

NO.1-467/2009-TW/ 857  
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ADMINISTRATION  
SECRETARIAT : PORT BLAIR

Port Blair dated the 4<sup>th</sup> October, 2011

To

The Secretary (Home)  
Ministry of Home Affairs,  
New Delhi

[Attention Shri M.Gopal Reddy, Jt.Secretary, (UT)]

Sir,

With reference to your D.O.No.U-11023/1/2010-UTL Dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2011, following comments are submitted on the points raised by Secretary (Home),

The rationale for not allowing tourist establishments in the Buffer Zone is due the negative impact that tourism activity may bring on the Jarawa tribe, as in recent times they have started coming out and making contact with the local settlers and outsiders. It has also been noticed that such development has been exploited by the tour operators in bringing tourists to these islands with explicit or implicit assurance of showing the 'rare' tribal people. Such development has also lead to buying of agricultural land by outsiders from the settlers for setting up hotels and resorts in vantage and nearby areas to the Jarawa Reserve, in last few years.

A Committee constituted by National Advisory Council (NAC) in 2006, consisting of Shri Jairam Ramesh and Dr.(Mrs) Sayeda Hameed, visited the islands to study issues related to Jarawas and their protection. Based on various recommendations and developing ground situation, A & N Administration brought in the Buffer Zone Notification in 2007 specifically putting a ban on setting up tourist resorts and promotion of tourism near Jarawa Tribal Reserve areas of South and Middle Andaman. The concern here was not the local settlers who are already living in these villages for more than 4 to 5 decades, but visit or stay by tourists from the mainland in close proximity of the Tribal Reserve. The settlers are aware of the ground situation and respect the tribal way of life barring few incidences of conflict; but the tourists would be coming with a sole purpose of leisure and adventure. The number of tourists coming to Port Blair has now reached about 1.8 lakh and is increasing with the development of infrastructure facilities. It has become significant when compared with the local population of 3.8 lakhs spread over the entire island territory.

The extent of land under Revenue settlements in the present Buffer Zone is hardly 20% and remaining is notified Reserved Forest. The restrictions under the Forest Conservation Act 1980 and the ICRZ notification limiting developmental activities in the coastal zone, restrict setting up of big industries. The major resource of the island which is timber, is not allowed to be used commercially after the 2002 judgement of the Hon'ble Supreme Court and since then the major wood based industries have been closed down. Due to logistic constraints, environmental considerations and availability of raw materials and