notification in the Official Gazette. It is represented before the Court that no gazette notification has yet been issued restricting operators of tourist vehicles to complete a round trip from Port Blair to Baratang and back on a single day and, therefore, the action of the respondents impugned in these petitions is absolutely illegal; and

2. The official respondents have been permitting buses to operate from Port Blair to Baratang and back by completing a round trip on a single day and, therefore, the petitioners have been subjected to hostile discrimination.

Mr. Rao, learned advocate for the petitioners in W.P. Nos. 989, 990 and 997 and Mr. Jayapal, learned advocate for the petitioners in the other petitions have vehemently criticized the step motherly attitude of the official respondents and have urged the Court to set things right by passing appropriate writs or directions on the official respondents to refrain from disallowing the petitioners to complete round trip from Port Blair to Baratang and back on a single day.

The writ petitions filed by the clients of Mr. Rao have been opposed by the official respondents by filing counter affidavits. It appears on perusal of one such counter affidavit that although a decision had in fact been taken by the State Transport Authority (hereafter the STA) in its meeting held on 14.10.2009 to allow all tourist buses which have valid permits to operate ten trips in a month for same day return from Baratang to Port Blair, the STA in its subsequent meeting held on 29.3.2010 decided to withdraw the earlier decision taken in the meeting on 14.10.2009. The decision taken in respect of agenda no.1 is quoted below for proper appreciation: