

Our angel that day



Nirmala Pant

We get only one life, and we meet so many people. At times, the person with whom you share a close or blood relation may leave you halfway but at the same time a completely unknown person may extend his helping hand in difficult situations.

One such incident I happen to remember is about a driver, whose unconditional and selfless help can never be forgotten. I was coming from Ranikhet to Doon with my husband and son. My son was little restless because of high fever and was crying too. Both of us were unable to understand what to do.

As our seat was next to the driver, he was watching everything. It was about 6 in the evening and we were almost about to reach Moradabad, when my son started crying louder; but instead of being cooperative, our co-passengers were feeling irritated. We tried our best to han-

dle the situation but all in vain. All of a sudden my son became quiet. I thought he is OK, but within seconds I realised he had fainted. I got scared and started screaming; the conductor was rubbing my son's palms and the bottom of his feet. The driver said, "Don't worry, nothing will happen to your son; I know a doctor and we will be soon at his place." These words of support were like a boon for us. I sprinkled some water on my son's face, rubbed his palms, unbuttoned his shirt and kept on praying with teary eyes.

Within a few minutes, he was back in his senses but started crying again. The driver stopped the bus and got off, took my son and asked us to follow him amid passengers objecting why they were being punished for one passenger. The driver said, "Whoever wants to go can take another bus but I can't help you in such a situation."

Without wasting a second, he took us directly to a child specialist who immediately did the needful for my son. The driver stood by us all the time. He was our God that day.

Despite govt push, green hurdles stay for infra projects

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NEW DELHI: At a time when the government is going all out to give a push to the infrastructure sector, it seems one central government ministry has ended up playing spoilsport. Over 20 big ticket infrastructure projects, each worth ₹1,000 crore or more, cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Investment (CCI) between January and August, have failed to take off as they are stuck with the ministry of environment and forest (MoEF). The CCI was set up by the government last year to fast track stalled big ticket

infrastructure projects.

"We have repeatedly sought an explanation from the environment ministry as to why the projects are not being cleared despite CCI decisions, but the ministry has failed to provide the status," said a senior government official who did not wish to be named.

In all, there are 399 projects in the manufacturing, power, steel, coal, petroleum and highways sector, worth a little over ₹15 lakh crore that have been stuck for over a year or more.

The dilly-dallying by the environment ministry has irked the Prime Minister's Office, which has now asked for an action

taken report (ATR) from respective infrastructure ministries on projects where CCI decisions have not been implemented. An official said, "Ministries have been asked to submit an ATR by mid January."

In July, the government had also set up the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) to track expenditure/ investments on stalled projects that have been cleared.

The PMG has already cleared 92 stalled projects entailing a total investment of over ₹3 lakh crore.

About 38% of the projects listed with PMG are related to the environment ministry.

frompageone

Gandhi visits riot-hit in UP..

His statement during his first visit in September, that the ISI was trying to recruit riot-hit youth from the area, had also not gone down well with the locals.

Gandhi urged the victims to go back to their homes, saying that by staying on at the camps, they were inadvertently helping those who had instigated the mob violence. He also noticed amity among people and communities, and said the government must expedite the rehabilitation process so that the people can return to their villages.

However, inmates told him they were not ready to go back yet as they feared being attacked again. Earlier this month, the

After Rahul, Modi talks corruption, aims at him

Modi also slammed the Congress for its 'votebank politics', saying that the Congress has a tradition of dividing people on communal lines. "The Prime Minister announced a special scheme for the 90-Muslim dominated districts in the country but later told Parliament that not a rupee was spent."

The BJP, on the other hand, was committed to developing the country, Modi said. "I will not talk much about Gujarat

because that induces pain in some people. I draw your attention to Madhya Pradesh which has made strides in development under Shivaraj Chauhan," he added.

The Gujarat CM said a 'Congress-free India' was his only aim and hit out at alleged attempts to block television cable network during his rallies, saying that "it makes no difference because Modi has already found a place in the people's heart".

Supreme Court had taken note of child deaths in the camps, follow-

ing which the state government constituted a probe committee.

MoEF approves projects in haste: green tribunal

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NEW DELHI: In a stinging remark on how callously the environment ministry grants approvals, the National Green Tribunal (NGT) has described approval to the thermal power plant in Andhra Pradesh as "cursory" and "arbitrary", without taking note of the importance of environmental issues.

While suspending the environmental clearance given to the ₹11,000 crore project in Vizianagaram, the southern bench of the NGT said there was through failure in the manner in which the Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) of the environment ministry appraised the project.

The ministry appoints expert

TERMS MINISTRY'S APPROVAL TO THERMAL POWER PLANT IN ANDHRA AS 'CURSORY', WITHOUT CONSIDERING ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS

members in six thematic EACs — mostly IAS officials — in an arbitrary manner to evaluate projects on socio-environmental aspects. Retired IAS officer VP Raja headed the EAC which approved the project. "Violating the precautionary principle and the principles of sustainable development, the ministry of environment and forest acted in haste," the NGT said.

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KEY SPEAKERS

Mr K K Sharma, IAS Advisor to the Administrator UT Chandigarh	Mr Man Mohan S Kohli Chairman CII Chandigarh Council & CEO, Arima group	Mr Deepak Gupta Senior Programme Manager Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation
Mr Satya Gopal, IAS Secretary - Science & Technology Chandigarh Administration	Mr Vikram Hans Past Chairman CII Chandigarh Council & Managing Director Multi Overseas India Private Limited	Mr Alekhya Datta Research Associate The Energy and Resources Institute
Dr Arun Kumar Tripathi Director Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Government of India	Mr R K Verma Chief Engineer (I/C) Central Electricity Authority	Dr Parmita Mohanty Fellow & Area Convener The Energy and Resources Institute
Mr Santosh Kumar, IFS Director - Science & Technology Chandigarh Administration & CEO, Chandigarh Renewal Energy, Science and Technology Promotion Society	Mr Amit Kumar Director The Energy and Resources Institute	Mr Alok Kumar Jindal Fellow & Area Convener The Energy and Resources Institute

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