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Supreme Court upheld Competition Commission of India's ("CCI") order of imposing penalty on Kerala Film Exhibitors Federation

The Supreme Court had upheld the CCI's order of imposition of penalties on the Kerala Film Exhibitors Federation ("KFEF") and its officers for carrying out anti-competitive practices. The CCI's investigation conducted by its Director General found that KFEF had violated the provisions of the Competition Act, 2022 ("Act") by threatening film distributors with boycott if their film were screened at Crown Theatre. KFEF filed an appeal alleging that imposing penalties and debarment without a specific separate penalty notice violated principles of natural justice and that penalties were disproportionate and unduly restrictive. The monetary penalty was equivalent to 10% average income or turnover on KFEF, Mr Basheer Ahmed, and Mr Bobby, the officers. A two-year ban is imposed on KFEF's individual officers from associating with KFEF's management and governance, effective from December 1, 2025.

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CCI launches probe into PVR INOX's continued Virtual Print Fee on film producers

CCI had ordered an investigation into a complaint filed by The Film and Television Producers' Guild of India against PVR Inox for charging film producers a Virtual Print Fee ("**VPF**") long after all cinemas switched from analogue to digital projection. It was alleged that PVR INOX's practice

leverages its dominant multiplex market position to impose unfair terms and extract extra revenue. The CCI found a prima facie breach of Section 4(2) (d) of the Act, which prohibits imposing unrelated supplementary conditions. The Director General has been directed to complete the investigation within 90 days, examining the conduct of PVR INOX's executives and the fees' market impact.



CCI investigated RCF for bundling subsidised urea with non-subsidised fertilisers in Maharashtra

Mr. Raghunath Patil President of Shetkari Sanghatana filed a complaint against Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilisers Limited ("**RCF**"). It is alleged that RCF had forced farmers and dealers in Maharashtra to purchase

non-subsidised NPK fertilisers as a precondition for buying essential subsidised urea. The CCI's preliminary findings identify a prima facie case of abuse of dominance and therefore, directed the Director General to submit a detailed report within 60 days.



CCI rejected the complaint of abuse of dominance against Nestle India Ltd.

CCI rejected the complaint filed by Sarvesh Kolumbkar alleging abuse of dominance and unethical production practices in the manufacturing of Maggi Sauce by Nestle India Ltd. at its Goa factory. The issues raised primarily related to the violation of food, health and safety standards and in itself does not fall within the ambit of the Act, in absence of any other information which necessitates

further examination into the allegations. It was alleged that Nestle was using dirty water extraction pump from an under-constructed site for the production of Maggi Sauce and putting false labels on the Maggi Sauce bottles thereby misleading consumers and violating food safety norms. The CCI, after considering the submissions, concluded that the allegations did not raise any competition law concerns.

CCI rejected complaint against ICICI, NSE and BSE

A complaint was filed by the Informant alleging that ICICI Securities Limited (“**ICICI**”) in alleged collusion with National Stock Exchange (“**NSE**”) and Bombay Stock Exchange (“**BSE**”). CCI examined whether the standardization of the Authorized Person Agreement and ICICI’s termination practices contravened Section 3 and 4 of the Act. It was observed that the agreement format

stemmed from Securities and Exchange Board of India (“**SEBI**”) regulatory framework aimed at investor protection and operational consistency. CCI held that enforcement of uniform AP Agreement by NSE and BSE did not constitute a concerted practice under Section 3 of the Act. CCI held that there was no evidence of ICICI exercising significant market power of engaging in anti-competitive vertical restraints.



CCI held BSNL not in dominant position under the Act

C CI held that Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (“**BSNL**”), which holds just 2.09 per cent share of the Indian telecom market, cannot be considered a dominant player and therefore could not have abused a ‘dominant’ position under the Act. The dispute arose from a tender floated by BSNL on December 12, 2024, on the Government e-Marketplace portal for the supply of 2 lakh splice closures for optical fiber cables. The tender prescribed various eligibility criteria, including a minimum average annual turnover of ₹664 lakh over three years. It also provided exemptions for MSMEs and startups from turnover and experience requirements, subject to quality and technical compliance. CCL Optoelectronics, an MSME registered under the Udyam scheme, claimed exemption and submitted its certificate. It also furnished details of having supplied more than 2 lakh units annually to telecom majors such as Vodafone Idea, Bharti

Airtel, Tata Communications and Tata Tele Business. The company was disqualified through a portal report that cited a non-fulfillment of “Past Performance” criteria. To examine the allegations levelled by CCL against BSNL, the CCI first defined the relevant market as the “market for telecommunication services in India.” It noted that Reliance Jio held 40.07 per cent of the market share, that Bharti Airtel held 32.01 per cent, Vodafone Idea held 14.37 per cent, and Bharti Hexacom had 2.41 per cent, while BSNL’s share was just 2.09 per cent. The CCI added that any objections to the tender terms must be raised through the Government e-Marketplace portal. It further observed that the allegations regarding the removal of “Public Listed Companies” from experience criteria in the tender conditions and changes in technical specifications were matters of procurement policy and not competition concerns.

CCI released Market Study Report on Artificial Intelligence and Competition conducted through Management Development Institute Society (MDIS)

CCI released its report, Market Study on Artificial Intelligence and Competition, conducted through the Management Development Institute Society (MDIS). The study inter-alia aims to understand Artificial Intelligence (AI) markets and ecosystems, identify emerging and potential competition issues, and review existing and evolving regulatory frameworks governing AI systems. In order to promote the development of a competitive AI ecosystem in India, prevent AI driven anti-competitive practices and protect

consumer welfare, the report proposes certain measures. In this regard, CCI intends to organise a conference on “AI and regulatory issues” in association with relevant stakeholders; conduct focused advocacy workshops on “AI and Competition Compliance”; focus on strengthening its technical capabilities and infrastructure; set up a think tank to drop on expertise on matters related to digital markets with special focus on AI; undertake steps to promote inter-regulatory coordination, and engage with international competition authorities and multilateral competition platforms.



Combination Orders:

- CCI approved the proposed acquisition of Dana Incorporated's off-highway business by Allison Transmission Holdings, Inc.
- CCI approved the acquisition of up to 75% shareholding in Akzo Nobel India Limited by JSW Paints Limited through a (i) share purchase agreement, and (ii) mandatory open offer.
- CCI approved the proposed acquisition of the entire shareholding of IPM Inc. and OC NL Invest Cooperatief U.A. in Owens Corning (India) Pvt. Ltd. by Triumph Composites Pvt. Ltd. and Quartz Fibre Private Limited.
- CCI approved proposed acquisition of minimum 95% and maximum up to 100% of Jaiprakash Associates Limited by PNC Infratech Limited.
- CCI approved the acquisition of 49.99% equity shareholding of Thriveni Pellets Pvt Ltd by Lloyds Metals and Energy Ltd.
- CCI approved the proposed combination inter alia involving (i) demerger of the identified business undertaking of Apollo Health Enterprise Limited into Apollo Healthtech Limited; (ii) merger and amalgamation of Apollo Healthco Limited with and into Apollo Healthtech Limited; and (iii) merger and amalgamation of Keimed with and into Apollo Healthtech Limited and (iv) acquisition of 74.5% shareholding of AMPL from existing shareholders by Apollo Healthtech Limited
- CCI approved the proposed combination involving (i) acquisition of IRB Hapur Moradabad Tollway Limited; Kaithal Tollway Limited; and Kishangarh Gulabpura Tollway Limited by IRB InvIT Fund; and (ii) acquisition of units of IRB InvIT Fund by Anahera Investment Pte. Ltd.
- CCI approved the proposed combination involving, inter alia, Jongsong Investments Pte. Ltd., Ivanhoe Cambridge Singapore Investments II Pte. Ltd., Adamas Asset Holdings Pte. Ltd., RGIP Holdings Pte. Ltd., Vikhroli Holdings Pte. Ltd., Airol Holdings Pte. Ltd., Bangalore Asset 2 Pte. Ltd. and Bangalore Asset 3 Pte. Ltd.
- CCI approved the acquisition of business of production, bottling, marketing and sale of alcoholic and other beverages under the 'Imperial Brands' by Tilaknagar Industries Limited.
- CCI approves the acquisition of OC Oerlikon Textile Holding AG, Pfäffikon and Oerlikon Textile Inc. by Rieter Holding AG and Rieter North America Inc.



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