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**ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ADMINISTRATION
DIRECTORATE OF TRIBAL WELFARE**

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The matter regarding the plan allocation for the 10th Five Year Plan 2002-2007 as well as Annual Plan 2002-2003 came up for discussions during the meeting of the DPC held on 4.6.2002 at 12.30 PM at Megapode Nest, Port Blair.

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The Hon'ble M.P., Chairman of the DPC raised the issue as regards the size of the allocation made by Planning Commission as against the requirement of the Union Territory. He desired to know whether any savings can be made out of the existing allocation of Rs. 95.00 lakh made to the Tribal Welfare Department by the Planning Department, A & N Administration. Director (TW) explained that after incorporating the changes initiated by the DPC in the meeting held on 1st and 2nd August 2001, the plan outlay of the department has already been substantially curtailed. However, Hon'ble MP insisted that the expenditure of the department for the last 3 years stood at almost 70.00 lakh without any increase and accordingly suggested further cuts in the Plan Outlay of the Department.

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At this stage Shri Ibrahim Ali Hussain, Vice-Chief Captain, Tribal Council, Car Nicobar and member, DPC raised the issue as regards funding of PRIs which are receiving and spending huge funds to the extent of almost Rs. 70.00 crores out of the Plan funds allocated for the A & N Administration. However, he pointed out that concomitant funding did not exist for the Tribal Councils of the Nicobar District placing the tribals of Nicobar District in a disadvantageous position vis-à-vis the PRIs in Andamans. He suggested that some kind of devolution of funds must also be made to the Tribal Councils of the various islands of the Nicobar Distt. which could be controlled by the Administration as deemed fit. It was emphasized by him that these Councils are functioning in a democratic manner (identically with the PRIs) long before the Panchayati Raj came into existence. The present dispensation placed the southern group of Islands in a financially disadvantaged position, the problem being amplified by the scattered territorial placement of the Islands coupled with the concomitant logistics problems. He mentioned that a representation had already been made to the A & N Administration in this regard.

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At this stage Secretary (TW) intervened to say that the Tribal councils are to a great extent functioning democratically and had been historically doing so and were consequently not less democratic than the PRIs. In fact certain devolution of funds must be made to these Councils and he suggested a token amount of Rs. 50.00 lakh for the Annual Plan 2002-03.

Hon'ble MP intervened to say that such devolution could be made from the individual Tribal Sub-Plan components of the line Departments but Director (TW) intervened to say that the line department funds would not be under the control of the Tribal Councils and accordingly the devolution could carry no meaning and in any case would not be congruent with the devolution funds to the PRIs who had control over their own funds. He suggested that a new scheme No. 9 could be