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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
4049	17.05.2017	18.05.2017	Assam	www.newindianexpress.com/English http://www.newindianexpress.com/nation/2017/may/17/three-tourists-from-assam-die-of-heat-wave-in-train-1605909.html
Title:	Three tourists from Assam die of heat wave in train			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to SSU-Assam			

Three tourists from Assam, travelling by a special train, died in north India apparently due to a heat wave, but a section of fellow tourists attributed the deaths to lack of facilities, particularly water. The non-AC train, Aastha, started from Guwahati on the night of May 9, carrying 547 tourists, mostly from Assam, and travelled across places in north India. When reports last came in, it was in Uttar Pradesh on its way back to Guwahati.

According to passengers, the three deceased, including a woman, were elderly people. Two of them died on Tuesday while another died on Wednesday.

The railway authorities had rented the train to the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). IRCTC's joint general manager (tourism) who organised the tour, had charged Rs.8,100 from each passenger for food, travel and two nights' accommodation in north India. Some passengers complained that they were going through a harrowing time due to lack of water. "We are being served little water. As a result, many of us are suffering from dehydration and are dying. Also, the toilets are stinky and cannot be used," some passengers complained in videos which they sent to local news channels.

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**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

For more information please contact: Media Scanning & Verification Cell: - Phone (011)23946029

Email: - idsppediaalert@gmail.com, idspp-misc@nic.in, idspp-npo@nic.in

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"It's a special train but it stops at every station. And in every station, it is halted for at least 15 to 20 minutes. Only God knows when we will reach Guwahati," they said. A passenger, Umakanta Mali, told the New Indian Express that the people were suffering due to the extreme heat wave. "The temperature in Uttar Pradesh is now around 43 degree Celsius. So, the extreme heat is making us sick because we don't experience such high temperatures in the Northeast," he said.

"We are being served water thrice a day along with meals. But as it is not sufficient, we should also spend money from our pocket to buy extra water. We cannot expect the IRCTC to serve 10 litres of drinking water to each of the 547 passengers every day," Mali added. The Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) said it was in touch with the IRCTC to ensure the comfort and treatment of the passengers. "We have spoken to the IRCTC which is running the train. The passengers were given medical attendance. According to them, the complaint about water has been taken care of," NFR chief spokesman, Pranab Jyoti Sarma, said.

The IRCTC said most of the tourists were aged and quite weak and suffering from high blood pressure. "The heat of north India has taken its toll at the end of the trip on their return journey. Adequate care was taken and medical help provided whenever the tourists had fallen ill," IRCTC's joint general manager (tourism), SA Karim, said. "The next time we organise such a tour, we will make sure that the passengers are medically examined," IRCTC regional manager, PK Dutta, said.

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