

Contractors of Metro, coastal road projects served notices

MPCB serves notice to L&T and BMC serves stop work notice to J Kumar Infra

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MUMBAI, NOVEMBER 8

IN A major crackdown on violators for flouting air pollution norms, the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board (MPCB) and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation on Wednesday issued notices to various infrastructure developers involved with Coastal Road and Metro rail projects in the city. While the BMC issued “stop work” notices to J Kumar Infra Projects Ltd, MPCB issued show cause notices to 14 Ready Mix Concrete (RMC) plants across the city, including four being operated by Larsen & Toubro Ltd.

The other RMC plants that received MPCB notices are units owned by Avighnaa Contractors, Century Estates, Swayam Realtors and Traders, Nagarjuna Construction Company, Ahluwalia Contracts, Apco infratech and ITD Cementation India Limited.

Confirming BMC’s stop work notice to J Kumar Infra Projects Limited, assistant municipal commissioner Swapnaja Kshirsagar told The Indian Express, “We have issued letter of intimation to all contractors who are carrying out infrastructure works around BKC area, asking them to follow dust mitigation measures. However, since these measures weren’t followed up by this contractor (J Kumar Infra) a ‘stop work’ notice was served to them.”

J Kumar Infra has been carrying out construction of Colaba-Bandra-SEEPZ Metro corridor, and the terminal section of this project is coming up at Income Tax Office (ITO) junction in BKC.

“We have issued intimation letter to Bullet Train Project asso-

ciates as well and held multiple meetings with them. They have assured that they will implement the mitigation measures within the next 2-3 days,” she added.

Civic officials also added that over the past one week, nine “stop work” notices were issued to several contractors operating in BKC alone.

The BMC action comes even as Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC) had earlier this week sought an exemption from the civic authority’s pollution mitigation guidelines.

As part of its “Death by Breath” series, highlighting the air pollution woes of Mumbai, The Indian Express highlighted that BKC emerged as one of the most affected pockets in the city recording poor AQI consistently, exceeding the 200-mark, which is classified as “poor”. The Indian Express had reported on October 20 that during a visit at the bullet train project site in BKC, it was found that no dust mitigation measures were implemented.

The MPCB issued show-cause notices to 14 RMC plants — four at Mumbai Coastal Road Project (MCRP) sites and two at Mumbai Metro project sites. Speaking to The Indian Express, MPCB officials said that the notices were served to ensure the entities follow the dust mitigation rules.

“During our inspection, we found out that several conditions that were stated while issuing them permission for setting up these plants, many of which were not followed. Some of these conditions include raising curtains around the RMC plants and carrying out continuous sprinkling of water. Hence,

we issued them a notice asking them to immediately implement dust mitigation rules,” an official said.

The MPCB has given the contractors seven days to file their reply, failing which stricter action would be taken. “In their response, they have to provide us a timeline by which they will implement the mitigation measures. If they fail to do so, we will issue ‘stop work’ notice to them,” a senior MPCB official said.

The MPCB also issued similar notices to two Metro 3 construction sites at Azad Maidan and Cuffe Parade, where stations for this new line is being constructed. While one notice is being issued in the name of L&T, another is being issued in the name of HCC. Calls, messages and e-mails sent to L&T and J Kumar Infra Projects did not elicit any response.

However, when contacted, a senior MCRP official said, “It was a general notice asking us to put all the measures in place. All the dust mitigation measures are followed in Coastal Road construction site and we have started sprinkling of water as well. Also, we don’t transport any construction debris out of the site as it gets treated inside the compound only.”

“The project proponent is L&T and we will follow up with them in case there is any lapse in following the rules,” the official added.

A spokesperson of the MMRC said, “The contractor has to comply with BMC norms and file a report. The MMRC has already communicated the guidelines to all its contractors. Anyone found flouting them will face notices.”