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Regional Medical Research Centre
(Indian Council of Medical Research)

Port Blair

Review of the scale of free ration for tribals

The scale of existing free rations for the primitive tribal groups of Great Andamanese and Onges has been reviewed and our comments are as under :-

The existing scale of rations seems to be adequate for an average sedentary man in terms of various food groups and nutrients except for pulses, green leafy vegetables, other vegetables including roots and tubers, milk and sugar and jaggery. The nutritional survey recently conducted by this centre among Great Andamanese also pointed out deficient intake of green leafy vegetables, other vegetables, milk and sugar and jaggery by majority of the families. Therefore, these items may also be added to the ration to make it balanced. We recommend provision of the following food items in addition to the existing rations.

Green leafy vegetables	:	<u>400 gms / week</u> or 200 gms twice in a week
Other vegetables	:	500 gms / <u>week</u> or 250 gms twice in a week
Jaggery	:	<u>400 gms / month</u>

Fruits like ripe papaya, ripe mango, oranges, guava, amla and other locally available fruits also should be supplied (200 gms / week) depending on their availability to improve Vit. A and C intake.

The existing ration of 14 kg of cereals (rice and atta) is adequate and need not be altered. But the composition of rice and atta in the cereal ration may be altered according to the preference of the tribe.

The study in Andamanese showed that they are taking fats and oils in excess of recommended dietary allowances. Hence the supply of dalda may be reduced to 250 gms instead of 500 gms keeping the supply of ground nut oil at 500 gms. The study indicated a high prevalence of under-nutrition among children despite good overall nutritional status of the adults, which indicate that the children might not be getting their share of food. Hence supplementary feeding for children is recommended. Consumption of the supplementary food by children should be ensured by supervised feeding at a community feeding place.