

PP, -75-
Views of Secretary(Tribal Welfare) on the two News items published in the Andaman Express has been perused. The Department's comments are given as under: (228)

I. The News items appeared in Andaman Express on 5.11.08:

The incident reported in the press relating to interaction of tourists with the Jarawa Tribes is given to understand to encourage Jarawa Tourism, which basically aims to cater to the interest of the tourists to see one of the primitive tribes living in our country. It is in this context eco-tourism activities taken up by the Department has been projected as a catalyst to encourage Jarawa Tourism. It is further brought on record that the said tourism activities at Baratang has caused environmental degradation at Jetty and nearby villages due to large flow of tourists to eco-tourism sites. On the above observation, the Department would like to comment that the eco-tourism facilities at Lime Stone Cave and Mud Volcano site created by the Department have taken care of the environmental factors likely to cause any degradation of the sites visited by the tourists. Apart from display of proper signages right from the Jetty up to the destination, no visitor is allowed to carry plastic materials to the above sites. A large number of eco-friendly Bins is also placed all along the road leading to the sites. Departmental mazdoors are deployed to clear the area of garbage if any left by the tourists at the end of the day. At present two bigger boats of carrying capacity of 100 persons and two smaller boats of 50 persons are engaged for taking tourists from Baratang Jetty to Mangrove creek wherefrom the tourists further proceed to the Cave. Littering in jetty area can be effectively controlled by PMB in collaboration with local Panchayat. The observation of driving away most of the parrots from Tota Tikry due to noise pollution is unfounded as no such impact has been observed on the number of birds visiting Tota Tikry at the end of the day.

Taken up with PMB

Administration is never encouraging Jarawa Tourism. Infact, in order to discourage the same, the tourist vehicles are not allowed to return on the same day from Baratang thereby forcing the tourists to move further to Middle and North Andaman. Effective measures are also taken by the Administration to allow movement of vehicles only in convoy thereby giving least chance to the tourists to interact with the Jarawas. Sporadic incidents of interacting with the Jarawas like the one reported in the Press needs to be dealt more rigidly and tour operators encouraging in such activity be taken to task due to violation of code of conduct while moving along the ATR. Officials of AAJVS and Police Department may be pressed more into action to curb such incidents of tourists