



Clean Air News

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Vehicle Pollution Standards Enforced

The government has brought into effect the Nepal Vehicle Pollution Standard-2069 and the National Standard on Air Quality-2069 BS.

These standards have been enforced so as to enhance environmental cleanliness at the sites important from the cultural, religious and touristic perspectives, and to offer people an environment where they can inhale fresh air, said the Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology (MoEST) officials at a press conference organized here on Tuesday.

An implementation facilitation team will be formed under the leadership of MoEST Joint-Secretary on the broader involvement of all stakeholders for the effective enforcement

of the standards and that the team will perform by charting out action plan, said Secretary at the Ministry Krishna Gyawali.

A four-wheeler vehicular means equivalent to the Euro 3 will only be operated as per the standard.

Earlier, the government has displaced 20-year-old public vehicles by enforcing vehicle pollution standard in 2056 merely allowing the operation of vehicles equivalent to Euro I

It is learnt that the Kathmandu Valley is enlisted as a city with air pollution according to a study carried out by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2005 AD.

Kathmandu has witnessed 60 per cent

of pollution merely from vehicles and that it has increased number of patients of lung cancer and skin diseases, said expert on climate change at the Ministry Govinda Kharel.

According to a data, there are around 1.37 million registered vehicles in Nepal and the number is being increased by 20 per cent every year.

All these vehicles belong to Euro I and 2, said Sharad Adhikari of Department of Transport management.

Chairperson of Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) Laxman Uprety said the old-aged vehicles should gradually be removed by offering package deal and public awareness building.

EURO III Emission Standard: Govt to Allow Dealers to Import Booked Vehicles

With the Euro III vehicle emission standard already in place, the government has said it will temporarily allow automobile dealers to import vehicles built under old standards that have already been ordered. This relaxation will be applicable to imports for which letters of credit have already been opened. The Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology on Tuesday said it would soon reveal a date until which dealers could import such vehicles. "We allow traders to import vehicles that are in pipeline as

per their request," said Krishna Gyawali, secretary at the ministry, at an interaction here on Tuesday.

Two weeks ago, the government introduced the Nepal Vehicle Mass Emission Standard 2012, which bars the import of vehicles that do not comply with Euro III, and the National Ambient Air Quality Standard 2012, publishing them in the Nepal Gazette. European emission standards define the acceptable limits for exhaust emissions of new vehicles. For the last 13 years, Nepal had been

importing vehicles based on Nepal Vehicle Mass Emission Standard 1999 (Euro I). Now, all vehicles, except for heavy equipment vehicles, entering Nepal require compliance with Euro III. Currently, there are over 1.3 million registered vehicles in the country and the number is increasing an annual rate of 10-20 percent.

At the interaction, automobile dealers asked the ministry to implement the new emission standard only after Contd.

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a year so that they could train their mechanics and set up additional 'hi-tech' workshops for vehicle servicing and after-sales services.

Nepal Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) Vice-president Shekhar Golchha said although the government had good reasons for introducing the new emission standard, it was necessary to know whether the fuel being imported support Euro III vehicles and what is to be done with the existing, old vehicles.

NADA has said the government enforced the new system without preparations, neglecting its impact on the domestic automobile business. According to NADA, all vehicles, besides public and heavy equipment vehicles, being imported are already in compliance with Euro III.

Lack of sufficient 'hi-tech' workshops, delay in bringing vehicle fitness test centres into operation, shortage of trained work force, adulterated petroleum products and lack of capacity with the Department of Transport Management are some

major hurdles for the effective implementation Euro III.

"Euro III vehicles need servicing through advance workshops run under computerised systems, which we do not have in a sufficient number," said Gopi Nepaune of NADA.

Source: <http://www.ekantipur.com/August 29, 2012>

Valley Night Bus Service Drawing Oohs and Aahs

The general public have started singing the praises of the night bus service that came into operation in Kathmandu and Lalitpur from August 17 and say they are feeling an incredible sense of relief.

By providing cheap fares, security, convenience and timely services, which are rare to find while travelling by day-time public buses, night buses are doing office-goers, daily wagers and commoners proud.

Those working at odd hours in particular are wreathing in smiles to avail themselves of this new-found opportunity. "Travelling by a night bus is a wonderful experience. It's a huge relief for people like me who can't afford taxis at night as their charges double after 8 pm," said Suresh Karki, a hotel worker at Sinamangal.

The perennial problem that Karki faced earlier was finding a vehicle to go home at Bhimsensthan. "Now I go home comfortably and safely." Bus operators, however, say the night buses have not attracted many passengers as expected. Bagmati Coordinator of National Federation of Nepal Transport Entrepreneurs (NFNTE), Dharma Rijal, said the number of passen-

gers is still not thick owing to lack of publicity.

"All are happy with this new initiation but many people do not still know about the night bus service. I hope the number will increase once they know that the city has night bus service," said Rijal.

Kedar Bahadur Adhikari, chief of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC), argues that the number is low because other private vehicles have also extended service time after night buses came into service in the city for the first time.

"While travelling through various routes, I saw many micro buses plying till late night. We should be satisfied with the present number. It will increase gradually," said Adhikari.

He does not see private buses as a threat and instead thinks that more people would benefit if the private sector too operates night buses.

Currently, 14 night buses are plying on six routes. Four buses operate on the Ring Road, while the remaining ply on five other routes. Two buses run from Satdo-

bato-Lagankhel-Ratnapark, Koteswror-Sinamangal-Jorpati, Kalanki-Ratnapark, Jorpati-Ratnapark and Bansbari-Ratnapark. One bus caters to night-time travellers on Koteswror-Kalanki route daily.

Officials said routes and plying time can be extended if the first three months go well. Any change will be based on the data collected from the CCTVs installed inside the buses. "Based on the number of passengers, we will reshuffle the existing routes, add the number of bus stops, fix light in the bus stops and publicise the time schedule of the buses plying on each routes" said Adhikari.

In order to assure passengers of their safety, two armed police personnel are on duty inside each bus. The night bus service is a joint initiative of the KMC and the NFNTE.

Source: <http://www.ekantipur.com/August 22, 2012>



Training on Lead Contamination Testing Conducted

By Damodar Dhital

Kathmandu University, Department of Environment Science and Engineering (KU, DESE) jointly with the Society for Legal and Environmental Analysis and Development Research (LEADERS, Nepal) organized a one day Training Program on; "Lead Contamination and Testing on Air, Soil and Paint" today here at the Kathmandu University, Dhulikhel. The Program was supported by the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM).

Executive Director of Occupational Knowledge (OK International) Perry Gottesfeld gave the training program. The program was basically organized to train the youths and professionals on taking Lead samples from air, soil and paints and determine the lead contamination. The first session of the training program was

covered by the presentations on the introduction, historical perspectives, background and uses of Lead, its health effects, routes of exposure and its possible health effect on child and adults, sampling and handling the samples. The second session of the 7 hour long training program was then focused on methods of analysis, sampling procedures and calculations. OK International is working in 7 different countries since last six months and the program is technically assisted by the University of California. The program was attended by more than 20 people from different background including Professors, students and recognized personnel from different organizations working for environment, public health and air quality management in Nepal.

Prof. Dr. Sanjay Nath Khanal of Kathmandu University, Program Director of

Center for Public Health and Environmental Development (CEPHED), Mr. Ram Charitra Sah, Researcher of UC Barkley, Dr. Amod Pokhrel were present on the occasion. Participants from Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN) and (CEPHED) were also present on the training.



KMC in Talks on Operation of EVs in City

Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) has started discussions with stakeholders for operating electric vehicles (EVs) at New Road and the vicinity, including the historic Hanumandhoka Durbar Square, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The KMC said it will discuss the plan with all stakeholders, including local people and authorities.

"For the first time, we held consultations with local clubs and entrepreneurs on the operation of electric vehicles in the area," said Kedar Bahadur Adhikari, executive chief at the KMC. "They took the plan positively and suggested operating parking lots in a bid to make the plan successful,"

he added. "We plan to operate electric vehicles in a bid to help preserve the heritage site," said Adhikari, adding that they plan to bar other vehicles from the area.



"If the stakeholders support us, we will expedite our work as early as possible. The plan is in its preliminary phase," he said, adding that they will soon work out the number of EVs and fix the date for

implementing the plan.

As per the plan, the KMC will buy EVs and operate them in the New Road area collecting minimum charges from passengers, according to sources. Amid stakeholders' concern about lack of parking space in the area, Adhikari said, "We will manage existing parking lots in a better manner and develop new facilities if necessary," said Adhikari.

Source: <http://www.thehimalayantimes.com> August 20, 2012

Nepal to Seek Korean Support

By Ramesh Shrestha

Nepal will seek support from the South Korean government for the development of railway in the country.

A high level government delegation led by the Minister for Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management, Hridayesh Tripathi, is scheduled to leave for Korea on Monday.

The main objective of the four-day visit is to attract Korean aid and investment for the railway network and metro network in the Kathmandu valley, according to the ministry.

The team includes Secretary Tulasi Prasad Situala, Joint Secretary Hari Om Srivastav and Railway Department Director General Ram Kumar Lamsal.

“The visit is focused on exploring opportunities for the metro and railway development with South Korean support,” said Minister Tripathi, adding that they would also hold discussions on other infrastructure development and bilateral issues.

Minister Tripathi is visiting Korea at the invitation of Korean Minister for Land, Transport and Maritime Affairs Kwon Do-youup. Tripathi will meet Kwon on Tuesday and request sup-

port for railway infrastructure development in Nepal. With the Nepal government prioritising railway, Korean firms have been expressing interest in investing in the development of railway infrastructure, besides conducting studies here.

During the tour, the Nepali team will also visit the Korea Rail Network Authority’s headquarters and meet its chairman. It will also meet officials of the Exim Bank of Korea. During the meetings, the team will discuss the possibility of getting soft loans from the Exim Bank for the construction of the 136-km Bardibas-Simara-Birgunj section of the proposed Mechi-Mahakali Electric Railway or East West Railway. The railway network construction is estimated to cost Rs 200-400 million per km, depending on geography, according to Lamsal.

Korean firm Chungbuk Engineering is preparing the detailed project report (DPR) of the Bardibas-Simara-Birgunj section which is expected to be ready by the next two months.

If the Korean government shows interest, the government can award the contract of building railway sections to Korean firms, ministry officials said. “The whole thing depends on



how the Korean government helps Nepal in railway affairs, and on the conditions of the soft loan agreement, if signed,” said a ministry official. A feasibility study carried out by RITES India two years ago had estimated the entire project cost at Rs 800 billion.

Meanwhile, the ministry on Friday formally requested the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to carry out the DPR of the proposed metro railway network in the valley and an in-depth feasibility study of the North-South railway link.

Source: <http://www.ekantipur.com> August 19, 2012

India: Road Map for Cleaner Air

By Sujay Mehdudia

Petroleum Ministry seeks setting up of an inter-ministerial group to draw up an action plan for pollution issues

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry has sought setting up of an inter-ministerial Committee (IMC) with representatives from the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the Ministry of Heavy Industries, Urban Development and Public Enterprises and the Ministry of Environment and Forests to draw up a road-map for reduction of pollution.

The Ministry has stated that with a time lag in implementation of sound vehicle inspection and maintenance, vehicle retro-fitment and retirement, garage certification and traffic management, mere improvement of fuel quality was not enough to achieve the desired results. “It is

time to evolve an appropriate roadmap and supervise implementation of measures to reduce the pollution levels,” it has stated in a note circulated among various stakeholders.

The note pointed out that as per the source apportionment studies conducted by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) in six cities, vehicular emission is not the only major contributor to overall pollution as road side dust, construction activities, domestic combustion, use of diesel generator sets and bio mass burning also contribute significantly to the pollution levels going northwards.

The Petroleum Ministry said while the oil industry has kept its commitment of supplying BS-IV quality auto fuels to reap the full benefits of the upgraded fuel quality, more important and immediate need was to ensure improvement in vehicle engine technology to reduce emission

levels and deliver higher fuel efficiency.

“Measures like retro-fitment of pollution control devices in old vehicles, phasing out of old vehicles, mandatory periodical inspections and maintenance requirements are also requirement to be taken up simultaneously,” it has stated.

It further pointed out that a decision had been taken to progressively expand coverage of BS-IV fuels in at least 50 cities by 2015, adding that inclusion of all State capitals and cities with population of more than one million and on-attainment cities as identified by the Ministry of Environment and Forests will be emphasized while selecting the additional cities for extension of BS-IV auto fuels.

Source: <http://www.thehindu.com> August 9, 2012

India Approves \$4.1 Billion Green Vehicle Push

India's government has approved a 230 billion rupee (\$4.13 billion) plan to spur electric and hybrid vehicle production over the next eight years, setting itself an ambitious target of 6 million vehicles by 2020. India has a nascent electric and hybrid vehicle industry, with most manufacturers focusing instead on low-emission cars, citing the prohibitively high costs of new technologies and an almost non-existent support infrastructure. "The question is the viability ... The cost of the car and how much the consumer can pay, there is a gap," said Pawan Goenka, chairman of Mahindra Reva, India's only electric-focused carmaker.

India's target to produce 6 million green vehicles by 2020, of which 4 to 5 million are expected to be two-wheelers, comes as China aims to have 500,000 electric and hybrid cars on its roads by 2015.

Reva, controlled by Mahindra & Mahindra, aims for sales of 30,000 of its battery-run cars a year by 2016.

S. Sundareshan, secretary of India's Heavy Industries ministry, said that New Delhi would provide around 130 to 140 billion rupees of the total investment in the plan, with companies providing the remainder.

"We will put in some specific schemes with regard to subsidy element, R&D, demand creation and infrastructure," Sundareshan told reporters.

"More individual schemes will come out at a later date." India's slowly growing market for electric vehicles crashed to a halt in April after the government withdrew subsidies worth up to 100,000 rupees per vehicle.

Source: <http://www.reuters.com/ August 29, 2012>

Pine Trees: Contributors to Air Pollution

Pine trees are one of the biggest contributors to air pollution. They give off gases that react with airborne chemicals, many of which are produced by human activity creating tiny, invisible particles that muddy the air. New research from a team led by Carnegie Mellon University's Neil Donahue shows that the biogenic particles formed from pine tree

emissions are much more chemically interesting and dynamic than previously thought. The study provides the first experimental evidence that such compounds are chemically transformed by free radicals, the same compounds that age our skin, after they are first formed in the atmosphere. These findings, published in the Proceedings of the National

Academy of Sciences, can help make climate and air quality prediction models more accurate, and enable regulatory agencies to make more effective decisions as they consider strategies for improving air quality.

Source: <http://www.sciencedaily.com August 9, 2012>

Good Reads:

1. [Where's the Policy for Urban Mobility?](#) - By Asmita Manandhar
2. [Public Transport in Nepal "Double-o-Driver"](#) - The Economist
3. [Now Time to Redefine Vehicle Inspection and Maintenance System in Kathmandu Valley](#) - By Gopal Raj Joshi

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 anjila@cen.org.np

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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.

CANN is a Country Network of Clean Air Initiative for Asian Cities.

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<http://www.cleanairinitiative.org/>