348

These islands prospered in all regards due to the Bengali Settlers, particularly in regard to cultural and social development. The Bengali Settlers have been growing more than 90% of the crops and vegetables in these islands.

Non-settler Indians would not have come to these islands had the Bengali Settlers not been settled. The non-settler islanders are not permanent residents of A & N Islands. Most of them visit their parent states during summer vacation in May-June every year; <u>only the Bengali Settlers guard most of the outer islands</u>.

Today, A & N Islands is predominantly a Hindu Union Territory and the integral part of India due to the Bengali Settlers who changed the most remote and isolated islands their heavenly abode.

12. The local Administration and GOI, New Delhi must be transparent and treat all the permanent residents of A & N Islands equally to sustain peace and communal harmony:

The leaders of the Penal Settlers are usually at the helm of the important political parties in Port Blair, the capital of A & N Islands and the leaders of the Bengali Settlers, mostly dalit cultivators, small traders or contractors, are being dictated by the high commands of the political parties. The political leaders of the Bengali Settlers are compelled to oblige the senior leaders of the political parties belonging to the Penal Settlers to sustain politically in their personal interest compromising the interests of their own community. The leaders of the Penal Settlers are dominating the Bengali Settlers. Hence, the Bengali Settlers are oppressed and exploited in all respects. The local Administration obliges the political leaders of the Penal Settlers at the helm of political parties for their own survival and sustenance and act wrongly and partially against the helpless poor dalit Bengali Settlers.

The ill treatment and injustice to the Bengali Settlers in A & N Islands by the Administration and GOI may prove to be very dangerous. The <u>Andaman Fraternity Forum</u>, a non political but social organization, <u>has been formed in June</u>, 2011 in Kolkata to highlight the injustice being

contd. - 15.