

PRESS RELEASE**THUNDERSTORM IN DELHI ON 30TH MAY, 2014 – RESPONSE BY TRAFFIC POLICE**

On 30/05/2014 at about 4.30 pm, a massive thunder storm and squall travelling at an enormous speed of about 114 kmph struck Delhi and neighbouring NCR towns. Calls of traffic congestion, failure of traffic signals, uprooting of trees and electricity poles, snapping of overhead electricity wires/cables, collapsing of buildings/roofs/walls etc. were received in the Central Police Control Room and Traffic Control Room. There were also incidences of power failure in many parts of the city such as Dwarka, Rohini, Janakpuri, Vikaspuri, Narela, I.P. Extension, Uttam Nagar, Palam, Bawana, NDMC area resulting in non-functioning of signals and manning of signalized intersections to regulate traffic.

Since it was peak traffic hours the uprooting/ falling of trees & electricity poles, non-functional signals etc caused traffic snarls causing disruption of traffic movement on various important arterial roads such as NH1, JLN Marg, Arya Samaj road, DBG Road, Patel Road, Vikas Marg, Mother Teresa Crescent, Shanker Road, M2K Cinema Chowk, Sec 20 Rohini, Sec 5/6 Rohini, Ghevra Kanjhawala Road, New Rohtak Road, Shastri Park Road, Ghonda Chowk, Shahdara Flyover, Cariappa Marg, Gurgaon Road, M.B. Road, Lodi Road and Mathura Road etc.

Metro Rail services were affected on all the six lines for about 45 minutes causing heavy rush of commuters below the Metro Stations. Majority of the commuters were observed walking on pavements and roads towards bus stands to board DTC buses. Pedestrians and two wheeler riders took cover besides roads under concrete structures to escape the fury of the storm.

As soon as the impact of the storm was felt, the Traffic Control Room flashed messages to all DCsP/Traffic-Ranges, ACsP/Traffic-Districts and TIs/Circles to mobilize the maximum number of staff, motorcycle patrol staff and cranes in the field to ensure manual regulation of traffic at intersections where there was no power supply, remove uprooted trees and poles from roads, remove broken down vehicles and restore normal flow of traffic.

6 Disaster Management Vehicles of Traffic Unit, allocated private and Govt. cranes were pressed into service and available local resources like JCB and heavy cranes were mobilized from local DMRC construction sites and roads were cleared. Senior traffic police officers like Jt CP/Traffic, DCsP/Traffic-Ranges, ACsP/Traffic-Districts and TIs/Circles along with subordinate staff manned almost each intersection and crossing to regulate the traffic and

handle the situation. Road users were also kept informed through the Traffic Facebook page, Mobile App and mobile vehicle mounted PA system about fallen trees, blockades and diversions. A total of 1404 traffic officers and personnel were mobilized to meet the eventuality:

| DCsP | ACsP | TIs | ZOs | HCs | Consts | Cranes | M/Cycles | DMVs |
|------|------|-----|-----|-----|--------|--------|----------|------|
| 5 | 10 | 43 | 169 | 325 | 852 | 63 | 200 | 06 |

Messages through Traffic Control Room were also flashed to Control Rooms of NDMC, PWD, MCD and Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA). The response of Delhi Police personnel in mobilizing local resources and manpower and attending to the situation and calls with due alertness, alacrity and promptness was commendable. The road carriageways were cleared by traffic police with equipment provided on Disaster Management Vehicles like Chain Saw Wood Cutters etc., Govt. hired/ towing cranes, JCB cranes, lifting and towing cranes mobilized from metro construction sites etc. Trees debris was removed along footpaths and central verges and traffic movement was managed in best possible manner. The traffic flow could be normalized by 2100 hours in the night.

It is also informed that about 100 metres length of sound barriers mounted at parapet railings of RTR bridge got uprooted and fell on the bridge carriageway from Airport to Munirka side. Traffic police immediately closed the bridge carriageway, marshalled traffic at grade, sought assistance from PWD, removed the sheets of sound barriers and straightened the steel angle supports to clear the carriageway and normalized the traffic in a short span of time.

Due to the massive thunder storm and squall, 14 persons are reported to have lost their lives. There were 16 calls of wall collapse, 3 of building collapse and 9 of roof collapse. 25 calls of traffic congestion due to uprooting of trees were received. 36 cars were damaged by uprooting of trees/electricity poles. A total of 370 uprooted trees which obstructed traffic were removed by traffic personnel in different parts of the city, 312 by NDMC, 9 by MCD and 4 by DMRC. In addition, 14 electricity poles including, 1 tower, were uprooted/damaged which were also got removed. The Local Police and Police Control Room Vans responded to 109 calls in which either the injured were taken to hospitals, uprooted trees/poles were removed, trapped persons/vehicles were rescued from under trees/poles etc.

(ANIL SHUKLA)
Joint Commissioner of Police
Traffic: Delhi