



1/2012

CityMatters

30 CUTS International

Risk of Mobile Tower Radiation

There is no definitive study to prove how dangerous is the radiation from mobile towers on health. However, in the recent past, some newspapers in Jaipur conducted the study and raised certain pertinent questions. Who is responsible for measuring the radiations from this web of mobile towers and if it is dangerous for human health then what are the preventive measures?



It is shocking to note that enforcement wing of Telecommunication Ministry responsible for checking mobile towers, does not even have the equipment to check the electro-magnetic radiations (EMR). There are directives for keeping the radiations within prescribed limits but only on paper. Mobile companies are free to install towers without caring for rules. There are 786 mobile towers in Jaipur city alone.

The mobile companies argue that radiations from the towers are within acceptable norms but the fact is the towers have much greater capacity than required. One suggestion is, therefore, to decrease the capacity of towers and increase their numbers.

In India, mobile towers get so much of power input that a mobile phone gets more than 100,000 times strong signal. In US, a mobile tower emits energy at 1-2 watt per tower but in India, it is in the range of 100 watt per transmitter. So, if a tower has 2-3 transmitters, it emits 200 to 300 watts of energy. Mobile companies are not interested in reducing the power of these towers as it means extra expenditure in installing more towers.

GS Shekhawat, Director, Telecommunications claims that there is no tower in the city which emits radiations more than prescribed limits and there is provision for a fine of ₹5 lakh if radiations are more than the acceptable norms. This is because we have one of the worst prescribed limits of 9.2 watt per square meter whereas in some countries like Austria, it is not more than 100 microwatt in residential areas.

An Inter-ministerial Committee has concluded that the exposure limit for the radio frequency field (base station emissions) should be fixed at one-tenth of the existing levels. Provisions for continuous online monitoring and display of radiation levels in mobile network frequency range at prominent places, and online data transfer to a central server will need to be ensured. It also recommended to ban the towers near hospitals, schools and densely populated areas and conduct a detailed study on ill-effect of radiations on health. But, no action has been taken on this report.

Environmentalists have been long maintaining a stand against such towers. An expert committee of Ministry of Environment & Forests says that the EMR is largely responsible for the declining numbers of sparrows. The panel suggested recognising EMR as a pollutant because of their possible effect on animals and birds.

India has no mechanism whatsoever to monitor the suspected harmful EMR from the mobile towers that dot skyline of every city and town and even villages. Local residents in Jaipur have complained about facing health problems due to these towers. The condition of local residents living nearby the mobile towers was like staying in a microwave oven, some suggested. While not exactly recognising and accepting the harmful effects of radiation, the Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) razed to the ground three cell phone towers in C-Scheme.

Though there is no need to be alarmist over the matter, there is certainly a case for a detailed study on the health hazards of radiation from mobile towers and their solutions in the interest of general consumers.

Pradeep S. Mehta

Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General



www.google.com

INSIDE

- ◆ Multi-level Marketing – In Need of Cognate Regulation
- ◆ Mini Buses to Kick Off on Roads
- ◆ Autos not Plying as per Meter
- ◆ Revised Plan for BRTS Scheme
- ◆ Inflated Power Bills Plague Jaipur

Multi-level Marketing

– In Need of Cognate Regulation

Jaipur-based multi-level marketing (MLM) company, 'Gold Sukh', has allegedly duped over 1.75 lakh investors of ₹200 crore. The company promised investors 27 time returns in just 15 months, on their deposits for buying gold. Company's website has become non-functional after the news broke out. FIR has been lodged against the firm in the Vidhayakpuri Police Station in Jaipur.

It is also reported that a committee named *Gold Sukh Pidit Sangharsh Samiti*, has been formed seeking government's intervention in the matter. Even before the dust could settle on the Gold Sukh scam, two more swindling cases by investment companies named 'Swarna Yug' and 'Eves Miracle' have surfaced. Like Gold Sukh, these companies attracted investors promising huge profits in return for buying gold.

Rajasthan seems to be a safe haven for MLM companies and scams. In another incident, Sindhi Camp police in Jaipur unearthed a racket of cheating by Pearl India Limited which had allured nearly three thousand investors in the name of providing land. They have been booked under Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act, 1978.

Police registered case against one more MLM company Tulip Global Private Ltd. Jaipur for duping over 30 lakh investors on the promise of providing high returns.

The Jaipur police also raided *Swarna Labh* Trade Link limited, *Aditya Cosmo* India Ltd and other such MLM firms.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI), too, had flashed a red signal to banks in respect of MLM companies advising caution in opening of accounts, etc. MLM involves a strategy whereby the sales team earns not only for sales they generate themselves, but also for the sales of others they recruit, creating a cascade of distributors with multiple levels of compensation. MLM has been variously referred to as pyramid selling, network and referral marketing.

For banking and non-banking financial services, RBI is the regulator and for stock markets, the regulator is the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). However, there are certain companies that do not fall under the purview of either of these regulators and it is in such grey areas where companies like Gold Sukh take advantage.

The state government, too, has been slow to react to MLM frauds. However, Kerala became the first state to set guidelines in September 2011 for MLM companies triggered by the Tycoon Empire International scam of about ₹1000 crore.

The Indian MLM market is worth ₹75,000 crore every year. There is no regulatory authority to oversee this trade. Out of greed and ignorance, people invest their hard earned money only to be duped by the master minds sitting behind these companies.

The absence of specific laws governing MLM businesses is likely to hound the prosecution in court rooms even though the Rajasthan police has booked the directors of Gold Sukh and others in the case under Indian panel code for committing



The state government, too, has been slow to react to MLM frauds. However, Kerala became the first state to set guidelines in September 2011 for MLM companies triggered by the Tycoon Empire International scam of about ₹1000 crore.

offence of fraud, cheating, criminal breach of trust and criminal conspiracy which may prove tricky to be established in the criminal court.

Anyways, the authorities are now alert and the victims are being encouraged to come forward with details to help investigations. When similar frauds surfaced in the 80s, the Central government enacted the Chit Fund Act, 1982 regularising chit funds with certain riders and fixing responsibilities of directors but no such responsibility can be fixed in present case in the absence of law.

It is high time to enact safeguards for investors so that they are duped of their earnings by the fraudulent MLM companies.

JDA to Reconsider 'Cycle Track'

Jaipur's first model road proposed on *Bhawani Singh Road* might see alteration in its design as the Jaipur Development Authority's (JDA) Engineering Wing is planning to drop the 'cycle track' – one of the most special features on this road.



After creating much hype on the construction of a dedicated cycle track for the first time in the city, the JDA is now reconsidering it as this will cover a lot of space. The road requires at least six lanes seeing the existing traffic condition. However, the cycle track was proposed after four lanes which can create congestion in future.

A cycle track of 1.5 metre was proposed on the 100-feet wide road connecting Indira Circle to Rambagh Circle. This was to include a footpath, footpath green buffer zone, and foot overbridge. *(Tol, 20.03.12)*

Mini Buses to Kick Off on Roads



After long wait, the low floor buses kicked off on the city roads. The buses have been started by Jaipur City Transport Services Limited and will connect old and new city with railway station and other main spots. It will prove beneficial to many who commute on regular basis.

Initially more than 20 buses have been started. The route will be from Railway Station to *Chandpole, Choti Chopar, Badi Chaupar* and then to *Gangpole*. Buses have been manufactured by Tata Motors with seating capacity of about 25 seats.

(RP & DB, 19.03.12)

Autos not Plying as per Meter

Autos are not plying as per meter in Jaipur city – customers are forced to pay almost three times the fare.



The government have came up with a notification on October 31, 2011 saying all autos would henceforth run on meter. But there are scores of autorickshaws running without meter with some even

daring to tell the commuters that they would not run on meter.

Most autos do not have meters or they have faulty or defunct meters. On the other hand, the autorickshaw drivers claim innocence saying the passengers themselves were not ready to pay by meter as they fear the meters would be faulty.

It is a common thing for autorickshaw drivers to tell the commuters that they would run on meters only if the distance is more than 10 kms. In fact, it is the lack of will power on the part of district administration that led to failure of the initiative. *(RP, 03.03.12)*

Revised Plan for BRTS Scheme



To ease traffic in the city, the JDA has sent a revised proposal of ₹680 crore for Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) to the Centre for the approval. As per the revised plan, corridors would not be built and three-and-a-half metre lanes on either side would be left for buses to ply.

Commuters will not be allowed to enter the priority lane and similarly bus drivers have to follow the rule. The elevated road proposed under BRTS was shelved after facing strong criticism that it might cause damage to the heritage building along the route. *(DB, 20.03.12)*

Garbage Collection Still on Paper

For proper cleanliness of the city the state government is banking upon the proposed door-to-door collection of the garbage through Public-Private Partnership (PPP). However, the project announced many years ago is still on the paper.



After failed attempts in attracting private companies despite extending the date for submission of bids, authorities are claiming that the process will get completed soon. Five companies from Mumbai, Gurgaon and Delhi have submitted their proposals. Once the technical bids are opened the financial bid will be done.

The JMC Mayor Jyoti Khandelwal too asserted that once the system gets implemented the whole problem of garbage in the city will be addressed.

(Tol, 15.02.12)

Cracking Whip on Illegal Parking



In order to streamline parking problem and curb illegal parking mafia, the State Transport Department is all set to crack the whip on all illegal parking lots being operated in the city. Transport Minister Virendra Beniwal directed the JMC to take stern action against people operating illegal parkings in the city.

The JDA Commissioner has been instructed to register an FIR against all such illegal parking operators. The action has been taken after regular complaints of people that they are charged more fees. In many cases, people complained they were charged parking fees forcefully even at the places where there was no authorised parking spaces.

Beniwal said that parking is a big problem in the city for which the state government is developing parking slots at various places. New measures will restrict such practices in the city. *(DNA, 28.03.12)*

Fund Paucity Hits Drainage Plan

The city residents would continue to face inconvenience due to water logging and poor road conditions this monsoon season, too, as the mini drainage plan prepared by JDA has been hit by paucity of funds.

The JDA Engineer Wing has recently drawn ₹200 crore mini drainage plan after compiling a report submitted by different zones. However, given at the present financial condition, the JDA will be unable to take up the work.

The civic authorities are struggling hard to have a proper drainage system in the city since long, however, it always hit due to financial crises. In 2007, the JMC had drawn a drainage plan of ₹1,200 crore for the city, which was sent to the Central government to seek funds under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission Scheme. *(Tol, 26.03.12)*

Briefs

Inflated Power Bills Plague Jaipur

Residents of a number of localities in the city are faced with problems of inflated electricity bills. People of colonies including *Shastri Nagar, Pratap Nagar, Jhotwara, Bhankrota, Amer, Murlipura, Vishwakarma, Vaishali Nagar* and other areas have complained that their electricity bills were inflated and the units which had not been consumed have been added to their bills.



E-Mitra and local electricity offices were crowded by residents with complaints of inflated bills and the officials in the Accounts Department had no answer to their problem. The department officials were unable to resolve the complaints of

consumers and asked them to deposit the 'faulty' bills without verifying details.

Interestingly, the officials of the Power Department tried to shift the blame of increased electricity bills on consumers, saying in many cases consumers negotiate with the meter readers to keep their bills deflated and by the end of the financial year, when the readers were changed, they got correct bills.

(DB, 24.03.12)

Metro Updates



R-Infra Shortlisted for Metro

Reliance Infrastructure Ltd (R-Infra) has been qualified for the first phase of the Jaipur Metro Rail project along with three other bidders. R-Infra is currently implementing three metro rail projects on a build-operate-transfer basis in the country at a total project cost of about ₹16,500 crore. R-Infra also provides engineering, procurement and construction services for developing power and road projects and currently has orders worth about ₹24,325 crore.

(www.livemint.com, 20.01.12)

Metro to Complete by June 2013

The Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC) claimed to complete the project within set deadline of June 2013. Managing Director Kuldeep Ranka said the JMRC has put in all efforts to complete the project within the set deadline. He said civil works of the Metro projects in Mumbai and Kolkata are running a bit behind the schedule. But in Jaipur, the project is on the right track as land required is being acquired well within the time frame. *Sitapura to Ambabari* will be the second phase.

(www.winnersdelhinews.com, 24.02.12)

Chandpole Metro Platform Ready

Construction of first platform of underground three stories metro station at *Chandpole* is complete. This platform is made by Dyefrom wall technique. First part of station that is ticket window area will be constructed in three stories and its platform area in two stories. After coming metro train on elevated track from *Sindhi Camp to Janana Hospital*, it will enter underground tunnel from Police line. When the track will be constructed from *Chandpole* to *Badi Chaupar* then this tunnel will be constructed towards *Badi Chaupar*. After completing the construction of station till December 2012, traffic at *Chandpole* area will come in flow.

(http://jaipur.co, 26.02.12)



Ministry Clears Jaipur Metro

At a high-level meeting between JMRC and the Union Urban Ministry, the latter cleared the expansion of Phase I of the metro project from *Chandpole* to *Badi Chaupar*. The corporation has been assured of a financial back up of ₹600 crore to take the metro to *Badi Chaupar*. The Centre and the state will share the funding of project and each will retain equity in the project. Around 56 percent fund will be raised through loans which will be carried out through a separate process. There will also be a share of central taxes to fund the project.

(www.projectsinfo.in, 27.02.12)

Mott MacDonald appointed on Metro

Mott MacDonald, the leading global management, engineering and development consultancy, has been appointed by the JMRC as technical and general consultant for the ongoing Jaipur metro project in India. The US\$2.2bn, 35km long metro project will comprise of two corridors, north to south and east to west and is a combination of both underground and elevated tracks. The metro is being delivered to ease traffic congestion, reduce travel time and reduce carbon emissions in the city.

(www.rail.co, 04.03.12)

Jaipur Metro to Solve Land Row

The Jaipur Metro project is sure of overcoming land acquisition hurdle for *Ram Nagar* station and completing the *Mansarovar to Chandpol* stretch on time, i.e. June 2013. Newly-appointed Jaipur Metro CMD Nihal Chand Goyal came up with an idea to avoid a delay in construction of Metro works, making his first inspection of the sites. He asked the officials to continue the construction works and acquire land to develop the Metro track near *Ram Nagar* station where around 12 houses at *VedVarika Colony* have stopped the progress.

(DNA, 11.04.12)

Sources: DB: Dainik Bhaskar; DNA: Daily News and Analysis; IANS: Indo Asian News Service; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; Tol: Times of India