Reference page: 354 - 357/cor.

PUC is from Govt. of India, Ministry of Home Affairs enclosing therein a letter from Ms. Indira Jaising, Additional Solicitor General regarding closure of mud volcano at Baratang. She has pointed out that tourist are visiting this area which is under the Buffer Zone and Administration has submitted an application before the Hon'ble Court stating that all the commercial activities has been stopped in the Buffer Zone area.

She has further pointed out that Hon'ble Supreme Court will not defer an inspection of the buffer zone area by a team of Advocates appointed to act as Court Commissioners. Consequent to the inspection if the Court Commissioners come to the conclusion that commercial activity is being carried out in the settlements which fall in the buffer zone, or tourism activities are taken place in the buffer zone, there may be issues of the administration being in contempt of the orders of the Court directing implementation of the notification. Ministry is seeking comments of the Admn. to reply to the Additional Solicitor General.

In view of the above, we may file a reply to the Ministry stating that the mud-volcano is a natural phenomena and the visitors are allowed to see the natural showcase. However, there is no any tourist infrastructure around the mud-volcano nor any commercial activities are allowed. No fees is charged from the visitors by any department or agency as such it is not covered in tourist/commercial activities.

In this connection, it is further to submit that the Admn. has already defined the commercial/tourist activity in the proposed amendment in the PAT Regulation.

A draft reply is placed in the file for approval.

Director (TW)

Pr.Secretary(TW).

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