

Minutes of the Meeting of Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority for the NCR (EPCA) held on February 15, 2016 (Monday) from 4:00 pm onwards (at the office of 'Centre for Science and Environment', India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi)

**Agenda:** *To discuss on the matter of IA no. 393 filed by Special Protection Group, Cabinet Secretariat requesting for modification in order of Hon'ble Supreme Court dated 05.01.2016 passed in WP (C) No.13029 of 1985 in the matter of M.C. Mehta Vs. Union of India & Ors. The relevant portion of court order is as under: "We accordingly direct that registration of SUV's and private car of the capacity of 2000cc and using diesel as fuel shall stand banned in the NCR up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016"*

In attendance:

1. Dr. Bhure Lal, Chairman, EPCA
2. Ms. Sunita Narain, Member, EPCA
  
3. Mr. Malay Sinha, Secretary (Security), GoI
4. Mr. Vivek Srivastava, Director, SPG
  
5. Ankush Tewani, EE, CPCB

EPCA convened this meeting to discuss the exemption sought by Central Govt. for purchase of diesel vehicles for Special Protection Group (SPG) protectees filed before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

Director, SPG briefed EPCA that the vehicles are procured under two categories: Special Purpose Vehicles and General Purpose Vehicles and that special purpose vehicles include armored vehicles, escort vehicles and ferry vehicles. Out of these, the Central Govt. has sought exemption for purchase of diesel cars for armored vehicles and escort vehicles.

Director, SPG explained that the reason for seeking exemption for purchase of a diesel SPG protectees vehicles/ cars, in this case the Toyota Fortuner (diesel), because this car meet the requirement of a SPG protectees vehicle and that its petrol version is not available in India. The most important requirement to be met by SPG protectees vehicles is engine power so that these should keep up the pace with the main vehicle to be protected besides other requirement of ground clearance and torque and kerb weight. It was also mentioned that under Section 38 of the Blue Book "engine of comparable power" should be used. In our case, the engine capacity of the main vehicle to be protected is around 6000 cc and that of Toyota fortuner is around near 3000 cc i.e. somewhere comparable.

Director, SPG informed EPCA that they had also explored options for petrol SUV cars in the market for the purpose. There are only three petrol based SUVs available: Honda CRV, Hyundai CRETA and Maruti Grand Vetera but these do not meet the requirements of SPG protectees vehicle.

EPCA asked Director SPG about the number of cars required to be purchased. Director SPG informed that they purchased 2 cars during last year and are in the process of armoring it and in order to support this there is need of 12 escort cars i.e. two sets of 6 escort cars each.

EPCA was of the view that in light of the fact that these vehicles are needed to support the armored vehicles that have been purchased it would be prudent to allow this exemption for 12 vehicles. But it was of the view that for this one-time exemption, an ECC of 30 per cent would have to be imposed. It was also of the view that SPG must explore options for petrol variants of these vehicles as these are available in other countries and so can be manufactured in India as well.

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