

# Clean Air News

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## Local News

### **Airforce Chimneys Hit Nepal**

Kitchen Concepts Pvt Ltd. has launched the Airforce brand of electric chimneys in the Nepali market. According to a press release, the chimneys are imported from Italy and available in a spectrum of sizes and finishes. " Each model is handpicked to provide the very best solution for oily Nepali cooking and have a suction capacity of 750 cbm per hour," says the release.

The company has priced the chimneys between Rs 9,500 to Rs 41,000. Airforce chimneys are available at Kitchen Concepts' Teku showroom and other electronics shops and departmental stores in Kathmandu and provide with a year's full warranty.

*Source: The Kathmandu Post, November 27, 2007*

### **Health Improvement By Chimney Hood**

**With the support from Practical Action and other organizations like Gharelu Air Pollution, chimney hood has been constructed in 355 households of Rasuwa district. Since then health improvement has been seen as 80 % of the smoke goes out of the chimney.**

According to the World Health Organization, 2002, nearly 7500 people died due to indoor air pollution. After the introduction of chimney hood in the village, both the health and environment has been improved, said 80 years old Seti Lamuni.

*Source: Kantipur, December 8, 2007*

### **EU Eyes Phasing In CO2 Fines For Carmakers**

**The European Commission is considering phasing in fees it charges to carmakers who fail to meet ambitious targets to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide (CO2) by 2012, a European Union source said on Monday.**

Amid fierce lobbying, the EU executive is due to announce on Wednesday how it will share out cuts in the main gas blamed for global warming between makers of light and heavy cars.

Germany has led resistance to sharp constraints on its makers of luxury heavy cars, rejecting the Commission's key goal of forcing carmakers to reduce CO2 emissions to 130 grams/km through engine technology by 2012.

France and Italy make smaller, more fuel-efficient cars and have managed to cut their emissions.

"The polluter will pay -- but later," the source said.

Two days before the decision, senior Commission officials were not shown the figures on how the cuts would be divided between makers of big and small cars, nor the proposed level of fines, several sources said.

Those details will be decided only at a meeting of the 27-member Commission on Wednesday morning, they said.

Use of biofuels and other measures to promote more fuel-efficient driving should help achieve the additional cut beyond what is required from engine technology.

*Source: Reuters, December 17 2007*

### **New York, Ottawa Order Over 1,000 Diesel-Electric Hybrid Buses**

**New York and Ottawa are taking their public transportation systems into the hybrid age. The two cities join a growing list of cities embracing hybrid technology for mass transit.**

MTA New York City Transit has ordered 850, the City of Ottawa 202 Orion VII Next Generation diesel-electric hybrid transit buses. These buses will be powered by BAE Systems' Hybrid Drive(R) diesel-electric hybrid propulsion system and delivered into 2010. Daimler Buses North America has received orders totaling 1,052 Orion VII Next Generation diesel-electric hybrid transit buses from some of North America's largest transit authorities.

With already 1,100 diesel-electric hybrid transit buses on the road, 460 pending deliveries and the announced new orders of almost 1,052 units, Orion received over 2,600 orders since the launch of the Orion hybrid bus in 2003.

"Daimler focuses on shaping the future of transportation through initiatives for greater fuel economy and lower emissions in commercial vehicles," said Andreas Renschler, Member of the Board of Management of Daimler AG and Head of Daimler Trucks Division. "In North America, where public-private partnerships create the right conditions, hybrid buses have proven to be an ideal solution for modern urban city transportation. With the orders announced today, we have again proven our leadership and responsibility in this field."

This order will bring the MTA's diesel-electric hybrid bus fleet to almost 1,700 units, making it the largest diesel-electric hybrid fleet in the world. With this order, Orion transit buses will account for almost 50 percent of MTA New York City Transit's entire fleet.

A majority of the deliveries previously mentioned will incorporate lithium-ion battery energy storage technology. The clean-diesel engine is smaller than that used in conventional buses and runs at nearly constant speed for clean operation and optimum efficiency.

Compared to standard diesel propulsion, these hybrid buses deliver up to 30 percent better fuel economy while greatly reducing emissions: 90 percent less particulate matter, 40 percent less NOx and 30 percent fewer greenhouse gases. Drivers and riders enjoy a quieter, cleaner and smoother ride.

*Source: [http://www.enn.com/pollution/ December 17, 2007](http://www.enn.com/pollution/December17,2007)*

## **Government Advisory Body Seeks Pollution Superfund**

*By Nishika Patel*

**An advisory body to the government yesterday called for a superfund to combat air pollution. The Council for Sustainable Development at an Air Summit meeting also said there was overwhelming public support for road pricing and higher transport costs.**

The largest public consultation conducted in Hong Kong has revealed that 42 percent of people favor a road pricing scheme while 77 percent support higher transport fees to improve air quality. The findings were presented by Hong Kong University at the summit.

Edgar Cheng Wai-kin, the vice chairman of the Council for Sustainable Development, which commissioned the survey of 81,000 people, called for all air quality initiatives to be condensed into the superfund to offer integrated solutions to air pollution.

"Let's focus on how to get air better in a holistic way. That will require big funding," he said. "If we want to clear up everything it will cost HK\$20 billion to HK\$30 billion."

In opening the summit, Chief Executive Donald Tsang Yam-kuen vowed to consider the council's recommendations when drafting the government's long-term strategy on air pollution.

The survey also revealed support for a color-coded alert system for bad air days and for the funds from road pricing schemes to subsidize greener vehicles.

HKU professor John Bacon-Shone said the primary concern of road pricing was the level of cost, although most said they would pay a reasonable fee.

"We asked how the fee should be decided. There was a clear consensus it should be on the pollution output of the vehicle - that is, the polluter pays. The principle of charging is clear but the level of charging is a delicate political issue that was too technical and specific to address in the consultation," Bacon-Shone said.

More than 70 percent of respondents also called for such mandatory measures as turning off air-conditioning or lights in empty rooms and a ban on advertising lighting early in the morning.

There was support for public events with physical activity such as sports days to be cancelled on poor air days and for greater use of public transport.

"The more than 80,000 responses from the public show they are concerned about air quality and the quality of life. We hope the committee ... will put forward some relevant suggestions on improving the air quality," Tsang said.

*Source: <http://www.thestandard.com.hk/> December 18, 2007*

### **Rs 1 Lakh Car A Threat To Environment: Pachauri**

**Even as big conglomerates like the Tata Group gear up to launch cars priced as low as Rs 100,000, R K Pachauri, who received the Nobel Peace prize this week as chief of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), said these will be a major threat to environment.**

Urging Indian industry to come forward in a big way and start being pro-active in saving the world against the dangers of global warming, Pachauri said: "Future of human race is going to be a low carbon future and the Indian industry has to take the lead and be part of the solution."

Pachauri asked it to strategize its business plans in such a way that it gradually moves towards a low carbon economy.

"Financial planning also has a major role to play in this. How we subsidize water, power and all will have an affect on the environment. We will have to start exploring immediately as to how we develop and adopt new technology," Pachauri emphasized.

He suggested new kind of corporate gifts for the festive season such as solar torches and solar lanterns to help save electricity.

*Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/> 15 Dec, 2007*

### **CAI -Asia Local Network Summit**

**Representatives from CAI-Asia's Local Networks in China (CAI-Asia China Project Office), Nepal (Clean Air Network Nepal), Philippines (Partnership for Clean Air), Pakistan (Pakistan Clean Air Network), Sri Lanka (Clean Air Sri Lanka) and Vietnam (Vietnam Clean Air Partnership) and staff of the CAI-Asia Center met in Manila for the CAI-Asia Local Network Summit to share their achievements in 2007 and plan activities for 2008.**

Among the main achievements of Local Networks and the CAI-Asia Center in 2007 are:

- Increase in the number of implemented and scheduled basic and advanced air quality management (AQM) and sustainable urban transport (SUT) training courses;
- More active involvement in AQM and SUT policy development; and
- Increased involvement in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating AQM and SUT information to stakeholders; and
- Increase in the number of project proposals developed for potential funding.

The scaling up of efforts to promote better air quality management through sustained and more concerted effort and more effective experience sharing among Local Networks, with the CAI-Asia Center as facilitator, was identified as a major goal for 2008. To achieve this, these are some of the CAI-Asia Center and Local Network activities agreed upon to be implemented in 2008:

#### Knowledge management

- Update of the Compendium of AQM and SUT Projects and Programs, Organizations, and Training Courses
- Develop an air quality database
- Undertake a survey on air quality management and climate change mitigation efforts by cities

#### Capacity building

- Training for stakeholders and coordinators on basic AQM, SUT, co-benefits and other special topics
- Experts' exchange among Local Networks
- Establish linkages with institutes that could serve as Technical Advisor of CAI-Asia Center and Local Networks

#### Policy development/networking

- Update of the Country Synthesis Reports on Urban Air Quality in Asia
- Actively participate in the Better Air Quality 2008 workshop in Bangkok
- Hold "Clean Air Day"

#### Implementation and investment

- Hold development partners meetings
- Jointly formulate project proposals and implement projects
- Exchange information on donor priorities and sources of funding for AQM, SUT and co-benefits projects

In January 2008, the CAI-Asia Center will publish on the CAI-Asia website, a report on the results of the CAI-Asia Local Network Summit.

### **Shell Joins Search For Green Fuel With Plan To Make Diesel From Algae**

*By Robin Pagnamenta*

**As oil becomes increasingly costly and difficult to find, Royal Dutch Shell said yesterday that it was developing an unusual new fuel source: algae.**

The Anglo-Dutch energy giant has begun to grow marine algae at a pilot facility in Hawaii to produce vegetable oil for processing into biofuel.

The research project has been undertaken as part of a joint venture, called Cellana, with HR Biopetroleum, an American micro-algae specialist.

Shell, which has taken a majority stake in the venture, said that algae was potentially a promising source of biofuel because it grows rapidly, is rich in vegetable oil and can be cultivated in ponds of seawater, minimising the use of fertile land and fresh water.

"Algae have great potential as a sustainable feedstock for production of diesel-type fuels with a very small CO<sub>2</sub> footprint," Graeme Sweeney, Shell's executive vice-president, future fuels and CO<sub>2</sub>, said. "This demonstration will be an important test of the technology and, critically, of commercial viability."

Algae can double its mass several times in a day and can produce more than 15 times more oil per hectare than alternatives such as rape, palm, soya or jatropha. Alternative sources of biofuel, particularly palm oil, have been linked with deforestation and the loss of agricultural land in developing countries.

Marine blooms of algae have the ability to absorb CO<sub>2</sub>, so farming it also has the potential to absorb waste emissions directly from industrial or power plants. Globally, it is estimated that algae is responsible for more than 85 per cent of the net global production of oxygen through photosynthesis.

Sceptics have suggested that the use of algae to produce biofuels is prohibitively expensive compared with conventional fossil fuels. One study, by Krassen Dimitrov, an academic in Brisbane, Australia, indicated that it would be uneconomic unless oil prices reached as much as \$800 per barrel.

Mr Sweeney said that Shell hoped that the initial 2.5 hectare pilot project could be expanded to 1,000 hectares and ultimately to 20,000 hectares if the fuel proved to be commercially viable.

*Source: <http://business.timesonline.co.uk>, December 12, 2007*

### **World Bank Launches Forest Car...**

*By Emma Graham-Harrison*

**The World Bank on Tuesday launched plans for a \$300 million fund to fend off global warming by preserving forests, but protesters said it risked turning homes of indigenous people into an asset for the rich.**

The new financing mechanism, launched at U.N. talks on tackling climate change, aims to turn better forest management into a tradeable commodity to try to halt destruction so rapid it accounts for around a fifth of annual carbon emissions.

"If we don't focus on retaining the world's remaining tropical forests, we drastically narrow the options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions," World Bank President Robert Zoellick told the project's launch.

"Deforestation and changes in land use are the second leading cause of global warming," he said, adding the project was just the start of tackling the problem.

He quoted economist Nicholas Stern's estimate that more than \$5 billion a year was needed to halt deforestation. A \$100 million "readiness" fund will provide grants to around 20 countries to prepare them for large-scale forest protection under a future climate change deal, also known as reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) in developing countries.

Grants will fund projects including surveys of current forest assets, monitoring systems and tightening governance. A second \$200 million "carbon finance mechanism" will allow some of these countries to run pilot programs earning credits for curbing deforestation. The credits will belong to the countries or groups that put up the cash for the fund.

*Source: Reuters, December 11, 2007*

### **It Would Cost About Rs 400,000 In Nepal**

**When the much-touted Indian Rs 100,000 Tata's new Nano car will make it to the Nepali market, it is likely to cost over four hundred thousand Nepali rupees.**

On the basis of showroom price of the car in India, which is set at around IRs 120,000 (Nepali Rs 192,000), its price is projected at Rs 441,600 in Nepal due to taxes.

While importing a vehicle from India, a combined 130 percent tax is levied, said Anup Baral, in-charge of Passenger Car Business Unit of Sipradi Trading Ltd, an authorized dealer of the

Tata vehicles in Nepal. The taxes include 76 percent custom duty, 35 percent excise duty, 2.5 percent local government tax, and 13 percent value added tax.

However, Baral said that as the dealer has not received any official retail price from the manufacturer, it is too early to ascertain the exact price in the Nepali market.

Experts have cautioned on the environmental consequences of this cheapest car so far. Bhushan Tuladhar, an environmentalist, said it is good news as it is affordable for middle class families, but cautioned that it could pose serious threats to environment. "Our concentration just on price would make us compromise with other aspects that can create the negative impacts such as high per capita fuel emission and use of cheap motor parts," he said.

Tuladhar said that it could cause serious traffic congestions as those riding two-wheelers will be able to have a car of their own once the car makes its entry into the Nepali market. "More cars mean more exhaustion of fuel and more emission of harmful gases," he added. "We should move towards using clean energy vehicles instead."

*Source: <http://ekantipur.com/> Jan 10, 2008*

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Compiled and Edited by : Anjila Manandhar and Gopal Raj Joshi

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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.

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