

KIND ATTENTION OF
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DY. SECRETARY
MHA.

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SPECIMEN TEMPLATE FOR PRESS BRIEF

Cabinet decision / Cabinet committee on decision

Ministry Name
Date of decision

Subject of the Note for the Cabinet / Cabinet Committee on

1. **Decision:** Promulgation of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands
(Tribal Councils) Regulation 2009 under article 240
of the Constitution

2. **Point-wise details:**

(i) The Nicobarese tribals have traditionally had Village Councils and Island Councils. On each island, there are a number of villages. Each village comprises a number of 'tuhets'. A tuhet is a sort of large extended joint family whose members are related to each other by way of a common lineage. The members of the tuhet are jointly subject to the authority of a single head of the tuhet, who is responsible for maintenance of peace and welfare of the lineage members, and for maintenance of harmony and discipline amongst them. It is he who organizes all important political, economic and other practical matters. The criteria for selecting the tuhet head are seniority in terms of age, proficiency, profound knowledge of customary laws and the qualities of administrative leadership to exercise control and command order in a large lineage group. Generally he holds his office for life. When the head of a tuhet becomes very old or is about to die, a successor is nominated by an assembly of all the lineage members of the tuhet and heads of other tuhets also. The lineage members have the power to remove the new head if he's found to be incompetent, guilty of misconduct or careless in matters of tuhet economic resources.

(ii) It is from among the tuhet heads that the Nicobarese used to nominate, villagewise, the First, Second and Third Captains. Of late, the system has changed. Now a days, First to Fifth Captains are chosen by way of 'election' and the term of the Captain is fixed which is five years. Election is held by way of secret ballot on the basis of universal adult franchise (above 15 years of age). The person getting maximum number of votes is elected as the First Captain, followed by Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Captains in that order. The election is conducted by an election committee comprising of the elderly and respected persons (like the Bishop etc.). The Village Captains so elected and all the tuhet heads, taken together, constitute the Village Council. Nicobarese society claims that women can also contest the election to First, Second and Third Captains etc., although no seats have been reserved for women in any formal way. Nevertheless, it is seen particularly in the southern and central group of Islands that