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**Minutes of the Tenth Meeting of the Island Development Authority
held on 19th January 2003 at Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands**

The Tenth Meeting of the Island Development Authority (IDA), chaired by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, was held on 19th January 2003 at Port Blair. A complete list of participants is at Annexure-I.

Welcome Address by Lt. Governor, A&N Islands

2. The Lieutenant Governor, Andaman & Nicobar Islands welcomed all the participants to the IDA meeting. In his Welcome Address, he touched upon environmental issues, including that of Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) which need to be resolved for the development of these islands. He noted that there was scope and potential in the areas of tourism and fisheries for employment generation. He welcomed the proposed preparation of a State Development Report for the Islands and requested the Planning Commission to focus on the unemployment problem in the forthcoming Development Report.
3. It was mentioned that with the expansion of the Port Blair Airport, a number of follow-up steps needed to be considered. These included its declaration as an international airport, introduction of direct flights from Delhi, Apex Fares, revival of LTC facility at least for remote areas. He also touched upon the restrictions on mining of sand following the Supreme Court Judgement and suggested allowing of import of sand from Myanmar, as used to happen earlier.
4. Lieutenant Governor outlined steps taken to devolve powers and funds to the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). He, however, noted that failure to furnish utilization certificates on time was holding up further release of funds to these local bodies.

Opening Remarks by Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission

5. Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission, noted that the Prime Minister's presence at the meeting underlined his deep interest in the welfare of the people of Andaman & Nicobar and Lakshadweep, and expected that the meeting would strengthen this forum for advancing the policies and programmes for integrated and environmentally sound development of these islands.
 6. Deputy Chairman highlighted the thrust sectors relating to tapping of marine and fishery resources and high value tourism, which would be taken up during the meeting. He also touched upon the issues of
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