

THE ECHO OF INDIA

PHONE : 03192 230269/230230 • FAX : 03192 234325 • E-MAIL : echopress4@gmail.com/and@echoofindia.com

DAILY FROM KOLKATA • PORT BLAIR • SILIGURI

PAGE 3

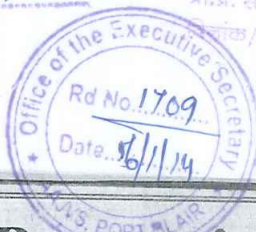
PAGES 6

PORT BLAIR • THURSDAY • DECEMBER 26, 2013



सचिव (विधि) का निजी अनुभाग
Personnel Section of Secretary (Law)
प्र.व. प्र.स. / R D No. 8526
दिनांक / Date: 27/12/2013

मु.स. का बोधनीय अनुभाग
CS's Confidential Cell
प्र.स. सं./RD No. 8227
दिनांक / Date: 27/12/2013



ATR convoy: Protection or harassment?

JAVED ALAM

PORT BLAIR, DEC 25/—/ "ATR convoy system has become harassment for public and tourists these days," said a furious travel agent. Another person, perhaps the driver of a tourist vehicle, said, "The existing convoy system in the Andaman Trunk Road from Jirkatang to Middle Strait is followed for the protection of Jarawa Tribe." Intervening in the discussion, a knowledgeable tourist explained to the group of travel drivers the definition of convoy: "Convoy term is directly related to army where they move from one place to another in a group to protect themselves from any attack. But in these islands it is being followed for protection of the Jarawa tribe." In true sense, convoy system is used for self-protection not for other's protection but in middle Andaman this system has become harassment for general public and tourists.

We, the islanders are aware of the fact that such convoy system was put in

place at a time when Jarawa tribe was very hostile towards the outsiders. Those days, they killed a number of residents of nearby area, whoever dared to intrude in their comfort zone. But now the things have changed. The Jarawa tribe is no more hostile. In order to keep a vigil and streamline the whole system, officials of the concerned Department including policemen are in place to prevent the public and the tourists from mingling and contacting the Jarawas. They don't allow any member of the Jarawa community to come on the road and even pose for photography and other activities. All these officials are managing the things so well. But is there anyone to listen to the aggrieved tourists and travel agents?

Owing to the four convoys a day system, local public and tourists are facing immense problems. Vehicles are gathered in huge numbers at the Police Check Post. Cab drivers bring

their guests one hour before the scheduled time and make them sit on the road side under the scorching sun. There is no arrangement for proper sheds and minimum basic facilities for tourists and others in these places. Lack of basic amenities leaves these tourists frustrated and irritated. Baratang is one of the famous tourist places in Andaman & Nicobar Islands with three important attractions i.e. limestone caves, mud volcano and Parrot Island. Many tourist boat operators have taken huge amounts of loan from banks to purchase the boats for which they are still paying installments. With the convoy system dragging down the popularity of these tourist attraction, these boat operators may face a difficult time in repaying their loans to the banks. This is high time that some new system or solution is found in the larger interest of all the stakeholders, including the Jarawa tribe.

P
/
S
A
or
pt
fu
by
D