



NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS

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New Delhi, September 10, 2013

To,

Smt. Mamata Banerjee,

Chief Minister of West Bengal

Sub: Ban on non-motorised transport in the city of Kolkata by Police

Dear Mamata Ji,

Namaskar !

We are stunned to know that the Kolkata Traffic Police through 29th May, 2013 Gazette Notification has passed an order to ban cycles, hand cart, pull cart, tri-cycles and other forms of non-motorised roads from 174 major and minor streets in the Kolkata city. The order is not only in violation of the National Urban Transport policy of 2006 that encourages non-motorized forms of transport but also an assault on livelihoods of working class people. Millions of poor and working class people in Kolkata are dependent on these forms of transport for earning an honest living and also commute within the city.

Cycles are a perfect manifestation of your party's slogan and vision - since Bicycles and non-motorized transport are socially inclusive, directly support livelihoods, inexpensive; take much less space, good for the environment and health, and least likely to cause jams and accidents.

Here are few facts and figures for your attention:

- **Data of the Union Ministry of Urban Development shows people in Kolkata make nearly 2.5 million cycle trips a day, second only to Delhi.**
- **Kolkata is the only metropolitan city in India where trips by cycle (11 per cent) outnumber trips by cars (8 per cent).**
- **Traffic accident data for West Bengal (2011) shows only 1.5 per cent of road accidents happen due to fault of cyclists against 71 per cent due to faults of motor vehicle drivers**
- **Kolkata has the lowest number of private cars and the least amount of road space (6 per cent) among metro cities. Even smaller cities like Gwalior have more registered motor vehicles than Kolkata. Cycling is practical and popular with the masses.**
- **Cycles do not slow down vehicular traffic. Average speed of traffic in Kolkata varies between 14-18 km/ hour. The national average is 22 km/hour**
- **With a population of over 14 million, urban agglomeration of Kolkata is among the most densely populated in the country. At least 7,750 people live in one sq km**

area. Cycling is a practical mode of transport in such areas

We are aware that these notifications have been passed on the orders of the Honorable High Court, but we feel your government must deal with this legally, rather than taking this anti poor and anti working class step.

Hence we urge you to revoke this ban and demand that adequate authorities on lines of other Metro cities be set up to take where local authorities can work with experts to find a holistic solution to kolkata's traffic congestion problems that focuses to provide safety to pedestrians and Non Motorised Transport through building of cycle tracks, public cycle scheme and integrate that with other forms of public transport.

We do hope your government will take adequate notice and revoke the ban at the earliest.

Yours Sincerely,



Medha Patkar - Narmada Bachao Andolan and the National Alliance of People's Movements (NAPM)

Prafulla Samantara - Lok Shakti Abhiyan, NAPM, Odisha

Dr. Sunilam - Kisan Sangharsh Samiti, NAPM, MP

Gautam Bandopadhyay – Nadi Ghati Morcha, NAPM, Chhattisgarh

Vilas Bhongade, Suniti SR, Suhas Kolhekar, Prasad Bagwe - NAPM, Maharashtra

Gabriel Dietrich, Geetha Ramakrishnan – Unorganised Sector Workers Federation, NAPM, TN

C R Neelakandan – NAPM Kerala

Ramakrishnan Raju, Saraswati Kavula, P Chennaiah – NAPM Andhra Pradesh

Bhupender Singh Rawat, Rajendra Ravi, Anita Kapoor, Sunita Rani, Madhuresh Kumar, Seela M – NAPM, Delhi

Arundhati Dhuru - NAPM, Uttar Pradesh

Sister Celia - Domestic Workers Union & **Sudhir Vombatkere** - NAPM, Karnataka

Vimal Bhai - Matu Jan sangathan, NAPM, Uttarakhand

Krishnakant, Anand Mazhgaonkar, Paryavaran Suraksh Samiti, NAPM Gujarat

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