

S30

2. [This issue has already been addressed in our letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> June 2009 wherein we have informed that the non-tribal population consists of either Government Servants or Srilankan settlers and illegal residents in the area. Besides, a similar situation also exists in the A&N Islands Panchayat Regulation which does not apply to the encroachers in the Forest areas of Andaman District, but is limited to the revenue areas.]
3. Regulation 14 which in the opinion of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj would render the Deputy Commissioner as only a transmitter of the decisions of the Election Commission, is the same as the provision available in the A&N Islands Panchayati Regulation 1994 applicable in the revenue areas.
4. Regulation 9(4) provides for 1/5 of the total number of members of Village General Body to form the corum for a meeting in order to encourage active participation by the Nicobari tribals. This was a conscious decision taken by the A&N Administration to ensure that the weight of democratic functioning is introduced to a larger number of participants.
5. While providing for two tier system in the proposed regulation, the traditional set up of the Nicobari tribe as well as the geography of the Nicobar group of Islands has been kept in mind. This two tier system has evolved over the years. Both Village Councils and Island level councils are part of the traditional Nicobari set up, so this Administration feels that it should be retained. Besides, the tribal leaders have rejected the concept of a District Council and are keen on a two tier system which reflects the already existing Village Council and Island Council.

Given this background the District Planning Committee has been proposed as the third level.

Yours faithfully,

*Arvind Ray*

(Arvind Ray)

Chief Secretary(i/c)

o/c