

Editorial

Tuesday, October 30, 2018

..... but traffic is still in mess

Time and again many newspaper published in the state has been highlighting the problems being faced by the people due to the unorganised manner of the traffic regulation in the city.

Meeting of the Traffic Regulations and Parking Committee (TRPC) meeting convened by the Chief Minister N. Biren Singh some months back turns out to be another publicity stunted as nothing has been changed. It is over 3 months now and the so call concern government officials still could not find any solution to solve the traffic woes in the city. Perhaps these government employees are either not that qualified enough or outdated or perhaps they don't care about what the Chief Minister wanted them to do to make people comfortable while walking or driving in the roads of Imphal city.

Everyone knows that Imphal city and of course neighbouring district head quarters towns have been witnessing a phenomenal increase in the amount of vehicles. This may be an indication of the rising social status of the public and improving economic conditions in the state.

While improving economic conditions of the people of the state 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 meeting of Traffic regulation and parking committee convened by the chief Minister N. Biren Singh has not been of much help for reason best known to the concern government authority.

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 personnel 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.

Supreme Court bans 15-year-old petrol & 10-year-old diesel vehicles in NCR to curb pollution

New Delhi, Oct 30

The Supreme Court has prohibited the plying of 15-year-old petrol and 10-year-old diesel vehicles in the national capital region and made it clear that such vehicles would be impounded if found on roads in Delhi-NCR.

Terming as "very critical" and "horrible" the prevailing pollution situation in Delhi-NCR, the apex court directed that a list of 15-year-old petrol and 10-year-old diesel vehicles be published on the website of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) and transport departments of the NCR area.

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Japan agrees to 316 Billion Yen loan for seven major infrastructure projects in India

New Delhi, Oct. 30

Japan has agreed to provide loans of about 316 Billion Yen for seven major infrastructure projects in India. These include Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train, projects in Delhi, North East and Chennai. This was announced after the 13th India Japan Annual Bilateral Summit led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe in Tokyo last evening.

Both the sides discussed wide range of issues of mutual interest and reviewed the prevailing regional and international situations. After the summit, both countries announced that an agreement has been made for establishing a 22 mechanism in which the defence and foreign ministers of both the countries could interact on furthering



cooperation. Another agreement on having greater cooperation and exchange of information in

Maritime domain awareness between the Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self Defence Force

was also signed by the two nations.

After the summit the two sides exchanged 32 MoUs. A Letter of Intent was also exchanged in which 57 Japanese companies conveyed their decision to make an investment of about 2.5 billion US Dollars in India. 15 Indian companies have also come forward to invest in Japan. India and Japan also concluded a 75 billion dollar Bilateral Currency Swap Agreement with a view to enhance financial and economic cooperation.

In a major fillip to the International Solar Alliance, Japan announced that it has ratified the framework agreement for the International Solar Alliance. Japan is the 71st country to sign the agreement to join the global alliance and the 48th to ratify it. The Prime Minister has since returned home this morning.

CBI Officer Who Was Investigating Rakesh Asthana Moves SC for SIT Probe, Claims Proof of Rs 3.3 Cr Bribe

New Delhi, Oct. 30

AK Bassi, the CBI officer who was investigating corruption allegations against the agency's special director Rakesh Asthana, has moved the Supreme Court seeking an SIT probe in the Moin Qureshi case.

Bassi was transferred to Port Blair following the upheaval in the CBI last week when Asthana and agency director Alok Verma were divested of all charges. In his petition before the apex court, Bassi has challenged his

transfer and claimed that he has "incriminating" evidence against Asthana. He told the top court on Tuesday that he has evidence of Rs 3.3 crore bribe paid to those mentioned in the FIR. He has cited WhatsApp messages and calls as evidence.

In a complaint to the Central Vigilance Commission, Asthana had alleged that Bassi was carrying out "roving inquiries" against him on the directions of Alok Verma.

The Delhi High Court has directed the CBI to maintain status quo till

November 1 on the criminal proceedings initiated against Asthana, who has challenged the FIR lodged against him.

The crisis in the country's premier investigating agency case emanates from a statement recorded by a Hyderabad-based real estate agent Sathish Sana whose role was being investigated by a team led by Asthana in a bribery case allegedly involving meat exporter Moin Qureshi.

It was alleged that Sana had paid Rs 50 lakh as bribe to Qureshi, which was shown as investment in his company, to get relief in a bribery case.

A Special Investigation Team led by Rakesh Asthana was probing the matter and was repeatedly questioning Sana in this regard as it suspected him of lying in the matter.

A lookout notice was also issued against him by the investigation which prevented him from leaving the country on September 25, 2018, Sana had said in his statement which is part of the FIR.

The team also submitted a proposal to arrest him as it felt the need for custodial interrogation on October 20, 2018 before the director which

was not cleared and sent for the opinion of Directorate of Prosecution.

"The arrest is ordered only when certain parameters are fulfilled. The sanctioning authority satisfies itself whether arrest is warranted or not. The due procedure was followed," CBI spokesperson said on the question of Asthana's claims.

Asthana in his complaint to the Cabinet Secretary on August 24 had alleged that CBI Director Alok Verma had received a bribe of Rs 2 crore from Sana to help him get relief from repeated questioning.

He had also alleged that Verma had called him over phone in February to not call Sana for questioning. In a surprising and unprecedented move on October 15, the CBI booked Asthana and investigation officer of the case on the charges of receiving bribe from Sana through middleman Manoj Prasad and Somesh Prasad.

The CBI has arrested Devender Kumar, the Deputy SP and investigation officer, alleging that he had fabricated the statement of Sana purportedly claiming that a Rajya Sabha MP had met Verma on his pending case and assured him of relief and a clean chit.

Sri Lanka braces for protest over PM's sacking

Colombo, Oct 30

Sri Lanka on Tuesday braced for a protest called by ousted prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's party against what it said was a "coup" by President Maithripala Sirisena which has triggered a political crisis in the country. Sri Lanka, a Buddhist-majority nation in the Indian Ocean, was plunged into chaos on Friday when President Sirisena sacked Prime Minister Wickremesinghe in a surprise move. He also suspended parliament in an apparent bid to shore up support for newly appointed Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa.

Sirisena is under increasing political and diplomatic pressure to reconvene parliament and resolve the constitutional crisis.

Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP) is set to hold a protest on Tuesday in the capital, Colombo.

"We are calling upon all sections of the society who believe in democracy and rule of law to gather and protest," Champika Ranawaka, a former minister said. Mangala Samaraweera, the ex-finance minister under Wickremesinghe said, "This was a constitutional coup and it is our duty to protect democracy and sovereignty of people". Speaker Karu Jayasuriya urged the president to let Wickremesinghe prove his majority support on the parliament floor.

The supporters of Rajapaksa, a former president, are confident that he would be able to prove majority support on the parliament floor as they are sure that members of Wickremesinghe's UNP would defect.

"We are waiting for more UNP members to join us. We have the numbers," Lakshman Yapa Abeywardena, a Rajapaksa loyalist, said. Wickremesinghe has said that he still commands the majority. However, he suffered a setback after four lawmakers from his party, who had pledged allegiance to him in the

public, took a U-turn and accepted ministerial positions in the Rajapaksa government.

"We have the majority despite four of them joining Rajapaksa," Ranjith Madduma Bandara, an ex-minister, said.

Speaker Jayasuriya has called for a meeting of all party leaders to assess the current political situation. At least 128 members had written to him calling for reconvening of parliament. Jayasuriya has insisted that the issue needs to be settled within parliament. The crisis turned deadly on Sunday when the bodyguard of a former cabinet minister fired on a crowd, killing at least one person and wounding two others.

Under Sri Lanka's constitution, the president, who maintains executive powers, can appoint a new prime minister once the current premier has lost control of parliament.

Wickremesinghe argues he cannot legally be dismissed until he loses the support of parliament. His party, which holds a plurality of seats in the 225-member assembly, was prevented from holding a vote when Sirisena abruptly suspended parliament on Saturday until 16 November.

Wickremesinghe claimed in a Facebook post on Monday he had obtained the signatures of 126 MPs calling for parliament to be returned immediately to end the political standoff.

Both camps are working to secure their numbers in parliament.

Rajapaksa's tenure as president was marred by allegations of authoritarianism, corruption and human rights abuses, especially against the country's Tamil minority. He was defeated at the 2015 presidential elections when Wickremesinghe and Sirisena formed an unlikely coalition, and their government initiated several investigations into alleged Rajapaksa-era crimes.

Vigilance Awareness Week begins NEC, Shillong



IT News Imphal, Oct. 30

Inaugural Programme of Vigilance Awareness Week with the theme "Eradicate Corruption-Build a New India" was conducted on 29th November at North Eastern Council, Shillong. The vigilance pledge was administered to all the Employees of the council by C.H. Kharshing, IA & AS Planning Adviser of NEC. Speaking on the occasion C.H.

Kharshing said, "NEC has geared up for observing the week in accordance with the directive of the Central Vigilance Commission. The council has commenced preparatory activities like for Vigilance Awareness Week to ensure participation from all the departments and their family members true to the spirit of the event and emphasized the need to inculcate and nurture core values like honesty, integrity, moral values in the work culture."