

284

May like to see the letter No. BTFBO/2017/80 dated 20.9.2017 (PUC) received from President, Baratang Tourist Fiber Boat Owners Associations, wherein, various concerns have been shown by them towards closure of ATR and introduction of Alternate Sea Route to Baratang for tourists. It is observed from the PUC that the Association is worried because they believe with the closure of ATR, the tourists who proceed to Baratang from Port Blair using ATR will affect the employment/ business including petty shopkeepers, hawkers etc. Furthermore, they have added that if the Administration will transfer the boat service to private boat service, then the big private agencies will destroy the business of small FRP boat operators of Baratang islands. As such, at the conclusion, the Association has requested the Administration to intervene into the matter by filing a petition before the Hon'ble Supreme Court for relief.

285

In this connection, it is to mention that the Alternate Sea Route Project to Baratang has been operationalized w.e.f. 1.10.2017 onwards, as a part of the implementation of the Jarawa Policy of 2004 and compliance of the commitment given by this Administration to the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in SLP 12125/2010.

286

With regard to the closure of Andaman Trunk Road for tourists with the introduction of Alternate Sea Route Project to Baratang, this Administration has already clarified its stand through press release published in the Daily Telegrams edition 21.9.2017 that the portion of ATR passing through Jarawa Tribal Reserve in South Andaman District from Jirkatang to Middle Strait shall remain open for the use of both islanders and the tourists as no decision has been taken for the time being.

287

As such, it is proposed that we may inform the Baratang Tourist Fiber Boat Owners Association not to get panic, as the Administration is fully committed to see and protect the interest of Jarawa and settlers & their livelihoods.

288

Subject to approval, a draft letter on the above lines is submitted for perusal.

EO (TW) 11/10/17

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11/10/17

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289

Tourists are not being barred from visiting Baratang in any sense; the