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3. The Committee members paid a visit to Andaman Islands between November 10 and 13, 1981, during the course of which they inspected the Andaman ~~and~~ Trunk Road from Port Blair upto a point ahead of 87 Km., beyond which it was not possible to go on account of absence of any traceable road. The Committee members were desirous of making contacts with the Jarawa tribe and for this purpose they undertook visit to the south-western coast of of the Middle Islands, but, unfortunately, ~~being~~ owing to rain and cloudy weather no contact was possible. The Committee had the benefit of discussions on 12 November, 1981, with the two concillors of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Administrations, S/Shri N.S.Chawala and William Cyril and the following officers:

- (i. Shri S.L.Sharma, Chief Commissioner,
- (ii. Shri Lakshman Raw, Secretary, Finance, Tribal Development and Transport
- (iii. Shri S.S.Lal, Principal Engineer, & PWD,
- iv. Shri Zama, Chief Conservator of Forests,
- (v. Shri FLA, Siama, Inspector General of Police,
- (vi. Shri Virendra Singh, Development Commissioner,.

4. During the visit, 10 to 13 November, 1981, ~~an~~ the Committee could find time barely to attend to the question of An aman & Trunk Road. The logistics for the Great-Nicobar Island being more difficult on account of the distance involved and facilities available and the time at the disposal being limited, for the present the Committee though ~~it~~ it fit to confine itself to the first term of reference to the Committee i.e. the Andaman Trunk Road. The Committee members hope soon to visit the Great Nicobar Island where the Project Yatrik and the Shompen are located and submit another report subsequently.

5. The Committee feels strongly that as per the Constitution adopted by the people of India, the nation has a responsibility towards all people belonging to the majority as well as minority groups. However, there are some extremely small ethnic groups who stand today perilously at the cross-roads of their existence. Steps taken today will determine whether such groups will survive or ~~it~~ be extinct in the course of the next few decades. The question is of relevance to the so-called "Primitive" groups of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, namely, the Great Andamanese numbering 26, the Onge numbering 96, the Jarawa estimated to be around 250, the Sentinelese estimated to be ~~around~~ around 100 and the Shompen numbering about 100. It is worthwhile recalling that the negrito inhabitants of the Andaman ~~and~~ Islands, referred to as Andamanese, comprised originally of 10 tribes, each with specific territorial habitation and have been reduced to a single group. Estimated around 4, 000 in 1858, the Great Andamanese were 625 in 1901 and are now reduced to 26. Similarly, the Onge numbered 672 in 1901 while today this can claim only 96 members. The Jarawas seemed to have declined from 468 in 1901 to the present estimated number of 250. The Committee is alarmed at the prospect of a total fade-out of the Great Andamanese in the near future and the Onge in the not too distant ~~xxxxx~~ future. Of late, the Islands, Administration has taken in hand certain measures for these two groups and, yet, the negative numerical trend continues. Though we are not strictly concerned with these two groups, we cannot help making the suggestion that this matter needs urgent deep scrutiny. They also provide a perspective for taking appropriate measures for survival and development of the Jarawas.