

# ***VIP naturale***

***By***

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The subject VIP has been discussed, deliberated and debated at length these days. The media, visual and print, are full of news related to VIP and VIP Culture.

I have a good friend of mine, a retired senior Engr from State Service. We meet quite often, during wedding ceremonies, Engineers meet and so on. When ever he sees me on these occasions, I notice that he turn his face the other direction, away from me. He expects me to go to him and say a hello every time. He likes to be appreciated and acknowledged. Now, there are some other guys who always sit in the front row in any meeting place. If there is no space available in the front row, they feel uncomfortable, keep themselves away and keep busy on some other issues. The protocol and the order of precedence laid down by the Government of India is perhaps taking cue from such guys.

Once I was standing in a queue for getting the biometric mapping done for my aadhar card. I waited for few days in order that the heavy rush may subside. One day after having late breakfast I reached the booth by around 11.30 am. There was a moderately long queue. I joined the group. It was quarter past 1 pm. The team took the break for lunch, promising that they will be back soon. I am used to having late lunch break and so continued to stand in the

queue. True to their words, the team came back in just 15 minutes and started their work. My turn is gradually coming up. In the mean time one gentleman came, ( I call him gentleman) entered the room of the staff and whispered in the ear of one of the members of the team. He left soon and came back with four persons in no time. Their recording was done leaving all others in the queue. I could not gauge what type of VIPs they were. They were middle aged and were having good physique.

You will find such VIPs anywhere and everywhere – In Govt offices, in banks, Post Offices, Railway Stations, Bus Stops, Consulting rooms of Doctors, whatever. There are yet another type of VIPs you come across on our roads. They stop the vehicle in the middle of the road, talk to their friends who will also be in another vehicle, blocking the road. They expect others to take their vehicle in whatever manner and with whatever space available. The bus conductor and the *kili* in a private bus are VVIPs. A limited stop bus is a VVIP on wheels, leave alone interstate night service buses. The screeching tipper lorries, pick up vans are the masters of the road. They are law unto themselves. The babus rule the roost in Govt offices.

Our country has a long history of VIPs. The good old Maharajas, Nawabs, Zamindars are of the past glory. The ministers down to ward members and the student activists propagating political ideologies are all the present day additions to the list. Those

activists shouting slogans and marching on the road are a different kind of VIPs on many counts - firstly they get quick attention of the public, the traffic get jammed, given a chance, they are permitted to destroy public and private properties. They move with police escort in the front, middle and at the tail end, though they never miss an opportunity to pelt stones on the Police men.

The conventions of political parties, trade unions are big affair happening in our city. Their main attraction, the long and strong march of columns of volunteers will invariably be on a working day. That is how they get diversions of traffic on all routes for hours together, the public running hither thither. After all, the road users get the message of their entity and prowess. The lightning strikes is a tool rigorously practiced by public transport workers.

Then, ladies and gentlemen, what are your grouse if A,B or C surface somewhere in an airport, assembly hall or parliament house in the garb of a VIP. In a society like ours - folded, faulted, fissured and fractured (sorry, I have used some Geological terms) is it not everyone a VIP? Shame of a billion plus!

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