others helped prevent the release of the film in October 2014. In November, the administration also issued a notification on joint patrolling of the borders of the reserve area by AAJVS, Police and Forest departments, which had not been implemented till July 2015. No steps



Fig.2: The boundary between the Onge Reserve forest and the settled areas on Little Andaman Island, 2015

to prevent infiltration from the porous 'hotspots' of settlements bordering the reserve, such as Tirur and Kadamtala, have been announced.

2.2 Jarawa Policy, 2004

Drafted in the aftermath of the Supreme Court ruling of 2002 ordering the closure of the Andaman Trunk Road, the Jarawa Policy emphasised allowing the Jarawa to 'develop according to their own genius and at their own pace'³⁴. It explicitly eschewed any further attempts at mainstreaming, rehabilitation or relocation, as well as interventions in their cultural life. The A&N Administration also undertook to prevent any exploitation of natural resources by non-tribals in the reserve, including government agencies. Based apparently on the 'Master Plan 1991–2021' drawn up for the tribes, yet overturning

many of its key suggestions, the policy places an indefinite moratorium on any attempts to encourage the tribe to join the mainstream, while implicitly suggesting that they will inevitably do so at a time of their choosing.

Simultaneously, the refusal of the administration to close the ATR, failures to prevent tourist traffic as well as poaching in the Jarawa reserve, and the creation of dependence on agriculturally raised products like rice, bananas and coconut, undermines the realistic space for the Jarawa people to preserve genuine autonomy even if they so choose.

2.3 Buffer zone notification, 2007

The ANPATR prevents outsiders from entering the reserve, but cannot prevent Jarawas from leaving it.

As a result of both this and the frequent poaching, the demarcation of the territory remains largely on paper, marked at some points by Bush Police camps and with little monitoring of the rest. The Jarawa being a semi-nomadic tribe do not have a fixed notion of boundaries, which in any case have undergone various changes over time without their consent or even knowledge. Whereas virtually the whole area north of Tirur on the South Andaman Island was considered Jarawa reserve area in 1957, the 1979 notification excluded the area east of the ATR, and permitted its use for settlement, logging and replanting for commercial forestry.³⁵

To reduce incursions, a Buffer Zone of 5km around the existing boundary (and 1 km of coastal area) was notified in 2007. Commercial activities employing more than 20 persons or with a turnover of more than 1 crore (as defined by ANPATR) were forbidden in the zone. Residents of the 31 affected villages, supported by political leaders, opposed the buffer zone, and a resort forced to close under the notification challenged it in the Supreme Court, based both on the lack of a previous recommendation to this effect, and on inconsistency of implementation. The Court-appointed Commissioner suggested that the rather arbitrary criteria of turnover and employment be replaced by impact assessments and other relevant criteria. Moreover, he recommended that the boundary of the reserve be properly demarcated on the ground and at sea before mandating a blanket 5 km buffer, the borders of which would be equally uncertain. These recommendations did not find a place in the final ruling.³⁶

2.4 Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, seeks to punish a wide range of actions which enact discrimination against these historically marginalised groups,

irrespective of whether the actions are punishable under other laws. The failures of implementation of this Act are mostly due to the reluctance to charge offenders under this law, and the use of milder laws instead. In the case of the Jarawa, this Act has been used to charge offenders for violations of the reserve, provision of intoxicants and sexual offences. In the case of reserve violations, it is used in the place of the more relevant legislation, the Forest Rights Act of 2006, which according to a forest official has yet to be notified in the Islands. Difficulty in getting Jarawa witnesses who are articulate and unfazed by the unfamiliar courtroom situation, poor evidence, and difficulty in apprehending and maintaining custody of repeat offenders have led to poor disposal rates.³⁷ This is despite special hearings conducted within the reserve area for these cases. Also the failure of Jarawa people to report poacher incursions suggests that they perhaps have more faith in the poachers than the welfare and police officials they are in contact with.³⁸

2.5 Forest Rights Act, 2006

An Act that could perhaps have helped prosecute those violating the reserve—but is not in use in the Andamans—is the Forest Rights Act (known in full as the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006). According to the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs' Report on FRA Implementation for August 2015,

The Andaman & Nicobar Administration has informed that there are no non-tribal forest dwellers as defined in the Act in A&N Islands. The Act, therefore, is applicable only to the Forest Dwelling Scheduled Tribes of these islands. The area inhabited by the Scheduled Tribes of A&N Islands has been declared as reserved area under the A&N Islands Protection of Aboriginal Tribes (Regulation), 1956. The interest of the tribals in the land situated in the reserved areas is fully protected under the provision of the regulation.

The tribal reserves have been notified as reserved or protected forest reserve.³⁹

The existence of the ANPATR is no reason for the FRA not to apply to the tribes. In particular, some of the rights granted under FRA would supplement those assured by the ANPATR—legally ensuring that the forest is owned by the community, and not subject to the discretion of political authorities.

Apart from the lack of specific application of existing laws, the lack of transparency also inhibits public scrutiny of relevant policies, especially due to a heavy reliance on government data. NCRB data for 2013 on cases involving Scheduled Tribes in the Andamans, for instance, characterises most cases as ‘Miscellaneous’ and further disaggregated data is not available.

3. Special Vulnerabilities

3.1 Increased contact

While, according to locals, the AAJVS field workers have had some success in ‘managing Jarawas’ and keeping them away from the ATR through persuasion and patrolling, interactions of the Jarawa with outsiders are still frequent, even commonplace. It is agreed by all sources that Jarawas often exchange highly valuable forest produce, like crabs and venison, for far less valuable objects, such as small quantities of rice packed in plastic bottles to enable storage. They have been observed to use these objects, procured both from exchanges as well as from their raids on villages, as gifts while visiting other Jarawa groups.

Raids and exchanges are frequent forms of interaction between Jarawas and border villages. Metal cooking vessels, one of the objects frequently given by contact missions, are often taken, and villagers who admit to having entered the reserve report that Jarawa hospitality now includes rice and meat cooked with salt and masalas.⁴⁰

Objects like soap, mirrors and talcum powder are other frequent takes; they may aid the tribe’s enduring interest in body ornamentation. Jarawa women working along the ATR were observed to be wearing kurtis and leggings, much in line with the fashions of Port Blair. The objects perhaps most useful for the Jarawas’ way of life, however, are plastic containers: members of the tribe have long been using plastic bags and buckets to carry their possessions during their constant movements around the reserve. The traditional weaving of baskets and carving of honey-buckets have correspondingly been affected.⁴¹

Speaking Hindi and interacting with outsiders have become status symbols among the younger Jarawa, and young Jarawa males are so habituated to wearing clothes that they have now developed a fashion-sense and the ability to make a statement with the clothing they wear⁴². Alcohol, tobacco and marijuana have long been used by outsiders to ensure Jarawas’ cooperation.⁴³ Some Jarawa are now often found actively in conflict with the law, ironically assisting in the poaching of the resources the administration tries to protect for their use⁴⁴—while the rest suffer the consequences of decreasing forest resources.

While ANTRI and the A&N Administration pursue a research-driven policy with the objective of setting the terms for cultural exchange between the Jarawa and the outside world, such a high degree of existing interaction would render the objective irrelevant.

3.2 Conditions for the settlers

When refugees from Bengal arrived in the Andamans, they were allotted five-acre parcels of land, promised to them by the government if they left their homeland behind. Radhaji told the story of how her father received a parcel of land out at Wandoor, then thick jungle, and was told to go ahead and cultivate it.⁴⁵ Working hard to clear the

area, constantly fearing attacks by the Jarawa of whom they had heard terrible stories, they began to grow crops there. Now her brothers find it difficult to survive on the produce of the same small piece of land (now divided between them), and she cannot therefore ask them to help support her own family. Married to a man who owns land near what is now Wandoor beach, the news about its development for tourism had made them believe that their struggles would soon be over. But as of now they live off a small tea stall that caters to tourists, waiting for the job promised to her son in compensation after their land was acquired by the government.

Unlike the Nicobars, where five perennial rivers ensure water for agriculture, the Andamans are not good cropland.⁴⁶ High salinity, poor access to water, and the rugged terrain are especially unsuitable for the crops that mainlanders—particularly those from Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Kerala—are accustomed to growing for subsistence, such as rice. In consequence, the islanders subsist on food items brought from the mainland, from vegetables to milk powder.

In terms of livelihoods, opportunities are few and far between, and a government job seems the best option to many. Fishing, which the government is trying to promote as a local industry, contributes little to development, especially in the absence of processing infrastructure. While some contend that the ‘fish in Andaman die of old age’,⁴⁷ political leaders contend that competition from the large boats of the international fishermen have left little for local fishermen to survive on. Opinions vary on whether the poachers in the Jarawa reserve are Burmese, Bangladeshi, or poachers from Port Blair and Mayabunder with virtual legal immunity.⁴⁸

This insecurity lies at the heart of the strong protests among settlers against the five-kilometre-wide buffer zone proposed by the administration. The borders of the reserve were effectively drawn to exclude the people already officially settled there, and it is precisely those communities which are now

seeing, in their view, an infringement of their right to a decent livelihood through business—especially that of tourism. ‘The government put us here’, many say, ‘Why are they now saying we shouldn’t be here?’⁴⁹

3.3 Environmental concerns

The conflict over resources with settlers, particularly food resources like pig and deer meat, ambergis, water, and non-timber forest produce, is compounded by the scarcity experienced by those living outside the reserve. Wild pig, for instance, is a resource that is now rarely found outside the reserve.⁵⁰ After the early practice of taking timber from the reserve for the maintenance of the ATR, the forests within are now officially protected. Although no recent survey of the quality of the reserve could be found, the forests are yet better preserved than any other on the islands, and are the last remnants of the original tropical rainforest vegetation of the Andaman Islands, besides including various other ecosystems such as the semi-evergreen, the littoral forests, and others.⁵¹

According to the August 2003 report of the Indian Institute of Remote Sensing and the A&N Department of Environment and Forests, satellite maps and GIS have clearly shown the qualitative difference between the forests within the JRA and those outside. The latter have lost their original canopy, been converted to deciduous forests after logging operations, or have given way to cropland and settlements.⁵²

The commercial value of this vast stretch of land in the centre of South Andaman Island, as well as that of the forest and natural resources within it, are all sources of vulnerability for the Jarawa. Conversely, the protection of the tribe and their right to pursue their traditional hunter-gatherer livelihood helps to ensure the protection of the territory over which the resources on which they depend are dispersed.

3.4 Role of state actors

The State buffer that is supposed to protect the Jarawa has itself often been a source of exploitation. Bush Police and even early recruits to the AAJVS were known themselves to engage in sexual exploitation, introduction of intoxicants and poaching of pork and venison. (Halder contends that this is still the case.) The Jarawa often responded violently in the past, particularly to sexual violence, but after they abjured violence the situation worsened significantly. The videos released in the *Guardian* exposé as recently as 2012 also recorded a policeman in complicity with tourists who were filming nude Jarawa women dancing.⁵³

Currently it is maintained by the administration, settlers and local observers that the reduced Bush Police presence and their replacement with trained AAJVS staff has reduced the exploitation and violence that the Jarawa are exposed to. ANTRI has also conducted sensitisation workshops for AAJVS workers over the past year on gender, health, settler-Jarawa relations, and the politics and ethics of photography. AAJVS officials also point out that all new recruits receive sensitisation and training before entering the field. Since we could not visit the Jarawa area, we cannot verify whether the welfare staff are indeed respectful, non-intrusive, supportive and non-exploitative.

4. Outcomes

'Hunger may induce them to put themselves in the power of strangers; but the moment that want is satisfied, nothing short of coercion can prevent them from returning to a way of life, more congenial to their savage nature.' —Lt.Col. Albert Fytche, 1861⁵⁴

The health and survival outcomes of the Jarawa people are still far better than most PVTG groups at the time of writing. In terms of health, measured by conventional indicators such as nutrition, disease prevalence, maternal and infant mortality,

the Jarawas' situation is good by most accounts, although complete data is not available.⁵⁵

The Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute has attempted, through its various projects to develop policies in consultation with the Jarawa, to address the concern that the Jarawa are being denied the fruits of modern society. Working through the AAJVS, they address Jarawas' stated interest in clothing, in education, and in pursuing nomadism—in the way that the Jarawas see most culturally relevant.

The problem that might emerge in this process is an institutional one: even in seeking 'consultation' with the Jarawas (as emphasised in ANTRI reports) they end up 'prioritising' some of their expressed desires over others (as one AAJVS staff member explained is frequently required of them). They negotiate based on needs they consider important and in the best interest of tribal people, what they can deliver, and what they can justify both to the A&N government as well as the academic establishment. Their reports then tend to reveal, unsurprisingly, a remarkably harmonious view of the situation and action taken.⁵⁶

4.1. Health

The most positive outcome of increased interaction, arguably, is the Jarawas' acceptance of allopathic medicine for certain illnesses. This treatment is made available to them at outposts within the reserve by a 'field pharmacist', while more serious complaints may be addressed subsequently at the PHCs in Kadamtala and Tirur, at GB Pant hospital in Port Blair, or at hospitals on the mainland. Each PHC has a separate 'Jarawa Hut', and hospitals a 'Jarawa ward', which is legally part of the reserve territory and therefore bears the same restrictions on the entry of outsiders, protecting Jarawa patients from contact with unfamiliar diseases. This also enables their treatment and interactions to be monitored by AAJVS workers, and for both patients and their

families to be provided the kind of food they are accustomed to. These provisions, combined with a strict disease surveillance regime implemented by the AAJVS, have ensured no further epidemic outbreaks since the outbreak of measles in 2005. The medical officer at Kadamtala PHC states that tuberculosis and conjunctivitis too have not been reported at all in the last three years, due to the efforts of the AAJVS in preventing interactions with outsiders.

At the same time, according to the AAJVS, Jarawas are encouraged to use their traditional medicines for diseases that they are familiar with, and minimise both intake of strong allopathic medicines and stay at medical centres.⁵⁷ Information on hygiene is also shared through *Ang Katha* sessions (discussed below).

The other side of the health story is encapsulated in the deaths of four Ang children in three months in late 2014.⁵⁸ Two deaths were believed to be due to the children having been given expired allopathic medicines and the others were due to a lack of proper post-natal care. Investigation revealed expired medicines in the possession of Ang people, indicating a lack of follow-up by the AAJVS staff to ensure completion of prescribed courses of medicines.⁵⁹ While the Director of the AAJVS, as well as a doctor who has worked in the Reserve for many years, commended practices around childbirth that Jarawas use, such as the squatting posture, an AAJVS worker mentioned a high maternal mortality rate and the need to train mothers for safer practices in childcare⁶⁰. This suggests significant variations in the attitude to the Jarawas' traditional practices within the administration itself.

Recently there have also been concerns raised about instances of 'DNA mining' of the Ang, after publication of various papers, including one by the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) Hyderabad and Regional Medical Research Centre, Port Blair, studying the genetic variation of the Jarawa as a part of 'evolutionary studies'.⁶¹

The Jarawa, along with the Onge, are believed to evidence a unique haplotype, showing that they were early participants in the migration to Asia and have been almost entirely isolated since. Their DNA, therefore, might hold the key to a better understanding of auto-immune diseases, genetic variation and other issues. What is more disturbing, however, is that the Director of CCMB has publicly spoken of the importance of his being allowed to take gene samples from the Jarawa 'so that we could do something to preserve the tribe', which the papers refer to as 'nearly extinct'. Such attitudes echo the views of British anthropologists such as Radcliffe-Brown, whose interest was to preserve the tribe in their publications as they retained no hope for their survival in person.⁶²

The Jarawa Policy 2004, taking into account this special form of vulnerability of the tribe, states that, 'it shall be ensured strictly that the confidentiality of genetic resources on the Jarawas will be maintained and not used for commercial exploitation by any agency or organization which is not directly concerned with the welfare and protection of the Jarawas.' But it is also important that if such samples are required for any reason, they should be taken with the informed consent of the Jarawas, and not of the administration.

4.2 Education

Recognising that mainstream education can at best train those brought up outside its language and culture to be its marginal labour force, Jarawas and the administration have agreed that it will not be implemented in the Jarawa reserve. At the same time, the difficulty of mutually translating Jarawa and *ennen* (outsider) experiences in the absence of a common language has historically led to misunderstanding, 'hostility', and exploitation. Instead, in accordance with a survey of a cross-section of the community, the AAJVS now provides a location for the experiment they call 'Ang Katha', which they describe as 'bilingual, bicultural education'.

Held at ‘hotspots’ within the Jarawa reserve (chosen based on convenience of access for the constantly moving Jarawa), the gatherings of adult and young Jarawas involve elders teaching the younger generation about the tribe’s myths, rituals, environment and medicines. The curriculum and lesson plans are synthesised with the seasonal calendar of activities, including hunting and foraging, performance and aesthetics. AAJVS staff also teach the tribe Hindi and numerical literacy, as well as provide basic information about hygiene. The Jarawa are also advised on how to assist the administration in protecting the reserve—especially by reporting incursions. Interestingly, a project of genealogical mapping carried out by AAJVS staff allows them to help Jarawas trace their ancestry and relationships, assisting collective memory.

The purpose of the project, according to Pandya et al., authors of the report *Ang Katha*, is to help Angs develop and better communicate a sense of their collective identity, indigenous knowledge systems and aspirations. To further these ends, the sessions use or at least include Hindi in order not to alienate the younger generation who speak the language. Political literacy is also recommended for the curriculum, to enable the Angs to assert their rights. Jarawas have also reportedly asked to be trained to use *dinghies* (motorised boats), but that is likely a more long-term prospect.

The latter reflects one important problem with ANTRI’s initiatives. Jarawas express desire for all sorts of ‘outsider things’, which the AAJVS ignores in the effort to prioritise health and education. If the urgency of these demands were to surface, or the AAJVS’ screening of them were to cease, a very different, far less ‘isolated’ picture of the Jarawas might emerge. It is important to note that the desire for mainstream technology or commodities, does not necessarily connote ‘mainstreaming’ as long as its full implications are understood and willingly accepted by them. The explanations for these—that dinghies require fuel, maintenance and money—remain the task of the welfare agency to deliver,

along with a system enabling fair interaction and exchange.

4.3 Clothing

Under the Kangapo project (‘Kangapo’ meaning clothes in Ang), ANTRI determined (through open-ended discussions with a representative cross-section, it emphasises) that Jarawa women wanted clothes to wear while travelling on the ATR. The women got the idea from the free maxis distributed to them when visiting the PHCs, but found those to be constraining free movement in the forest. After considering various possibilities, the Jarawa women and AAJVS staff decided on a kurta-pajama arrangement, of which one set is provided to women in exchange for a basket woven by them. Men were not prioritised in Kangapo as they have more access to clothes (as to the outside world generally), and because Jarawa women are more prone to exoticisation and exploitation by virtue of lack of access to clothes. This argument of the report is contentious because, as in the case of the ATR, outsiders create exploitative conditions that force the Jarawas to adapt to the negative consequences. In this case, apart from sexual exploitation itself (the connection of which to clothes is problematic even in mainstream society), gender differences and a construction of the female as more vulnerable are promoted by this interpretation, which may not be part of Jarawa social norms. Jarawa women themselves have also begun to manifest ‘shame’, according to the report, although they maintain that their markings, waistbands and headbands have symbolic meaning and definitely do not equate these with nakedness, or with shame.

The exchange framework under Kangapo is meant to create a sustainable arrangement that emphasises the concepts of private property and exchange rather than creating (further) dependencies. The baskets are to be marketed by the government as ‘genuine Jarawa handicrafts’ to fund the creation of more clothes. The state

thus remains a buffer between Jarawa traditional activities and the market economy, and there is currently no plan to remove that buffer. In creating this plan, however, ANTRI is either denying or ignoring the existence of such transactions in status quo, and their inevitability in the future. According to the AAJVS, the purpose of providing literacy and numerical literacy to the Jarawas seemed precisely to be to enable more empowered participation in such economic exchange.⁶³

4.4 Access to food and water

It is important to recognise that for the Jarawa, these basic goods are sufficiently provided by the reserve ecosystem itself—if the forest is required to provide only for the tribe. The traditional system of food use, in the absence of storage methods, allows the various species to regenerate while providing sufficient nutrition to the Jarawa in each season. Particularly valued foods such as wild pig and honey are however used by settlers as well, and this creates competition and scarcity. Fishermen straying into the reserve also collect crabs, shells and sea cucumbers, the latter attracting poachers from as far away as Myanmar due to its high value in South East Asian markets. Venison is another important resource hunted by poachers, and now by some accounts by Jarawa themselves, who do not consume it but hunt it for exchange.

The question of whether the reserve can currently, and will continue to be able to, sustain the Jarawas in terms of food resources is a fundamental question—one, according to the TW Director, that is under consideration by the administration at present. This is particularly pertinent considering the growing Jarawa population (240 in Census 2001 and 380 in 2011).

Mohan Halder, Pradhan of Tushnabad panchayat in South Andaman, is the best known dissident to sufficiency: he says that need is driving the (Tirur) Jarawas out of the reserve and that

hunger and malnutrition are rife. According to Halder, this forms the basis for both conflict and collaboration with outsiders, and is a violation of Jarawas' human rights as well. AAJVS maintains that the reserve is currently sufficient—and that the Jarawas' health and nutrition status is, as always, good. They do, however, express uncertainty about the future, between the competing pressures of poaching and population growth. One plan is to augment food resources through plantation within the reserve of plants Angs use—and to involve them in the cultivation process. However, negative consequences could well result from interfering with the ecological balance, as well as from allowing the forest department such leeway in the reserve. After all, in the recent past, the forest department chose to plant coconuts and bananas in the reserve in their attempt to encourage Jarawas to cultivate—ignoring the well-established ways of both tribe and forest.

The complementary question is whether the Jarawa are acquiring a taste for outsider foods and practices, to the eventual exclusion of their own. There is sufficient evidence of their use of outsider food and intoxicants, as well as cooking practices. ANTRI's response is that outsider food like rice is merely a stopgap measure for Jarawas: it can be easily stored uncooked, but once cooked cannot be stored, is heavy in the stomach, and makes one 'hungry again and again'.⁶⁴ Their study finds pork and honey as still the most valued foods, both in taste as well as in ritual significance as items of tribe commensality. However, at least in the case of the Tirur Jarawa a more pessimistic evaluation seems reasonable. If not preference for outside food, addiction—including to Corex cough syrup—is making Jarawas enter into exploitative arrangements with outsiders.⁶⁵

The recommendations of an ANTRI report voice the uncertainty that then develops: should the administration declare the ongoing economic exchanges illegal due to their exploitative nature? Or should they be made transparent and regulated?⁶⁶ In either case, the logistical difficulties

of oversight might throw a further spanner in the works. Records of past cases of poaching show very low rates of conviction, due in large part to lack of cooperation by Jarawa witnesses.⁶⁷ While the police express frustration at Jarawa ‘stupidity’,⁶⁸ a study by ANTRI concludes that the refusal to recognise the accused as poachers is the outcome of a consensus among the tribe in favour of collaboration⁶⁹—losing sight of the fact that the responsibility of policing the reserve belongs to the administration.

4.5 Intersectionality

As mentioned above, incidents of sexual exploitation of Jarawa women are reported from time to time in the news, suggesting that the practice is ongoing. Editor of the Andaman Chronicle, Denis Giles, says that even 10 years ago when he entered the reserve as an investigative reporter, there were *chaddas* at the border of the reserve where only young, vulnerable women stayed—all orphans, perhaps 14–17 years old—and the huts held evidence of alcohol and tobacco having been frequently used there, suggesting that outsiders frequented the place. One girl was also pregnant—he had reason to suspect the child was part *ennen* or outsider.⁷⁰ Giles was forced to conclude that orphan girls and half-blood children were not taken care of by the community, at best; at worst, the community might be abetting their exploitation.

A group that is particularly vulnerable is that of children of Jarawa women with outsiders. According to one account, elders of the tribe when asked how they deal with this situation, replied that the women are welcome to come back and settle down with Jarawa men.⁷¹ The children, however, were not extended this invitation. According to Moidu’s paper, the Jarawa do not accept children out of wedlock, especially children of *ennen*—and do not expect the children to survive that rejection. This starkly contrasts with the observation of many anthropologists that the Jarawa are among the most tender carers of young children, whom they adore.

4.6 Special Category in Discourse

Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups, of which classification the Jarawa are officially a part, are defined as groups with ‘pre-agricultural level of technology, stagnant or declining population, particularly low levels of literacy, subsistence-based economy and forest-dependent livelihoods.’⁷²

The Jarawa population has finally shown a rise in the 2011 Census (380 individuals, compared to approximately 240 in 2001), demonstrating that low literacy (unrelated to linguistic ability or practice), subsistence-based economy, pre-agricultural technology and forest-based livelihoods may coexist with health and well-being. Unlike the situation of the Great Andamanese or the Onge, described previously, the case of the Jarawa in PVTG policy is unusual—in which their right to their alternative lifestyle is not only acknowledged but actively protected in principle by policy and administration—suggesting that a different view can be taken of PVTG policy as a whole. At the same time, although the Ang are placed in a situation of high level of exposure to mainstream society, this is not a barrier to their continuing (and desiring to continue) their ‘forest-dependent livelihoods’, suggesting an alternative possibility for those PVTGs being forcibly ‘integrated’ on the mainland. At the very least, it contains a clear message about the crucial importance of protecting indigenous communities’ rights to land and to pursue their traditional livelihoods.

The case of the Jarawa also contains learnings for the way the administration should choose to deal with communities at the other end of the spectrum, who have been totally isolated from the mainstream—such as the Sentinelese. The A&N administration now clearly states that it will not make any attempts at ‘friendly contact’ with the tribe. One official described this as the ‘Hands off, Eyes on’ approach: that aerial and naval surveillance of the island would continue, as the administration

could not ‘abandon’ the tribe, but there was to be no attempt at interaction or interference.

Recommendations

There are very few examples of isolated indigenous communities with rich self-contained cultures, living through non-agricultural hunting and gathering livelihood patterns, being integrated with outside economies and cultures in ways that are genuinely voluntary, humane, just, non-exploitative and egalitarian. On the contrary, most such contacts have typically been of ‘adverse inclusion.’ In most parts of the world these have resulted in intense dispossession, sexual and economic exploitation, alarming health and nutrition declines as well as profoundly endangered and precarious survival. There is also pervasive anomie, the collapse of cultural self-confidence, self-reliance and pride, and the extinguishing of both their cultures as well as their collective hope for the future.

India’s first Prime Minister Nehru demonstrated, in our opinion, a rare sensitivity to the formidable challenges of crafting just and egalitarian public policy and legal regimes for indigenous communities, enabling the community to access development while protecting their rights to pursue development on their own terms. Through the Jarawa policy of 2004, a renewed commitment to this vision forms the basis of independent India’s official approach to the indigenous communities of the Andaman Islands. This contrasts with the colonial policy of violent suppression and cultural submergence of what they saw to be ‘savage’ ways of life.

However, the actual practice has been fraught and flawed in many ways. The Great Andamanese were reduced by their colonial encounter to somewhat abject subordination, and the Onge to excessive dependence on the Indian administration for everyday survival. The violent suppression of their histories combined with epidemics, exploitation,

and exposure to intoxicants to drastically reduce the numbers of both these peoples. Even today their populations remain stubbornly stagnant despite the numerous health and educational inputs of the A&N administration—perhaps because of the persisting association of stigma with their cultural identities.

The Ang avoided several of these consequences until recently, because of their long hostility to outsiders and to their penetration into the Ang traditional forest habitats. The administration however forcefully reversed their isolation by the construction of the Andaman Trunk Road. Mukerjee speaks of the patterns of roads, innocuous to start with, all over the world: ‘(T)hey take people into the forest, who chop the trees and settle in. Many of the outsiders living in the Jarawa reserve were first brought by the public works department to help build the road; after it was finished, they just didn’t move.’⁷³ The road brought in the government officials, the settlers, the traders, the poachers, and the tourists, who forced on the Ang people exploitative relationships and unequal dependence. Despite clear directives of the Supreme Court to close this highway as far back as 2002, it remains open, with the administration pitting the interests of settlers against those of the indigenous community to defend their position.

The government policy of ‘gifts’, beginning in colonial times, also created dependencies that ultimately threatened the dignified and self-reliant survival of these relatively isolated peoples. Colonial administrators actively encouraged first the Great Andamanese and then the Onge to depend on nicotine to build submission. This was not the approach of the Indian administration, although contact inevitably brought alcohol, drugs and tobacco into tribal reserves. The Indian government did, however, pursue the policy of ‘contact visits’ that disbursed food items like rice, bananas and coconuts, dependence on which would transform the diets and render unsustainable the livelihoods of the Jarawa people.

The impact of both these official measures are to some extent irreversible. But there are also positive aspects to the Indian state's approach to the Jarawa. The administration has reserved more than 1600 square km for Jarawa and other PVTG reserves, constituting as much as 25 percent of the total area of the islands.⁷⁴ These communities, if left to themselves, are best equipped to conserve these rich biodiversity treasures.

Despite the availability of rice, bananas and coconuts, the Jarawa people still demonstrate an adherence to their hunting and gathering way of life. They show a general appreciation of the state's health services, including allopathic medicine—the health support to the Jarawa people (when requested by them) has helped save lives, and the Jarawa are the only PVTGs in the Islands to have shown an increase in numbers during the last census. The administration is also attempting to engage with the Ang on their own terms and in accordance with their expressed will, as evidenced in the Ang Katha and Kangapo initiatives.

However, the response to the efforts for education are more complex and ambivalent. The presence of welfare personnel working and living in close proximity to the Jarawa always carries the danger that they may not be adequately trained, guided and supervised, and may therefore act in ways that might be overbearing, patronising and even exploitative.

We believe the future of the Jarawa people remains strongly tied to the early closure of the highway, along with far more effective policing of the reserve to prevent penetration of outsiders, poachers and tourists. The legitimate interests of settlers can be met through the strengthening and popularising of sea transport services, originally planned to have been completed by March 2015, and perhaps also by constructing an alternative highway along the Eastern sea coast. Ferries from Port Blair to Baratang, Rangat, Mayabunder, Diglipur, etc. would take

on the burden of passenger, freight and tourist traffic, minimising the use of the ATR to just emergencies, or for settlements unreachable in other ways, simultaneously disincentivising further encroachments into the reserve.

Policing of the reserve must improve on a priority basis. In order to more effectively prevent sexual exploitation, entry into the reserve, sale of poached materials, and purveying intoxicants, it is imperative that those found poaching there be punished promptly and with the full force of the law. Simultaneously, the administration must economically assist and support the settlers so that they do not need to resort to poaching. Settlements within the reserve boundaries will need to be negotiated with more actively—otherwise they only grow, and use the reserve for what their fields cannot provide.

Additionally, a complete mapping (preferably using satellite technology) of settlements, both legitimate and encroachments, would give a more realistic picture of the condition and prospects of the reserve, and additionally help evaluate claims of timber poaching within it. Besides, the borders of the reserve need to be made visible on the ground, to concretise what so far is still an 'imaginary line on a government map'.

Along with the immediate closure of the ATR and more effective protection of the Jarawa reserve, with no further reductions in their territory, our most important recommendation is that all those who interact with the Ang need to treat the tribe as equals, possessing the agency and wisdom to decide their best interests. The Jarawa must be effectively in charge of their own futures and as such only changes or projects that are initiated by the tribe themselves should be implemented. It is vital that no 'development' or 'welfare' programmes are devised by outsiders and then handed down to the Jarawa to 'participate' in. The Jarawa must choose and control any projects that concern them, at all stages of the process.

The inalienable community rights of the PVTG

to the forests that they have inhabited for millennia must be legally notified through the application of the Forest Rights Act in the Islands. The position held by the administration, that the A&N Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation, 1956, protects their rights adequately is not legally tenable. The state has exercised unilateral rights to alter and reduce the Jarawa reserve. The further affirmation of their legal community rights to forests they inhabit would also give them greater legal protection in future from incursions like the ATR.

The Great Andamanese, and to a lesser extent the Onge, demonstrate the consequences of adverse inclusion. The experience of ‘friendly contact’ of the Jarawa is much shorter: a little over two decades at the time of writing. The story is mixed so far. While there are unmistakable signs of adverse inclusion setting in quite early in this contact with the outside world, the

Ang are still exercising agency and choice, and the administration must enable them to do so, not only in letter but also in spirit. As far as the Sentinelese are concerned, we take the opportunity to recommend continuing to respect their decision to refuse contact by not attempting to make any contact with them, and only properly policing the waters around their island. There are some unconfirmed suggestions that the administration is contemplating a slightly more proactive approach —one that helps the Sentinelese distinguish between ‘friendly’ administration and ‘harmful’ outsiders like poachers. This would be a disastrous strategy as it would encourage contact, which even with the administration could be extremely dangerous for the Sentinelese. The experience with the Jarawa demonstrates that even ‘friendly’ interactions with the outsider can quickly propel grave adverse consequences.



Fig.3: Vehicles queued at Jirkatang checkpoint to enter the Jarawa reserve (Copyright G. Chamberlain/Survival International)

Endnotes

1. Dev Nathan and Virginius Xaxa (2012), 'Introduction and Overview' in Dev Nathan and Virginius Xaxa (eds), *Social Exclusion and Adverse Inclusion: Development and Deprivation of Adivasis in India*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp 1–19.
2. Both the Andamanese as well as the Onge have been recipients of the Administration's efforts at 'mainstreaming' since the 1800s—through both violence and welfare. The measures, aimed at giving them access to mainstream education, healthcare, housing, livelihoods and nutritional support, have not however led to any improvement in their populations or well-being, as recorded by the 2011 Census. Those (mostly Andamanese) who succeed in leaving their settlements and traversing the education system find themselves in marginal government jobs, increasingly marry outsiders and have forgotten much of their language and traditions (See: Madhusree Mukerjee (2003), *The Land of Naked People: Encounters with Stone Age Islanders*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.)
3. This essay also reluctantly makes use of the term 'tribe' because of its broad recognition, while acknowledging the urgent and complex debates that must underlie the usage. (See, for example, Virginius Xaxa (2008), *State, Society and Tribes: Issues in Post-Colonial India*, Delhi: Dorling Kindersley.)
4. D. Venkatesan (1990), 'Ecocide or Genocide: Onge in the Andaman Islands. *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, Vol 14.4 (Winter 1990): Land and Resources. [<http://www.culturalsurvival.org/ourpublications/csqa/article/ecocide-or-genocide-the-onges-andaman-islands>. Accessed 14 August 2015]
5. Census of India (2011), 'Enumeration of Primitive Tribes in A&N Islands: A Challenge.' [http://censusindia.gov.in/Ad_Campaign/drop_in_articles/06-Enumeration_of_Primitive_Tribes_in_A&N_Islands.pdf Accessed 11 September 2015]
6. Pankaj Sekhsaria (2014), 'Jarawas at the Jetty' in *The Last Wave*, Noida: Harper Collins.
7. Interview with Samir Acharya (29.06.15)
8. Interviews with Samir Acharya (01.07.15) and AAJVS official (04.07.15).
9. Pankaj Sekhsaria (2001), 'Delivering the Jarawas.' *Frontline* 18(17). [<http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1817/18170650.htm>] Accessed 10 September 2015.
10. Mukerjee, *The Land of Naked People: Encounters with Stone Age Islanders*, pp 205–10
11. Sophie Grig (2014), Working Paper. Presented at 'Thinking Futures: The PVTGs of Andaman and Nicobar Islands' conference, 4–5 December 2014.
12. Manish Chandi (2010), 'Colonisation and conflict resolution in the Andaman islands'. In Pankaj Sekhsaria and Vishvajit Pandya (eds) *The Jarawa Tribal Reserve Dossier*. Paris: UNESCO, p. 15.
12. Zubair Ahmed (16 January 2012) 'Jarawa Dance Video: Army Personnel Involved'. *The Light of Andamans*. [<http://lightofandamans.blogspot.in/2012/01/cover-story-jarawa-dance-video-army.html> Accessed 5 August 2015]
13. The Light of Andamans (08 February 2012), 'Jarawa Video Safari Continues'. [<http://lightofandamans.blogspot.in/2012/02/editorial-jarawa-video-safari-continues.html> Accessed 5 August 2015]
13. Alia Allana (2015), 'Loot in the Andamans'. *Fountain Ink*. March 2015. [<http://fountainink.in/?p=6772> Accessed 15 August 2015]
14. Survival International (2015), 'India misses deadline to end Andaman 'Human safaris'. [<http://www.survivalinternational.org/news/10735> Accessed 15 August 2015]
15. Gethin Chamberlain (07 December 2012), 'Andaman Islanders 'forced to dance' for tourists'. *The Guardian*. [<http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2012/jan/07/andaman-islanders-the-land-of-naked-people-encounters-with-stone-age-islanders-human-safari-video> Accessed 14 August 2015]
16. Zubair Ahmed (16 January 2012), 'Jarawa Dance Video: Army Personnel Involved'. *The Light of Andamans*. [<http://lightofandamans.blogspot.in/2012/01/cover-story-jarawa-dance-video-army.html> Accessed 8 May 2015]
17. *The Light of Andamans* (16 January 2012), 'Why MoRD Team Visited Jarawa Tribe at Tirur?' [<http://lightofandamans.blogspot.in/2012/01/why-mord-team-visited-jarawa-tribes-at.html> Accessed 8 May 2015]
18. *Andaman Chronicle* (1 February 2014), 'Poachers Sexually Exploit Jarawa Girls under Influence of Alcohol and Ganja' [http://www.andamanchronicle.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4298:exclusive-jarawa-man-speaks-out&catid=49:highlight&Itemid=200 Accessed 15 August 2015]
19. Andaman and Nicobar Administration Order no. 405. (28 November 2014) p.1.
20. Virginius Xaxa (2008), 'State, Society and Tribes: Issues in Post-Colonial India.' Delhi: Dorling Kindersley, pp 6.
21. Ibid.
22. Pankaj Sekhsaria (2001), 'Deforestation in the Andamans: Effects on the Onge'. *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 36, No. 38 (Sep. 22–28, 2001), pp. 3643–48

- Madhusree Mukerjee (2014) 'Why the Andaman Islands are Headed for Disaster' [<https://in.news.yahoo.com/why-the-andaman-islands-are-headed-for-disaster-045113050.html>]
23. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1964), *The Andaman Islanders*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 22–26
 24. Nathan and Xaxa (eds.), *Social Exclusion and Adverse Inclusion: Development and Deprivation of Adivasis in India*.
 25. K. Mukhopadhyay (2010), 'The ATR is like a public thoroughfare through one's private courtyard', in Pankaj Sekhsaria and Vishvajit Pandya (eds), *The Jarawa Tribal Reserve Dossier: Cultural and Biological Diversities in the Andaman Islands*. Paris: UNESCO.
 26. A question may be raised about the legibility of concepts between cultures. Pandya argues that, in the question of ownership at least, illegibility is the excuse used to ignore the tribe's rights—which they categorically defend. To quote him, 'Some settlers seem completely oblivious of the fact that what belongs to the Jarawa is not just the forest territory but also the right to own certain material possessions.... on 16 April 2005, settlers destroyed honey stored by Jarawa at Philip Nallah within their reserve territory. In retaliation Jarawa entered Forest valley and "looted gold ornaments, cash, watches, clothes, and utensils from 17 houses"... The police recovered some material from the Jarawa,... but no action is on record for loss caused to the Jarawa by the settlers.' Vishvajit Pandya (2010) 'From Dangerous to Endangered: Jarawa "primitives" and welfare politics in the Andaman Islands'. [http://meenamahi.blogspot.in/2010/12/from-dangerous-to-endangered_14.html Accessed 15 August 2015]
 27. Zubair Ahmed (21 July 2012) 'Why Jarawas don't have a say?', *AniNews.in* [<http://www.andamansheekha.com/2012/07/21/why-jarawas-dont-have-a-say/> Accessed 15 August 2015]
 28. Sekhsaria (2001), 'Deforestation in the Andamans: Effects on the Onge'. pp. 3643–48.
 29. Richa Dhanchu (2003), 'Traffic on the Andaman Trunk Road'. In Annexures, *The Jarawa Tribal Reserve Dossier*. Paris: UNESCO.
 30. Correspondence with Dr Vishvajit Pandya (7 July 2015) and interview with Mr Samir Acharya (30 June 2015)
 31. Article 3, *United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (2008), New York: United Nations.
 32. Amendment to A&N Protection of Aboriginal Tribes Regulation (9 July 2012) [[http://tribal.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/AN4\(9_7_2012\).pdf](http://tribal.nic.in/WriteReadData/userfiles/file/AN4(9_7_2012).pdf)] Accessed 10 September 2015.
 33. Zubair Ahmed (21 October 2014), 'Jarawa Tribal Reserve: A Potemkin Village', *The Light of Andamans*. [<http://lightofandamans.blogspot.in/2014/10/jarawa-tribal-reserve-potemkin-village.html>]
 34. *Policy on Jarawa tribe of Andaman Islands*. December 2004. Andaman and Nicobar Administration. p.3.
 35. Sanjay Upadhyay (4 April 2012), 'The Buffer Zone around Jarawa Reserve and Andaman Trunk Road: To be or not to be'. *Report of the Supreme Court-appointed Commissioner in Lt. Gov. versus Barefoot India ((SLP (C) 12125 of 2010)*.
 36. Ibid.
 37. Interview with Superintendent of Police, South Andaman district, on 8 July 2015.
 38. Ahmed. 'Jarawa Tribal Reserve: A Potemkin Village'.
 39. Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India (August 2015), 'Status Report on Implementation of the Scheduled Tribes and other Traditional forest dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 [for the period ending 31 August 2015]' [<http://tribal.nic.in/WriteReadData/CMS/Documents/201510281110537367495MPRAugust2015.pdf> Accessed 29 October 2015]
 40. Interview with Mohan Halder, Pradhan, Tushnabad Gram Panchayat (5 July 2015).
 41. Vishvajit Pandya et al. (2013), *Jarawa Movements in Relation to Time and Space*. Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute
 42. Vishvajit Pandya et al. (2014) *Ang Katha*. Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute.
Vishvajit Pandya (2013), *Kangapo*. Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute.
 43. Alia Allana (31 March 2015).
 44. Shabana Moidu (2014) 'Notion of Jurisprudence: In the context of Jarawa tribe and Non Tribes of Andaman Islands'. Presented at *Thinking Futures*. Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute, December 2014.
 45. Interview with Radhaji Wandoor, 5 July 2015.
 46. Alia Allana (2 April 2015), 'Stringing the Pearls'. *Fountain Ink*. [<http://fountainink.in/?p=6798&all=1> Accessed 24 August 2015]
 47. Ibid.
 48. Ibid. and Interview with Mohan Halder, 5 July 2015.
 49. Interviews with Radhaji (5 July 2015) and Mohan Halder, Tushnabad (5 July 2015).
 50. Manish Chandi. 'Colonisation and conflict resolution in the Andaman islands'. p. 35.
 51. Manish Chandi and Harry Andrews (2010), 'The Jarawa Tribal Reserve: the "Last" Andaman Forest'. In Pankaj Sekhsaria and Vishvajit Pandya (eds), *The Jarawa Tribal Reserve Dossier*. Paris: UNESCO, pp. 42–53.

52. Ibid., Box-II, p. 46.
53. 'Andaman islanders 'forced to dance' for tourists.' *The Guardian* (7 January 2012). [<http://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2012/jan/07/andaman-islanders-human-safari-video> Accessed 10 September 2015]
54. Lt. Col. Albert Fytche (1861), 'A Note on Certain Aborigines of the Andaman Islands.' *Journal of Asiatic Society*, Vol 30, pp. 263–7.
55. B.N. Sarkar and R. Sahani (2002). 'A Demographic and Health Profile of the Jarawas of Andaman Islands.' In *Jarawa Contact: Ours with Them, Theirs with Us*. Kolkata: Anthropological Survey of India.
56. See, for instance, 'Conclusion' from Vishvajit Pandya et al. (2013) *Jarawa Movements in Relation to Time and Space*. Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute.
57. Interview with Arun Gupta, Director, Tribal Welfare. (5 July 2015).
58. 'Investigation Still on?' *The Light of Andamans* (22 October 2014). [<http://lightofandamans.blogspot.in/2014/10/jarawa-tragedy-four-deaths-reported-in.html> Accessed 12 September 2015]
59. Ibid.
60. Interview with Arun Gupta (5 July 2015); Interview with AAJVS official (4 July 2015)
61. Sunita Singh et al. (2004), 'Single nucleotide polymorphisms in two genes among the Jarawa, a primitive tribe of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.' *Current Science*. Vol.86, No.2.
- K. Thangaraj et al. (2003), 'Genetic affinities of the Andaman Islanders, a vanishing human population.' *Current Biology*. Vol.13, pp. 86–93.
62. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1964), pp.19
63. Vishvajit Pandya et al. (2014) *Ang Katha*. Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute.
64. Vishvajit Pandya et al. (2013), *Jarawa Movements in Relation to Time and Space*. Port Blair: Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute.
65. Alia Allana (31 March 2015)
66. Vishvajit Pandya et al. (2013), pp.78
67. Moidu. 'Notion of Jurisprudence: In the context of Jarawa tribe and Non Tribes of Andaman Islands.'
68. Interview with police representative, South Andaman district (8 July 2015)
69. Shabana Moidu. 'Notion of Jurisprudence: In the context of Jarawa tribe and Non Tribes of Andaman Islands.'
70. Interview with Denis Giles (6 July 2015).
71. Shabana Moidu. 'Notion of Jurisprudence: In the context of Jarawa tribe and Non Tribes of Andaman Islands.'
72. Government of India. (2014) '*Report of the High Level Committee on Socio-economic, Health and Educational Status of Tribal Communities of India*' (May 2014). Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, pp. 59.
73. Madhusree Mukerjee. *The Land of Naked People: Encounters with Stone Age Islanders*, pp.139.
74. Manish Chandi and Harry Andrews in P. Sekhsaria and V. Pandya, pp. 46-47 [box].

About the Authors and Contributors

1. Aditi Rao is currently a Research Consultant at PHFI, working on projects of Urban Healthcare, Knowledge Translation Initiatives and Post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Email: aditi.rao93@hotmail.com
2. Agrima Bhasin is an independent researcher based in Delhi and was formerly a Researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies.
3. Anamika Lahiri is a Researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: anamika.lahiri27@gmail.com
4. Anushree Deb is a Research Associate at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), Bangalore.
5. Chaitanya Mallapur is a policy analyst and research writer working with IndiaSpend, a data journalism initiative based in Mumbai. Email: chaitanya@indiaspend.org
6. Coen Kompier is a Specialist on International Labour Standards with the International Labour Organization. Email: kompier@ilo.org
7. Devaki Nambiar is a Research Scientist at the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), New Delhi, working on health equity and the Social Determinants of Health. Email: devaki.nambiar@gmail.com
8. Geetika Anand, is a Senior Associate at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), Bangalore. Email: ganand@ihs.co.in
9. Harsh Mander is the founder and Director of the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: manderharsh@gmail.com
10. Kanchan Gandhi is a visiting faculty member at the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi. Email: kanchanisthere@yahoo.com
11. Kavita Wankhade is a Project Manager and Consultant at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), Bangalore. Email: kwankhade@ihs.co.in
12. Kinjal Sampat is a Researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: kinjalsampat@gmail.com
13. Prachi Salve is a policy analyst and writer working with IndiaSpend, a data journalism initiative based in Mumbai. Email: prachi@indiaspend.org
14. Prathibha Ganesan is an independent researcher and was formerly a Research Associate at the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), New Delhi, working on health equity and the Social Determinants of Health. Email: prathibha.ganesan@gmail.com
15. Radhika Jha is a Researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: radhika.n.jha@gmail.com
16. Rajanya Bose is a Researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: 89.rajanya@gmail.com

17. Rajeev Malhotra is a development economist and Professor at the School of Government and Public Policy at the O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat (Delhi NCR). E-mail: rmalh1@hotmail.com
18. Rajiv K. Raman is an independent consultant based in Bangalore and is a Senior Advisor on water and sanitation, at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), Bangalore.
19. Rhea John is a Researcher at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: rneasjohn@gmail.com
20. Saba Sharma is a Doctoral student at Cambridge University, UK. Email: sabasharma4@gmail.com
21. Sajjad Hassan is the Founder of MISAAL and a research fellow at the Centre for Equity Studies, New Delhi. Email: iamsajjadhassan@gmail.com
22. Sanjay (Xonzoi) Barbora is an Associate Professor at the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS), Guwahati. Email: xonzoi.barbora@gmail.com
23. Saumya Tewari is a policy analyst and writer with IndiaSpend, Mumbai. Email: saumya@indiaspend.org
24. Sejal Dand is a founding member of Area Networking and Development Initiatives (ANANDI), Gujarat
25. Shikha Sethia is a Masters student at the International Institute of Social Studies, the Hague. Email: s.sethia@gmail.com
26. Sita Mamidipudi is a Researcher at Area Networking and Development Initiatives (ANANDI), Gujarat.
27. Smita Premchander is the founder and secretary of Sampark, Bangalore. Email: smitapremchander@gmail.com
28. Sridhar Kundu is an economist working at the Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), New Delhi. Email: sridhar@cbgaindia.org
29. V. Prameela is a Programme Director at Sampark, Bangalore. Email: prameela@sampark.org
30. Vishnu MJ is an Associate in the Practice Division at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS), Bangalore