

least in the initial phases. Once the bridges have been built, mutual suspicion allayed and an understanding developed, the moderating mechanism can be phased out.

### **Governance**

Most in the administration are of the view that the Jarawa are citizens of India and cannot be treated differently unless the constitution is amended. Lack of a coherent policy with respect to the tribes and legal loopholes have affected the administration's efficiency and their ability to interact with the Jarawa. The recent incident of the beating up of the Jarawa boy is reflective of the administration's helplessness in dealing with the situation without any legal instruments.

There is little communication between the grassroots workers who spend time with the tribals and the senior officials who work in Port Blair. Antagonism between administration and civil society is palpable, making it difficult for them to benefit from each other's knowledge, expertise and resources. There is a feeling that Administration is not entirely transparent in cases such as the recent measles outbreak because conflicting reports appeared in the press.

Administration is also at a loss on how to deal with law and order problems concerning the Jarawa. For example, in the case of rape of a Jarawa girl, Jarawa boys who were made to testify were herded in a van and made to wait for hours in cramped conditions. Finally, the Committee on Protection of Scheduled Tribes had to intervene to stop this treatment. The administration pointed out that if action is to be taken against people who exploit the Jarawa, the latter have to be drawn into the legal procedure for which they have neither the understanding nor the need.

### **Sensitization**

Administration underlined the need for sensitization of officials, grassroots workers, settlers, tour operators and Panchayati Raj representatives. Some efforts, like including the history of the Jarawa in the school curriculum, are being undertaken. There is further need for ongoing sessions with experts who would develop orientation material and regularly train officers on the need for sensitivity in dealing with precious human lives.