

Clean Air News

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Teachers training on Air Pollution Toolkit

-By Charina Cabrido
30 May

With the aim of increasing awareness on air quality issues in Nepal, a teacher's training session was conducted by Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) in celebration of the World Environment Day 2011. This activity focused on environmental science teachers of grades 7 to 9 from at least 10 schools in Kathmandu city.

The Air Pollution Teaching toolkit a publication of CEN and Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) was used for the training. This resource material provides teachers and educators with easy to use lesson plans, engaging activities, and other resources that can teach students about air pollution, changing climate, and health effects of pollutants.

Anjila Manandhar gave an

overview on CEN and CANN as forefront organizations in Nepal actively engaging the community on air pollution issues. After a short welcome address by Kriti Shrestha, the teachers shared their expectations from the training and how they perceive this as something useful in their daily work. Charina Cabrido one of the authors of the toolkit served as the trainer for the session wherein she explained that materials in the toolkit supplement the environmental, health and science lessons at 7th, 8th and 9th grades. The lesson plans are designed to be stand alone activities that can complement the teacher's actual lessons and can be easily incorporated in their school curriculum. She later emphasized that one of the benefits of this toolkit is

that it was organized as interactive lessons that create greater participation from students. The middle part of the training consisted of actual lesson demonstration on concept mapping with a theme on forest conservation. The teachers were grouped into two sets and were asked to write down and explain concepts about the need and protection of forest. Each concept represents a body of knowledge that was later linked into relationships. Concept mapping, a proven cognitive learning and evaluation methodology, was practiced. The program ended with a closing remark from Manjeet Dhakal, program director of CEN. CANN and CEN plans to conduct a series of teachers training in the future and this is just serves as the beginning.



16 Int'l Firms Bid For Metro Feasibility Study In Valley

By Prabhakar Ghimire

Residents of Kathmandu Valley, who want to see underground train (metro) service operate in the capital to relieve them of traffic congestion, will have to wait for nine months to know whether starting such service is feasible.

The Ministry of Physical Planning and Works (MoPPW) has stated that it will receive the feasibility report of the proposed project within nine months. The ministry had last month called for global tender to conduct the feasibility study of metro rail in the Valley. "A total 16 foreign companies had applied," said Ram Kumar Lamal, chief of the Railway Project under MoPPW. The government had allocated budget to

conduct feasibility study of the proposed metro in the budget for 2066/67. Companies based in India, US, UK, France, South Korea, Thailand, Japan, Singapore and Germany had submitted their Expression of Interest (EoI) to conduct feasibility study till Monday, the last day of submission.

16 global firms have bid for feasibility study. Metro could be a combination of underground, mono- and elevated train. It will be 75-km long, cover all four entrances to the Valley and city core. Construction mooted under PPP. MoPPW has said it would short-list three to six firms from among the total applicants as per the existing Public Procurement Act and select the firm on the basis of their

technical and financial proposal. As per the plan, the proposed metro service will be a combination of underground, mono rail and elevated train keeping in view the topography of the Kathmandu Valley and will be divided into four sections that include 27 km section along the ring road, 10 km from North- South stretching from Bansbari to Lagankhel, East-West section from Kalanki-Tinkune and also along some river corridors. Likewise, the proposed Department of Railways (DoR) has sought a budget of Rs 7.30 billion from the government in the new fiscal year to conduct detailed survey of eight railway projects, including the much-touted East-West Electric Railway.

Abu Dhabi taxis turn to natural gas

DHABI — In a step towards sustainable public transportation system, TransAD, the taxi regulatory authority in Abu Dhabi, has started converting its fleet of taxis from traditional fuels to natural gas. In the first phase, around 1,300 taxis will be converted to natural gas.

Talking to *Khaleej Times* on Tuesday, Masood Hashem, acting general manager of TransAD, confirmed that the conversion had been already started.

According to the guidelines of the Abu Dhabi government, by the end of 2012, it's intended to convert around 25 per cent of the total public transportation

including taxis and cars used in government sectors in the emirate to natural gas. The Abu Dhabi National Oil Company The step is intended to better public transportation services and help enhance the developments in the emirate in line with the Abu Dhabi Plan 2030.

The conversion is estimated to reduce the fuel consumption rate by 30 to 40 per cent. The Centre participated in the activities of the "International Conference of the 59th World Federation of Public Transport" and delivered a presentation on "Legislation, regulation and control of taxi" it assessed in the presentation about new developments in the public

transport at the center.



MoEnv planning to review NAAQS

March 2nd, 2011

Krity Shrestha, CANN

An interaction program on "Review of National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) was organized by Ministry of Environment, Government of Nepal in the Conference Hall, within the Ministry premises.

The program was chaired by Dr. Ganesh Raj Joshi, Secretary of Ministry of Environment. The interaction program was mainly focused on the assessment of NAAQS situation and to discuss and decide whether the revisions of the Standards are necessary or not. The program also aimed at drafting the ToR of the consultant if necessary. In the program, Mr. R.R. Koirala of Ministry of Environment presented on the

NAAQS scenario; the Maximum values of parameters and the initiatives since the formulation of NAAQS in 2003. He also graphically presented on the various air quality data of the Kathmandu valley with reference to the vehicles registered and the number of brick kilns in the valley. Further, he also discussed on the ongoing and planned activities of the Ministry of Environment. The air quality data collection and monitoring had been discontinued in 2007, owing to the damage of the granted equipments. Since then, the data had been generated occasionally through outsourcing.

After the presentation, the experts from various networks, organizations, academic institutions, working on air quality discussed on the need and the methodology of the review of

NAAQS. The discussion mainly focused on the inadequate intervention in the compliance of NAAQS 2003 and the basis for review of NAAQS. The experts also discussed on the implementation methodology and sharing mechanism, when the NAAQS will be revised.

The interaction program concluded that the review of NAAQS is a must and the ministry will further carry out the discussions with a wider group of stakeholders and discuss on the methodology and mechanisms discussed at this program. According to Mr. Surendra Subedi, Unit Chief, Pollution and Control Division, this program is only an initiation. Further discussions will be carried out to develop a proper methodology to revise the NAAQS.

Transportation Group Nominated by Gillibrand Wins Award

New York— US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, a member of the environment and Public Works Committee, congratulated a New York City Transportation and environmental group for winning the 2011 Environmental Quality award. This past February, Senator Gillibrand nominated the Tri-State Transportation Campaign (TSTC), a non-profit group dedicated to promoting sustainable transportation in New York. Today, the organization is set to receive the Environmental Protection Agency's prestigious honor for their commitment and significant contributions to greening New York City. Gillibrand said, "I congratulate the Tri-State Transportation Campaign for their dedi-

cation to creating a cleaner New York. From finding ways to reduce our dependence on foreign oil to improving the area's quality of life, Tri-State Transportation Campaign is an environmental champion who will help lead the way towards a green energy future for our city and our country." Kate Slevin, executive director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign said, "With soaring gas prices and a challenging economic recovery, the need for more sustainable, equitable and transit-friendly communities is more critical than ever. These goals cannot be realized without leadership from our elected officials at all levels of government. "



City goes green by buying hybrid cars

PICO RIVERA - In a move officials say also helps reduce air pollution, the city recently added three hybrid cars to its fleet. Assistant City Manager Jeff Prang said the city bought the three Ford Fusions with money from the South Coast Air Quality Management District's AB 2766 Subvention Fund Program. The city paid \$26,398 each for the cars. So with tax, the total bill came to \$87,709.

"Assembly Bill 2766 provides funding to cities to help reduce air pollution from vehicles," Prang said. According to the AQMD website, AB 2766 provides for the collection of an additional \$4 in car registration fees to pay for various air pollution efforts. The new cars were delivered last week and went to the city's Public Safety Division which is in charge of the crossing guards and parking enforcement. The division now has four cars. Steve Gutierrez, public safety manager, said the two cars replaced by the Fusions were put into

the pool of Public Works vehicles. The cars were about three to five years old and will still be used by the city, he said. He said parking enforcement officers will be driving the hybrids.

The division has four full-time and two part-time officers. It's the first time the city bought a hybrid, Gutierrez said. "Obviously AQMD funds were there for the city to go green. It gives (parking) officers new equipment and helps the environment," Gutierrez said. He pointed out that the funds were especially created for clean air programs. No problems so far with the new cars. "They've been running great," he said.



Vehicle To Grid Storage And The Future Of Electric Vehicles

Renewable energy sources like solar and wind only generate electricity when the wind blows or the sun is out and that isn't always when customers need power. Batteries large enough to hold megawatts of electricity are prohibitively expensive but another potential source of battery storage is fast emerging: electric vehicles.

Vehicle-to-grid (V2G) storage allows the smart grid to

use EVs (and even hybrids) as a distributed network of batteries that can store power at off-peak times and help power the grid when demand peaks. Here's how it works:

1. Power is generated from a renewable source, like wind, and transferred to the grid.
2. Electricity flows from the grid to EV batteries when there is excess capacity (e.g. when the wind blows in predawn hours). The power flow is reversed when de-

mand on the grid is higher.

3. Customers can control when the smart grid can access battery power from their EVs, which can put out enough power to run 10 houses, and even control how far the battery is discharged.

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Building Partnership for Clean Air

Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) is a network of organizations and professionals involved in air quality management in Nepal. The goal of CANN is to increase the ability of professionals and other interested stakeholders to effectively address the problems of air pollution in Nepal. We encourage you to join hands with us to expand our campaign for clean and better Air.

Clean Air News is a free email publication that features news, information and events related to clean air. Clean Air News is published by Clean Air Network Nepal to highlight the activities and initiatives for clean air by CANN and its member and partners.

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Urban Development: Leaders Lead, But People Do the Planning

The inclusion of all stakeholders in urban planning was a recurring theme yesterday at the U.N. Commission on Sustainable Development event, “Sustainable Transport and Infrastructure Policies in Latin America,” organized by the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). To punctuate the point, presenter Morana M. Stipisic from Columbia Earth Institute’s Urban Design Lab quoted Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu: “When the best leader’s work is done, the people say ‘We did it ourselves.’”

Ricardo Sánchez, chief of ECLAC’s Infrastructure Services Unit, led the presentations. Sánchez focused explicitly on the role of transport and urban infrastructure development in reducing inequality in the region and stimulating economic and social development, neither of which can happen without the other. Infrastructure development as a tool for poverty reduction is something we have written about frequently. Transport infrastructure and

more livable built environments can dramatically increase poor people’s access to economic opportunities. These benefits can be even more striking for the disabled poor. Unfortunately, as Sánchez pointed out, the “infrastructure gap” in transport persists. Policymakers in cities around the world continue to let urban infrastructure languish, even as demand for new infrastructure booms and despite the axiom that infrastructure development boosts economic productivity. Sánchez highlighted the main challenges to sustainable and inclusive urban infrastructure development in Latin America, which hold true in cities around the world. These include tightness in space or shortage in provision; inconsistent views among policymakers on best practices; institutional failures (e.g. cities that rely on one agency to plan housing, another to govern the streets, and still others to govern transportation); and a lack of sustainability

criteria in infrastructure design policies, a weakness that Sánchez suggests is particularly glaring in transport and worse in landlocked countries. So how should we move forward in the face of all of these challenges? To address this question, Dr. Stipisic from Columbia presented a preview of forthcoming guidelines for sustainable and inclusive urban development, called “Are we building sustainable and competitive cities?” The guidelines establish three measures for urban infrastructure development: quality of life, competitiveness and environmental sustainability. They also clearly identify “counter-intuitive bad policies,” such as widening roads to accommodate more cars, rather than focusing on building cities for *people*, and responding to increased waste with more landfills, rather than promoting and incentivizing “reduce, reuse and recycle.”