

Society through which the coconuts are sold and items of their requirements are provided at their settlement.

Onges have exercised their adult franchise during the Lok Sabha Elections not only in the past but also in the Parliamentary Election which took place on 5.9.99. The Chief of the Onge (Raja) was one of the members of the erstwhile Pradesh Council, A&N Islands. The Panchayati Raj Institutions like Zilla Parishad has been created in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in accordance with the Constitutional Amendment Act. The Chief of the Onges is one of the member of District Planning Committee of the Zilla Parishad, A&N Islands. As such the Onges of Little Andaman Islands are described as a "partially acculturated" tribal group in anthropological terms. They are no longer a hostile and isolated primitive tribe like the Sentinelese of North Sentinel Island. Onges of Little Andaman island are at the "transitional stage" to join the national mainstream. However, there appears to be no possibility of reversing the natural process of their "acculturation" at this point of time. In fact they require further protection and assistance from the Govt. so that such a small tribe would survive and prosper as one of the communities in India.

That the Onge tribe today in comparison with certain other indigenous tribes show a marked tendency towards sedentarism and have also got wage employment in their own settled way of life, even though, they have not in any way forsaken their traditional practice as hunters and gatherers. The Onges both at Dugong Creek and South Bay continue to forage, in fact they hunt turtles and fish and are very comfortable at sea. They design their own boats known as "Dangey". They hunt pigs in the forests and are excellent archers. Further in so far as their gradual integration, as sharply distinguished from assimilation is concerned, the doors of education have been opened to Onge children at the Dugong Creek settlement where a Primary School has been established by the Administration. A primer on the Onge language has also been developed to facilitate education of Onges and communication with them. It is judged by the facilities so extended to them by the A & N Administration that they cannot be described as primitive. In fact they are in a transitional stage and have already reached a state of partial acculturation as is evident from the fact that they have developed a fancy for modern clothes, and enjoy living in pucca houses. They also keep their dwellings remarkably neat and