

42

approach to generate a more comprehensive, coordinated and dependable database. With regard to the nutrition survey also, I understand a team from the All India Institute of Hygiene and Public Health is already in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and have completed training on the analysis of data and are presently conducting spot checking of the data and the final report will be completed before the next meeting. This would, I hope, take care of the reservations felt in respect of the data gathered during the survey in the preparatory discussion and later conveyed in the meeting.

- 4) A matter of much greater urgency and importance needs to be attended to. During discussion with the Survey Teams, I learnt that the officials handling Health and Nutrition were able to contact 189 Jarwas while ASI were able to cover 201. Even the latter number is far shorter of the number of 291 or so Jarwas estimated during the last census. Elsewhere the DHS has quoted a figure of around 254 Jarwas about whom medical records are available. ASI had roughly assessed the strength of Jarwas somewhere between 300-400. Even if we were to go by the census figures which are backed by the identity of the Jarwas through photographs, the huge gap brought out between this number and the Jarwas who could be contacted/covered by survey teams (maximum by ASI) is causing anxiety, as this has implications both for our strategy and efforts of coverage as also rate of mortality among Jarwas and would therefore need to be accounted for by appropriate but thorough verification. I have brought it to the notice of the local officers already before leaving Port Blair. We need to grapple with this aspect of the study before any report to the High Court is prepared.

I would have wished to raise these matters through personal discussion. As we all were leaving early next morning there was neither time nor opportunity to do so. Hence, this letter.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,


(K.B. Saxena)

Dr. N.N. Jha,
Lt. Governor,
A & N Islands,
Port Blair.