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## BACKGROUND NOTE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE TRIBAL WELFARE DEPARTMENT

The Directorate of Tribal Welfare is headed by Director (TW), assisted by Research Officer (TW), Assistant Commissioner (TW) and other supporting staff. Another administrative unit of the Directorate functions under the Project Officer (ITDP) at Car Nicobar to co-ordinate the implementation of Tribal Sub-Plan by various sectoral departments at the ITDP level for the development / welfare of Scheduled Tribes of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The Secretary (TW) is the head of the department.

There are, six tribes scheduled under the Constitution of India in relation to this UT. They are: (1) Onges (2) Andamanese (3) Jarawas (4) Sentinelese (5) Shompen (6) Nicobarese.

### ONGE

The Onges belong to Negrito race. They have been in contact with the civilized society for over 100 years. The Onges are still follow their indigenous activities of hunting, fishing and gathering. The traditional rites and rituals are still observed by them even today. The present population of the Onge is 97. Initially the Onges were scattered all over the Little Andaman Island in different bands, and later they have been settled at two places viz. Dugong Creek and South Bay in Little Andaman Island..

Onges have been provided with permanent houses. Coconut plantations have been raised at the two Onge Settlements for their economic benefit. Administration provides free rations and clothes to the Onges. The potable water supply, electrification of Onge settlements, free medical care, school and other amenities like Police Wireless for communication, Direct Receiving Set for T.V., Community Hall, footpath, jetty for berthing of the boats etc. have been provided at the Onge settlement.

### ANDAMANESE

The Great Andamanese, who too belong to Negrito race, have been settled on Strait Island in Andaman District. It is the first tribe, which came in contact with the civilization through the British Administration. Once they were the largest tribal group, but their population dwindled drastically due to inadvertent introduction of certain diseases following their contact with outsiders. They were just 19 persons in late 1960's and individual Andamanese roamed around aimlessly in the Islands. The A & N Administration decided to re-habilitate the surviving Andamanese on Strait Island. Andamanese population has gradually increased to 47 now over a period of time as a result of various welfare measures undertaken by the Administration.

The Administration has introduced the poultry and goatry to improve their economic condition and the nutritional status. Besides they are being engaged in raising and maintenance of the coconut plantation-cum-orchard so as to provide them regular means of sustenance.