

Restrict movement of heavy vehicles in Shimla: High court

Shimla is to decongest its roads by regulating traffic and streamlining the movement of heavy goods vehicles during peak hours.

The Himachal Pradesh High Court in an interim order has directed authorities to regulate traffic and restrict the movement of heavy vehicles during the day.

'The district administration and the police are directed to ensure that heavy goods vehicles are completely prohibited from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. on major roads of Shimla,' a division bench of Acting Chief Justice R.B. Misra and Justice Rajeev Sharma said.

The order -- passed Friday but made available Sunday night -- has highlighted the scale of chaos on the town roads.

The court, acting on a public interest litigation (PIL) petition, has also directed authorities to regulate the movement of one-way traffic of light vehicles on arterial roads of the town.

In its order, the high court has also directed the administration to draw yellow lines on the roads, check drunken and rash driving and deploy sufficient number of traffic police on Sundays and holidays to regulate the traffic.

The Queen of Hills, as Shimla was fondly called by the British, is a picture of fallen glory, inflicted by overpopulation, haphazard construction and chaos on roads.

The town, which has a population of nearly 200,000, was developed by the British for just 20,000 people.

On an average, about 50,000 tourists arrive in Shimla every day during the peak season.

Shimla's municipal commissioner A.N. Sharma told IANS: 'We are now looking for solutions not just to check growing traffic congestion but also to develop parking lots in the town.'

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