

Editorial

Friday, January 5, 2018

Tinkering the Traffic

The state of Manipur, and Imphal city in particular has been witnessing a phenomenal increase in the amount of vehicles- an indication of the rising social status of the public and improving economic conditions in the state.

While these factors are a welcome sign, the fact remains that the concerned authorities have failed to keep pace with the times and the changing social scenario in the state resulting in heavy traffic jams and delays which needs to be addressed immediately. The short term policies and systems being implemented from time to time in an attempt to ease the congestions and traffic jams have not been able to alleviate the problem in any way, on the contrary these ad-hoc measures have managed to confuse the public and compound the problem the authorities have been trying to solve.

The formation of Traffic regulation and parking committee has not been of much help, and one can only wonder if they are functioning at all. Queries put up to the concerned departments have only resulted in more bewildering responses- a classic example of the effectiveness of passing the buck around that has been at work in all government set ups. While formulation of policies and systems to control and regulate traffic may be a beginning in the right direction, the fact remains that the increasing number of vehicles need additional space to accommodate them and juggling acts of the traffic system by the experts, however efficient and experienced they may be, will not bear fruit. Construction of additional parking spaces at strategic locations, bypasses and flyovers, and most importantly providing subways at important and crowded junctions will go a long way in reducing these problems.

Construction of public utilities does not automatically guarantee improvement- their proper usage is as important- an obvious example being the use of footpaths by the vendors and shopkeepers to stock and ply their goods forcing the pedestrians to walk on the road.

The need to streamline and re-orient the traffic police personnels is also being felt by the public. Turning a blind eye to the irregularities being committed by the drivers of various public and commercial transport vehicles in consideration for a "quick handshake" has been well documented- despite the dangers and inconveniences such greedy acts causes.

The present government ministers and high ranking officials may not be feeling the burden such traffic jams causes as they seem to have a prerogative of the right of use of the road over the common public but unless some concrete steps are taken up very soon, the only option that would be available to them would be to use their feet with their retinue of escorts and assistants wading through the impossible traffic- surely a distracting relief for the stranded common public on the road.

Natl. & Intl News

Competition Commission of India imposes Penalty on Chemists and Druggists Association

PIB New Delhi, Jan 5: The Competition Commission of India ("Commission") has found the Chemists and Druggists Association of Baroda ("CDAB") and Federation of Gujarat State Chemists and Druggists Association ("Gujarat Federation") to be in contravention of the provisions of the Competition Act, 2002 ("Act"). One of the stockists based in Vadodra filed an information alleging that despite an earlier order of the Commission in the year 2012, CDAB, through its practices, has continued to limit and control the supply of drugs and medicines in the market by mandating 'No Objection Certificate' ("NOC"/"LOC") prior to appointment of stockists and payment of 'Product Information Service' ("PIS") charges prior to introduction of new products in the market by pharmaceutical companies.

Investigation carried-out by the Director General ("DG") revealed involvement of the State Level Association, i.e. the Gujarat Federation, besides CDAB, in the alleged conduct. After detailed enquiry, the Commission has found that CDAB and the Gujarat Federation were indulging in the anti-competitive practice of insisting NOC prior to the appointment of new stockists by

pharmaceutical companies. Further, the Gujarat Federation was found to be carrying on the practice of making introduction of new products in the market subject to payment of PIS charge and its approval. These practices were held to be limiting and controlling supplies of drugs/medicines in the market, in contravention of Section 3 (3) (b) read with Section 3 (1) of the Act. Further, the Commission has held office bearers of CDAB and Gujarat Federation, namely Shri V.T. Shah (President, CDAB), Shri Jashvint Patel (President, Gujarat Federation), to be responsible under Section 48 of the Act, for their involvement in the anti-competitive practices.

Accordingly, CDAB, Gujarat Federation and their office bearers, have been directed to cease and desist from indulging in the aforesaid anti-competitive practice. Further, the Commission imposed a monetary penalty of Rs. 1,08,588/- and Rs. 11,11,549/-, calculated at the rate of 10% of the average income of CDAB and the Gujarat Federation, respectively, under the provisions of Section 27 of the Act. Penalties of Rs. 34,048/- and Rs. 62,144/-, calculated at the rate of 10% of their respective average incomes, are also imposed upon Shri V.T. Shah (President, CDAB) and Shri Jashvint Patel (President, Gujarat Federation).

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National & International News

Bengal governor condemns agitation at Kolkata college

PTI Kolkata, Jan 5: West Bengal Governor K N Tripathi has condemned the agitation at Charuchandra College here over removal of a security guard and said students should not behave in a way that deviates from the tradition of showing respect to their teachers. Students should follow decorum and what happened at the college was unfortunate, the governor said, when asked about the alleged

manhandling of a teacher during the agitation on Tuesday. "Our culture and tradition underscore that students have to be respectful to the teachers," Tripathi said on the sidelines of a cultural programme at a city hotel yesterday. A section of the students had allegedly manhandled a teacher and a non-teaching staff of the college on Tuesday during an agitation at principal's office over removal of a security guard and inadequate

safety measures on campus. The college authorities had called for an indefinite shutdown from Wednesday following the incident. The shutdown was withdrawn after Education Minister Partha Chatterjee intervened into the matter and said college should not have taken a unilateral decision without consulting the Higher Education department on the matter. Chatterjee said he was neither in favour of the gherao of the

principal's office by the students nor the subsequent decision of the college management to go for indefinite closure of the institution. The students had on Tuesday claimed that the college authority played a role in the removal of a security guard and demanded enhanced security for students, especially girls, by restricting alleged entry of outsiders. Principal S Ghosh said the college had nothing to do with the removal of the security guard of a private agency.

Maha bandh: 16 FIRs registered in Mumbai, over 300 detained

PTI Mumbai, Jan 5: The Mumbai Police registered 16 FIRs and detained over 300 people in connection with protests by Dalit groups during the day-long bandh yesterday against the Bhima Koregaon caste clashes, while Internet services were suspended in Kolhapur following tension in the district.

Over 200 buses of the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation were damaged in attacks by protesters across the state during the bandh, MSRTC officials said. In Mumbai, 16 FIRs were registered at various police

stations and more than 300 people detained, police said. In Kolhapur, the home district of social reformist late Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, the protesters yesterday attacked 13 buses of the civic corporation, an official said.

The Kolhapur district police has suspended Internet services till midnight today as a precautionary measure, an official said. Protests by Dalit groups were held in the district yesterday followed by counter-rallies led by Shiv Sena MLA Rajesh Kshirsagar.

In Parbhani district of Marathwada region, an office of the RSS was attacked yesterday,

police said. The agitators raised anti-RSS slogans, the Parbhani police said, adding no major damage to property was reported.

In Nilanga, the home town of state labour minister Sambhaji Patil Nilangekar in Latur district, around 40 two-wheelers and 10 to 12 four-wheelers were damaged by a mob, police said.

The bandh was called yesterday following violence in Pune district on January 1 when Dalit groups were celebrating the bicentenary of the Bhima-Koregaon battle in which the forces of the British East India Company defeated the Peshwa's

Army. Dalit leaders commemorate the British victory, as it is believed that soldiers from the Mahar community were part of the East India Company's forces. The Peshwas were Brahmins, and the victory is seen as a symbol of assertiveness by Dalits.

The battle has come to be seen as a symbol of Dalit pride because a large number of soldiers in the Company force were Mahar Dalits. Since the Peshwas, who were Brahmins, were seen as oppressors of Dalits, the victory of the Mahar soldiers over Peshwa force is seen as Dalit assertion.

Mumbai Marol fire: 4 killed in Maimoon building blaze; matter reported to police for detailed investigation

FP Mumbai, Jan. 5: Four members of a family, including two children, were burnt to death after a fire broke out in a residential building in Marol located in Mumbai's Andheri East area. The family was sleeping when the fire broke out at 2 am. Seventeen others were rescued from Maimoon Manzil at the sprawling Dawoodi Bohra Colony.

The deceased were identified as: Sakina A Kapasi (14), Mohsin A Kapasi (10), Tasleem A Kapasi (4) and a senior citizen, Dawood Ali Kapasi (80). They were all residing in a flat on the third

floor of the four-storey building. They were taken to Cooper Hospital where they were declared dead before admission. Some members of the neighbouring family of Kotharis also sustained injuries in the fire and were being treated. They are: as Ibrahim Kothari (57), Sakina Kothari (53), Hussain Kothari (26) and Hafiza Kothari (21). The Kotharis were admitted to Holy Spirit Hospital for treatment. Of the four, Ibrahim suffered from suffocation and is admitted in the ICU.

Another injured woman, Zara Cutlerywalla (42) was discharged after treatment.

The fire spread to the electric wiring, electric installations and household articles in Room 306 on the third floor of four storey residential building. Fire Brigade officials said the blaze engulfed the flat from all four sides, trapping the ill-fated Kapasi family.

The fire brigade received the call at 2.09 am and they arrived at the scene at 2.34 am. It was finally brought under control at 4.15 am. The fire was extinguished with three lines (small, big and high pressure lines) of 5 motor pumps. The cause of the fire is reported to be unclear and the matter has been reported to the police by

the flat-owner for a detailed enquiry.

The Marol fire comes only days after a fire broke out in Kamala Mills Compound in Lower Parel area of Mumbai, killing at least 14 people, including 12 women. Most of the deceased were in their twenties and thirties. The fire had spread rapidly to nearby restaurants and offices as well. Reports said that the postmortem examination revealed that all 14 deaths were due to suffocation. The police has registered a case under Section 304 of the IPC (culpable homicide) against IABove, the restaurant where the fire reportedly broke out.

Mangaluru: Karnataka Police arrests 4 suspects for murdering 32-year-old 'Hindu activist'

IANS Mangaluru, Jan. 5: Four persons were arrested on Wednesday in Karnataka's Suratkal town near Mangaluru for the alleged murder of a 32-year-old man, whom the Opposition BJP claimed to be a Hindu activist.

"The suspects were arrested when they were trying to escape after attacking the victim - Deepak Rao - at Katipalla in the town," Dakishna Kannada Superintendent of Police SK

Reddy told IANS. Rao, a sales executive with a mobile phones distributor, in Mangaluru, about 350km from the Bengaluru, was riding a motorbike at Katipalla when the accused waylaid and assaulted him with a machete between 1.30-2 pm.

"A bleeding Rao was rushed to a private hospital at Suratkal for emergency treatment, but doctors declared him dead," said Reddy. Mangaluru Police Commissioner TR Suresh said that the

suspects were nabbed after they were chased and intercepted by police which fired at the car in which they were fleeing from the crime spot.

"We recovered the weapon (machete) with which Rao was hacked," added Reddy. The four arrested were identified as Mulky Naushad, Rizwan, Pinky Nawaz and Nirshan.

Right wing outfit Bajrang Dal also claimed that Rao was one of its members in the coastal district.

Meanwhile, state Home Minister Ramalinga Reddy rushed Additional Director General of Police Kamal Pant to the town to inquire into the incident.

The state government also deployed additional police to maintain law and order and ensure peace, as the BJP and Bajrang Dal called for a day-long shutdown in the coastal district on Thursday in protest against the murderous attack on Rao.

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