

Officials in Lijiang suspended over Weibo posts

Two officials in the Old Town of Lijiang in Yunnan province have been suspended over comments made on Sina Weibo on Sunday, which appeared to attack users of China's Twitter-like social media platform.

The deputy head of the publicity department in Gucheng district, where the scenic spot is located, and the head of the district's international communication office have been suspended from their duties, while the publicity department has been urged to examine its actions, the district government said in a statement on Sina Weibo on Monday.

The Old Town of Lijiang is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a national 5-A scenic spot.

However, in recent years, there have been many reports of tourists being overcharged or being forced to shop in the city. In one incident, a tourist lost her purse and was disfigured after being beaten by a dozen people at a restaurant.

For its failure to maintain services and facilities akin to a top-rated scenic spot, the town was given a warning by the China National Tourism Administration on Saturday and told to rectify issues within six months.

Gucheng's publicity department posted a statement on Weibo on Sunday, saying it was willing to accept punishment and work to resolve issues with the services it provides.

However, when a user commented, "I will never go to Lijiang", the official account replied, saying: "You'd better not come to Lijiang! We don't need you!"

Another comment read, "Is there any risk of being beaten in Lijiang?", to which the official account replied, "It takes two to quarrel."

The replies were deleted soon after being posted, with the publicity department denying knowledge of them and promising an investigation into the case.

The replies triggered a flood of criticism among netizens, with many questioning whether the scenic spot has any desire to improve its services.