

SC bans use of pet coke in NCR

A car park built near the Taj should be demolished, the Supreme Court said.

The Supreme Court on Tuesday directed the prohibition of industrial use of pet coke and furnace oil in NCR regions from November 1, 2017. The order follows the recommendation of the Supreme Court-appointed Environment Pollution Control Authority (EPCA) to ban the sale, distribution and use of furnace oil and pet coke in the NCR. Their use is already prohibited in Delhi.

A Bench led by Justice Madan B. Lokur also imposed a fine of Rs. 2 lakh on the Ministry of Environment for not fixing any emission standards for industries using pet coke and furnace oil in the NCR region.

Casting its net wider against sources of air pollution and government apathy after recently cracking down on the sale of firecrackers during Deepavali, the Supreme Court said fixing emission norms for industries using these toxic materials was vital for public health.

'Lethargy, laziness'

The delay on the government's side, the court said, was symptomatic of "lethargy and laziness."

Snubbing the Ministry for submitting draft norms only on October 23, the court said failure from the Ministry's side to pay the Rs. 2 lakh fine would invite serious penalties.

In a separate hearing, the same Bench, led by Justice Lokur, ordered the demolition of a high-tech, multi-parking lot built a kilometre from the Taj Mahal. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath is expected to visit the monument on October 26 to review tourism schemes. The court gave the authorities four weeks to demolish the parking lot.

Later in the day, counsel for the U.P. government sought a recall of the order, but the court asked her to move an appropriate restoration application. The order came on a PIL petition filed by advocate M.C. Mehta for protection of the monument from pollution and deforestation.

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