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Parking Management Issues in Kathmandu Discussed



Clean Energy Nepal in collaboration with Kathmandu Metropolitan City, UN-Habitat and GIZ-SUTP has organized a two-day training workshop on **“Towards Effective Parking Management for a Better Kathmandu”** on 24th and 25th March. As Kathmandu Metropolitan City is now planning to develop comprehensive parking policy, this training is expected to facilitate the process. The workshop aimed to expand understanding on parking management, and encourage stakeholders to think differently about parking and its possibilities. Parking management expert Mr. Paul Barter lead the workshop.

Opening the program, chief and executive officer of Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mr. Laxman Aryal highlighted the existing parking problems in city core areas, including the parking problems for buses and trucks. He said that it is important to find out the market based approach of parking management. “This training workshop will be helpful in providing inputs for the parking strategy and eventually help in drafting the parking policy”, he said.

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Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar from UN-Habitat said, “Although the majority of trips in Kathmandu Valley are done by walking, the transport plans are almost exclusively vehicle centric”. “Road expansion and easy car loans have increased the car sales in Kathmandu Valley creating further woes to the existing problems”, he said. This training will support Kathmandu Metropolitan City to formulate effective parking policy.

The Secretary of Ministry of Physical Infrastructures and Transport, Mr. Tulsi Sitaula in his keynote remarks stressed the needs of effective parking management to solve the urban transport problems. “Due to the congested area, there is no way we can have surface parking, so we should opt for off-street parking or multistoried parking”, he said. He also added that government has been working to enhance walkability, public transportation and sustainable urban transport, and subsequently reducing the dependency on private vehicles.

Mr. Paul Barter started his presentation on understanding parking issues. He explained different mindset of people understanding and solving the parking problems. “The conventional approach on parking management assumes parking as an on-site infrastructure like toilets in the building, which is longer successful and create further parking chaos”, he said. “The area management and responsive or market-oriented approaches are more pragmatic”, he added giving successful example of Japan which has accidentally adopted responsive approach in

parking management.

“If the problem is on the street, the solution must be found in the street, not off-street”, he said highlighting the importance of effective on-street parking management. , should also be coherent with the long-term vision of achieving sustainable urban transportation”, he said.

“Parking policy should ease the short-term problems, but is should also be coherent with the long-term vision of achieving sustainable urban transportation”, he said. “Subsidizing parking in low-income countries like Nepal is a tragic equivalent to a crime, as the money that should go to provide basic needs such as health and education goes to the benefits a small percentage of richer people that can afford cars and motorbikes”, he said.

” Pricing should be taken as a tool to manage parking problems, not as a source of revenue”, he said. High parking minimums are fertility drugs for car, obstacle to transit-oriented-development and harm housing affordability. ”High parking minimums and government-built parking involve regressive subsidies and unjust cross-subsidies towards motorists”, he said.

The second day of the training workshop started with high level panel discussion on parking management, which was followed by the group work on parking issues in major five business centers in Kathmandu.

Mr. Tulasi Sitaula, Secretary from Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport said that parking problem has been serious in Kathmandu Valley.

“Many of the newly expanded roads have been illegally occupied by local groups for parking”, he said.

Mr. Keshav Adhikari, DIGP of Traffic Police highlighted on the number of vehicles per traffic police has been increased from 140 to 800 in last decade.

In the group discussion some of the key problems identified by the participants were long duration parking in on-street, double parking, queuing for parking etc. In the long term, vehicle free zone in the core areas was suggested. Parking infrastructure such as road marking on the parking site, signage of parking and effective pricing were suggested. The groups suggested having parking pricing structure based on the occupancy of vehicles during peak hour, off hour, week day and weekend.

Mr. Paul Barter commented on the group work presented by the participants. He said that improving on street parking should be based on responsive market based pricing, consistent with long term of vision for Kathmandu. He suggested not to focus on underground parking as it conflicts with long term vision to pedestrianize the urban core areas.

Source: www.cen.org/maya

Govt to Allow Electric Rickshaws in Urban Centers

The government has decided to allow electric rickshaws to ply the roads in urban centers and municipalities.

The Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MoPIT) on Friday took the decision to allow battery-operated rickshaws that can carry up to five passengers, or load of 500 kilograms, on Nepali roads. The meeting decided to issue road permit to rickshaws powered by up to 1500 watt batteries. Speed limit for those rickshaws has been fixed at 25 km per hour.

Talking to Republica, Senior Divisional Engineer of MoPIT Nabin Kumar Pokharel said MoPIT has directed the Department of Transport Management (DoTM) to register electric rickshaws through its zonal offices and issue road permits by fixing a quota in urban centers.

MoPIT, however, has decided not to allow such vehicles in the Kathmandu Valley, Pokara and areas covered by the Lumbini Master Plan.

According to ministry officials, electric rickshaws should meet road worthiness requirements and a pass a road test conducted by technicians.

Electric rickshaws are already in operation, albeit illegally, in Birgunj, Hetauda, Biratnagar, Butwal and Nepalgunj.

Hulas Motors, which assembles five types of rickshaws from parts imported from China, had applied for registration of rickshaws two months ago.

Talking to Republica over telephone from Biratnagar, Surendra Golcha, director of Hulas Motors, said the new

rickshaws will not only improve city transport but also bring about changes in the lives of rickshaw pullers. "We want to replace normal rickshaws by the battery-powered rickshaws which are also called nano rickshaws," he said, claiming that daily income of rickshaw pullers would double after the loan payment period is over.

Prices of electric rickshaws start from Rs 150,000. There are separate models to carry passengers and cargo.

"We will provide easy financing for rickshaw pullers so that they can replace their traditional rickshaws with the new electric rickshaw," added Golcha. "These rickshaws, however, can be operated only in plains."

Besides Hulas Motors, there are around half a dozen companies that are assembling and supplying rickshaws in different Tarai districts.

Sharad Adhikari, director at DoTM, argued that electric rickshaws will make urban centers pollution-free and provide people with faster transport com-

pared to traditional rickshaws.

Dinkar Sharma, former joint secretary of MoPIT, welcomed the decision. "Such vehicles can reduce import of fossil fuel and reduce pollution," he said.

Source: www.myrepublica.com,
March 31, 2014



DoR to Construct Pedestrian Bridge at Tinkune

With the aim to ensure safe road crossing for pedestrians and minimize traffic disruptions, the Department of Roads (DoR) has decided to construct an overhead pedestrian walking bridge at Tinkune.

Jaywalking by pedestrians is one of the contributing factors for traffic congestion and road accidents in the capital, says the Metropolitan Police Traffic Division (MPTD).

The Kathmandu Valley Road Improvement Project (KVRIP), under DoR, has already finalized the design of the overhead bridge and is now making preparations to call for bids for the construction of the bridge, informed Shyam Kharel, chief of the KVRIP.

Meanwhile, the project does not have any immediate plan to construct such pedestrian walking bridges in other road sections of the capital including at Baneshwor, Minbhawan, Babarmahal,

Singha Durbar and Kalimati, among others.

“The overhead pedestrian bridge is being constructed as part of a pilot project. We do not have any immediate plan, but we can build such pedestrian bridge at other places where there is heavy traffic,” said Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, secretary at the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport.

Experts, however, say that instead of dillydallying, the government should construct pedestrian bridges at expanded road sections where vehicles ply at a comparatively high speed, thus, increasing road accidents involving pedestrians.

Ashish Gajurel, traffic engineer, said the construction of a pedestrian bridge makes it clear the little importance given by the authorities concerned for ensuring pedestrian safety. “Many people don’t have proper knowledge of

traffic rules. It is also the reason why many pedestrians are found crossing roads despite red signal. Few people use zebra crossing. In the context, pedestrian bridges are more helpful than traffic signal lights for ensuring pedestrians safety,” he opined.

In Koteshwar, despite the presence of traffic lights and zebra crossing, pedestrians mostly cross road recklessly, hindering traffic flow. An intersecting overhead bridge in the road sections like Koteshwor and Chabhil can ensure comfortable walking and maintain smooth flow of vehicles at the same time, argue traffic experts.

Currently, there are 26 overhead pedestrian bridges in the Kathmandu Valley, including 15 pedestrian bridges in the Koteshwor-Bhaktapur road section, according to the DoR.

Source: www.myrepublica.com, March 4, 2014



7 Million Premature Deaths Annually Linked to Air Pollution

In new estimates released today, WHO reports that in 2012 around 7 million people died - one in eight of total global deaths – as a result of air pollution exposure. This finding more than doubles previous estimates and confirms that air pollution is now the world's largest single environmental health risk. Reducing air pollution could save millions of lives.

In particular, the new data reveal a stronger link between both indoor and outdoor air pollution exposure and cardiovascular diseases, such as strokes and ischaemic heart disease, as well as between air pollution and cancer. This is in addition to air pollution's role in the development of respiratory diseases, including acute respiratory infections and chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases.

The new estimates are not only based on more knowledge about the diseases caused by air pollution, but also upon better assessment of human exposure to air pollutants through the use of im-

proved measurements and technology. This has enabled scientists to make a more detailed analysis of health risks from a wider demographic spread that now includes rural as well as urban areas.

Regionally, low- and middle-income countries in the WHO South-East Asia and Western Pacific Regions had the largest air pollution-related burden in 2012, with a total of 3.3 million deaths linked to indoor air pollution and 2.6 million deaths related to outdoor air pollution.

“Cleaning up the air we breathe prevents noncommunicable diseases as well as reduces disease risks among women and vulnerable groups, including children and the elderly,” says Dr Flavia Bustreo, WHO Assistant Director-General Family, Women and Children's Health. “Poor women and children pay a heavy price from indoor air pollution since they spend more time at home breathing in smoke and soot from leaky coal and wood cook stoves.”

Included in the assessment is a breakdown of deaths attributed to specific diseases, underlining that the vast majority of air pollution deaths are due to cardiovascular diseases.

The new estimates are based on the latest WHO mortality data from 2012 as well as evidence of health risks from air pollution exposures. Estimates of people's exposure to outdoor air pollution in different parts of the world were formulated through a new global data mapping. This incorporated satellite data, ground-level monitoring measurements and data on pollution emissions from key sources, as well as modelling of how pollution drifts in the air.

For more information

[Click here](#)

Good Reads:

1. [Public Transportation not only for the Poor](#): Ashish Gajurel, The Himalayan Times, March 31, 2014
2. [Wrong Debate](#): Republica, March 16, 2014
3. [A Scandal](#): Republica, March 27, 2014

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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. CANN is a country network of Clean Air Asia and hosted by Clean Energy Nepal. *For more information:* www.cen.org.np; www.cleanairinitiative.org

To contribute articles, news items, or event announcements for the next issue, send an email with the complete details and URL source to info@cen.org.np or rassu@cen.org.np

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