Safety Guidelines for Swimming / Snorkelling / Diving in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Andaman and Nicobar Islands have many sandy beaches and coral reefs. Though Andaman water are generally safe for swimming, snorkelling and diving, they also have few potentially dangerous marine animals, which may come in conflict due to mistaken identity such as a prey or to defend their territory. Though such incidents are extremely rare, visitors are advised to observe following precautions for a safe and enriching swimming experience.

Remember these FLAGS

1. FIND Safe swimming / diving locations from Tourism Department Information Centres / local Tour operators / Life guard and Forest staff.
2. LOOK at the safety signs - they help you identify potential dangers.
3. ASK the lifeguard on duty for some good advice - Swimming conditions (Local currents, tides, visibility, presence of dangerous marine creatures etc.) can change quickly. So talk to a lifesaver / man on guard before entering the water. In an unpatrolled area, seek prior advice.
4. GET a friend to swim with you - You can look out for each other’s safety and get help if needed. Children should always be supervised by an adult. Avoid swimming in dark.
5. STICK your hand up for help - if you get into trouble in the water, stay calm, wave your arm to signal for help.

General Precautions

- Do not dangle your arms or legs in the water during boat rides.
- Do not swim under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Shiny jewellery or bright coloured clothes resemble the fins of small fish and may attract predatory fish. Avoid such accessories or clothing while swimming.
- If you have an open wound, please avoid swimming. Many predatory fish are attracted to the smell of blood.
- Avoid swimming among a shoal of fishes while diving, to avoid attack by predatory fish such as sharks.

Potentially harmful marine animals found in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

The warm tropical waters of these Islands are rich in marine life. Most of them are harmless and beautiful but few of them can be dangerous due to their size or predatory nature or both. Some of these animals are described below;

Jelly Fishes - Their sting may cause pain and giddiness. Don’t touch or play with them. Get ashore if you see a large shoal of jelly fish. In case of a sting, apply vinegar / ice packs on it and do not rub.

Stone Fish - Present in shallow coral and rocks or camouflaged in mud and sand. They have venomous dorsal spines and the sting could be lethal. To avoid them never walk on coral reef area and never lift rocks or corals. Wear sturdy sandals while walking in shallow coastal waters.

Sea Snakes - They are highly poisonous and are usually recognised by their paddle like tail. They can be aggressive if handled or stepped on. Stay well away from them.

Sharks - Normally present in the open sea and some parts of coral reef areas (Reef shark). Avoid swimming or diving alone and don’t enter the water with open wounds.

Salt Water Crocodile - They are normally present in creeks, Mangrove areas, sheltered waters and mouths of the creeks. Please avoid swimming or diving in these areas. If you notice a crocodile in the water, immediately go ashore and alert the authorities. Crocodiles move large distances in open sea and can be found in coral reefs also.

For more information contact

1. Chief Wildlife Warden, ANI, Yonsadan, Haddo Ph: 03192 - 232270
3. Director (Tourism), A&N Admn., Port Blair Ph: 03192 - 230933
4. Police Control Room : 100

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