

For this, the situation needs to be understood properly, taking all aspects into consideration. It seems that from the very beginning of the penal settlement at South Andaman the authorities did not want to know the effects on the tribal populations of the various measures taken to increase the infrastructural facilities or to colonize different parts of these islands. Such measures,

Now that the situation has improved, we should not let this opportunity slip through such acts as may push them again into a situation of insecurity or provoke them to retaliate in self-defence. The utmost caution must be exercised while taking any action to exploit this favourable situation and to consolidate friendly relations with this endangered community.

Time and again their friendly gestures have not been taken in a proper spirit. In spite of several measures taken by the authorities to protect this endangered community, a few miscreants did disrupt their life through unlawful activities. Even so, they have realized that all non-Jarawa are not miscreants and have behaved accordingly with the friendly Contact Party and those fishermen whom they observe occasionally in the creek.

Quite often, the non-Jarawa complain that the Jarawa are hostile, 'uncivilized' and cruel to the point of being merciless and kill those who unfortunately happen to be seen by them in and around their territory. As a result of their hostile attitude, it is further argued, the non-Jarawa cannot live in peace and several developmental activities suffer. But the accounts of expeditions and other incidents provided in the previous chapter show that contrary to such allegations the Jarawa have in fact shown great restraint even after being put under constant threat of loss of territory and even extinction. They had expressed their friendly disposition as early as 1790. Also, in February, 1974, they came on their own to the dump of the Contact Party in a friendly gesture. Ever since, they have maintained friendly relations with the Contact Party.

The Task Ahead

Chapter Five

