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Pr Ad. will be the Member Secretary of this Committee. This committee will act as an interface between the JTDA and the Andaman administration and will ensure removal of bottlenecks in the implementation of policies.

The immediate formation of the JTDA is the principal recommendation of this sub-committee. We strongly believe that it is this mechanism that should suggest how the problems pointed out earlier should be tackled. However, till the time the JTDA is constituted the sub-committee would like to make the following recommendations. These are based on in-depth discussions with administration, settlers, Panchayati Raj representatives, grassroots workers and NGO representatives, and meetings with three of the four Negrito tribes of Andaman in their natural and established surroundings.

#### ATR

- (1) The Sub-Committee feels that the portion of the ATR that passes through the Reserve should eventually be closed. Before that happens, alternate arrangements for transportation<sup>4</sup> need to be put in place. Administration should prepare a plan of action which can be followed should the Supreme Court rule in favour of its earlier judgement. Here it must be mentioned that there was dissent within the Sub-group on the issue of ATR closure. While the administration felt that the ATR cannot be completely closed despite alternate means of transportation, Aruna Roy and K.B. Saxena advocated for the immediate closure of the ATR. These divergent points of view need to be kept in mind, while looking at the recommendations vis-à-vis the ATR.
- (2) Tourist and private vehicles should not be allowed on the ATR.<sup>5</sup> Rules should be amended to ensure that only public transport buses and trucks in convoys, defence vehicles and ambulances ply on the ATR. Timings of buses should be fixed and widely notified to minimise inconvenience. Only ambulances and vehicles carrying emergency aid/rescue workers should

<sup>4</sup> The sea route from Port Blair to Baratang, Kadamtala via Middle Straits Creek and to Rangat can be an alternate. In January 2006, the Chairperson of the Sub-group had travelled this route to examine its feasibility. Details of this journey as well as of interaction with the Onge can be found in a Planning Commission report titled "Surviving Civilization".

<sup>5</sup> Administration felt that this might unduly inconvenience the settlers. However, other members of the sub-group strongly felt that this was absolutely necessary.