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Minutes of the meeting held on 20.12.2005 under the chairpersonship of Smt. Adarsh Misra, Principal Adviser (SP/TRP/HUD/E&F) to discuss the request from Mr. Matthew Dyas, BBC about the permission for shooting films of primitive tribals in Andaman & Nicobar Islands (ANI).

The meeting was attended by Resident Commissioner, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, representatives from Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Adviser (TRP) and Deputy Adviser (BC&SW) of Planning Commission.

During the meeting Mr. Dyas made an audio visual presentation of ADI tribe in Arunachal Pradesh. In regard to shooting of film of Jarawas in ANI he mentioned that the objective was to show the audiences the life-style and living of Jarawas.

It is understood that the Jarawas are important because of their knowledge of forests and the uses of the resources which can be brought into medical uses through the knowledge that this tribe has gathered over so many thousand years. It is to them that we owe the forests of the islands which still stand, and some of the original and presumably rare resources still survive in these islands. The most important issue of concern for these Jarawa Tribes has been whether to assimilate them in the development initiatives of the Islands or to leave them in isolation and a final view on this matter should be based on Inter-disciplinary research on the subject.

The major contact with the Jarawas was through Andaman Trunk Road (ATR). Initially they were hostile to the construction of the road. However, over the years the attitude of the Jarawas has been changing and they often come on the road side to watch vehicles and people. As a result of this human contact and the foreign food, the Jarawas started getting sick and developed diseases like measles, skin rashes etc. Because of this a writ petition was filed in the Kolkata High Court in 1999 seeking direction of the Government to look after the protection and welfare of the Jarawas. The Administration has submitted in its petition to the Hon'ble Court pointing out that ATR is a lifeline and is required for various reasons such as -

- a) Maintaining arterial road link essential to socio-economic development of the Islands;
- b) Important for security reasons, both external and internal and also in terms of natural disasters;
- c) Facilitates movement of essential goods;
- d) Facilitates immediate and safe evacuation of serious patients from remote areas in Port Blair;
- e) Road connectivity has helped students in getting admission in colleges in time; and
- f) Ensures mobility of staff engaged in protection of forests and wildlife for prevention of poaching, encroachments and illegal felling.

In pursuance of the order of the Hon'ble High Court, Kolkata dated 9.4.2001 to set up an Expert Committee to look into the issue, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) constituted an Expert Committee who visited the reserved Jarawa area, met all the Jarawas and examined them medically. The expert committee observed that Jarawas were perfectly healthy and maintained a healthy race. The committee of experts submitted its report before the Hon'ble Court on 28.07.2003 and as per the Court's direction, the Central Government were required to formulate policies, plans and programmes in respect of Jarawas after organizing seminars and open discussions with the different National and International