

JARAWA CONTACT EXPEDITION  
(2 - 4 September 1996)

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Preliminary observations regarding health and nutritional status.

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During the expedition, a group of 17 persons of Jarawa community at Foulbay and 24 persons at Yadita point in Middle Andaman were contacted on 3rd and 4th September respectively. Persons contacted on 4/9/96 include 17 persons contacted on 3/9/96. Each day, the contact lasted for about three hours. Following are the preliminary findings based on superficial general examination of some of the Jarawas.

The group of 24 Jarawas contacted included five adult males, seven adult females, seven boys and five girls. Children included two male and one female infant. One female aged about 25 years was found to be pregnant (28 to 30 weeks duration).

All of them were active and apparently healthy. Teeth and tongue of the majority were clean. Personal cleanliness was good except for long and sometimes dirty nails. One male adult had contusion on the proximal end of the left thumb. Five children and six adults had healing abrasions on different parts of their body. Two adult females had pthysis bulbi (unilateral) which could be due to the injury/infection in the past. Dry and muddy conjunctiva was observed in two of the children, which could be an early sign of conjunctival xerosis due to Vit-A deficiency. Five adults including one pregnant and one lactating woman and two children had signs of anaemia. Whether these findings are due to nutritional deficiency or due to some underlying diseases, have to be studied in detail. No other signs of nutritional deficiency were observed in them. None of them were having any form of skin diseases.

Instruments for anthropometry (weighing machine, measuring tape etc.) from this Centre were carried during the visit and the measurements in the form of height, weight, mid-upper arm circumference, head and chest circumference etc. were recorded on all the contacted persons. During the subsequent contact expeditions, collection of data on other persons will be attempted and also attempts will be made to ascertain their approximate age with more accuracy so that the meaningful inference can be drawn. However, with the present observation, weights and heights ranges from 40.5 kg to 55.0 kg and 142.5 cms to 156.0 cms