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PUC is a letter No. 23011/34/2016-FRA dated 23.3.2017 received from the Joint Secretary to Govt. of India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, New Delhi regarding provision of funds from TSP for undertaking activities under Forest Rights Act 2006.

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The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has stated to create awareness by conducting regular meetings among the tribal communities and other traditional forest dwellers for active participation to achieve the desired objectives of Scheduled Tribe and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 and requested to utilize the State TSP fund as well as other funds viz. SCA to TSP, Proviso article 275(1) of the Constitution of India MGNREGA, funds for forestry available with the Gram Panchayat, funds under CAMPA for implementation of FRA so that maximum benefit can reach the Tribal Communities dependent on forests for their livelihood.

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In this context, it is submitted that the Govt. of India has notified six tribes namely Ongese, Andamanese, Shompens, Sentinelese, Jarawas and Nicobarese as Scheduled Tribes in relation to this Union Territory vide Constitutional Order No 58 dated 31.3.1959. The Nicobarese are progressive tribes while others are Particularly Vulnerable Tribes (PTGs). The Area inhabited by Scheduled Tribes has been declared as reserved area under the A & N Islands (Protection of Aboriginal Tribes) Regulation 1956, thereby prohibiting the entry as well as acquisition of any interest in land etc. of any person other than the members of the aboriginal tribes in the reserved area. Thus the interest of the Scheduled tribes in A&N Islands have been fully protected by the Regulation, 1956 by exclusively preserving the area for them in which they have full rights to use their forest products for their bonafide use.

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Of the six tribes Nicobarese is an advanced tribe and it is the largest tribal group and they mostly inhabit in Nicobars District. So taking into account their concentration, an ITDP has been formed in the Nicobar District. Under the ITDP Nicobar an ITDA consisting of DC, Nicobar as Chairman, tribal leaders and head of the line departments as members and Project Officer (ITDP) as Member Secretary has been constituted to co-ordinate of the Tribal Sub Plan Programme. Their welfare activities are looked after under the Tribal Sub Plan. There are as many as 22 line department implementing schemes under Tribal Sub-Plan, 8% of the UT Plan funds are earmarked for TSP under the separate TSP Sub-Head of Account "796".

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The participation of the Nicobarese tribals in their development programmes is being ensured through the seven traditional Tribal Councils of the Nicobareses one each at Car Nicobar, Chowra, Teressa, Nancowry, Katchal, Kamorta and Tribal Council for Great & Little Nicobar. These Tribal Councils are autonomous in their own way. The Tribal Council functionaries viz. Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Deputy Vice Chairperson and Village Captain are invariably involved in formulation of the development programmes for the Nicobarese through the District Planning Committee of Nicobars District being its members and they are paid remuneration at the same rate as the functionaries of the PRIs. The fund of the developmental activities is being released to the Tribal Councils in the shape of grant-in-aid through Chairman ITDP, Car Nicobar.