

INSIDE THE ISSUE

Bicycle Handed Over to PM Bhattarai 1

Worse than cigarettes 1

Road Expansion Picks Pace In Capital 2

Kathmandu Valley's Ring Road Widening Works To Start Next Year 3

NASA SERVIR MINX Workshop held in 4

Book Launched in Kathmandu 4

Development Banks Pledge \$175bn for Public Transport at Rio+20 4

UK Cities Face Ban on Heavily Polluting Traffic 5

Nanoparticles Have Serious Health Impacts 5

Bicycle Handed Over to PM Bhattarai



Mr. Shail Shrestha, President of 'Kathmandu Cycle City 2020' handing a bicycle and helmet to Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai during World Environment Day June 5, 2012. (Photo Courtesy: Rajan Kathet-KCC2020)

A bicycle was gifted to Hon. Prime Minister Dr. Baburam Bhattarai today on the occasion of Environment Day at a program organized by Ministry of Environment, Science and Technology held at Nepal Academy Hall, Kamaladi.

The bicycle was bought from the fund collected from participant cyclists of Mega Cycle Rally conducted on April 6, 2012 in association with Clean Energy Nepal, Clean Air Network Nepal, Nepal Unites, World Cyclist's Foundation, Come On Youth Stand Up, Step for Miles, Rotaract Club, Nepalese Youth for Climate Action, Association of Youth Organizations Nepal, and Resources Himalaya.

The gifted bicycle is a Jomsom Bike, made for Nepal, assembled in Nepal, by Chain Bikes, which the organizers hope the PM will use after his much hyped 'made in Nepal' Mustang Jeep.

The purpose of the event is to draw attention and pressurize PM and concerned stakeholders to build dedicated cycle lanes throughout the city to ensure the safety of cycle users

and their rights for safer mobility. It also aimed to encourage usage of bicycles, promote cycle safety and

demand to prioritize cycling as an important element of sustainable urban transport in National Transport Policy.

Cycle being a sustainable means of transport fits well into World Environment Day 2012 theme: "Green Economy: Does it include you?"

Source: <http://www.cen.org.np/> June 06, 2012
http://www.cen.org.np/index.php?page=news_detail&nid=275

Worse than cigarettes

By Buddha Basnyat, MD

Imagine burning a thousand cigarettes in a room and inhaling this smoke everyday. This is what happens in many households across Nepal which burn wood and dried cow dung to use as cooking fuel in their kitchens. No wonder many Nepali especially women who do the cooking are afflicted with chronic lung disease as early as 40. Many die prematurely because of heart failure, which is secondary to chronic lung disease.

Kirk Smith from the University of California in Berkeley who has been working on indoor air pollution for decades, estimates that each year two million people die worldwide from this pollution. This figure is stunning because it rivals the annual deaths caused by either tuberculosis or malaria, two age-old scourges of humans.

But why has there been no substantial improvement in this area when people have been aware of this problem for decades and clean stoves are eas-

ily available? Even in Nepal, researchers including senior physician Migendra Raj Pandey published an extensive monograph called Chronic bronchitis and corpulmonale in Nepal. This was an epidemiological study conducted in the early 1980s in four areas of Nepal's three different geographical regions.

Yet medical records from hospitals around Nepal (and across South Asia) still point to a disproportionate number of women in their forties and fifties who suffer from chronic

lung disease due to wood and cow dung smoke.

Just replacing old stoves with newer, cleaner ones or installing efficient chimneys does not seem to solve the problem. Many national and international organisations are already doing this.

In Nepal a problem is considered to be significant only if it has immediate con-

sequences. Smoke in homes takes years to cause permanent physical ailments like chronic lung disease. People do not seem to mind the initial burning or tearing of the eyes. Some feel that smoke keeps rooms warm, while others believe the roof will cave in with termite infestation in the absence of smoke.

In addition, most researchers barring a few, are foreigners based outside Ne-

pal who are far-removed from this problem. We need young, local, medical and engineering professionals and social workers to solve this unique problem and save the lives of thousands of Nepali women.

Source: <http://www.nepalitimes.com> June 24, 2012

<http://www.nepalitimes.com/issue/2012/06/24/LifeTimes/19406>

Road Expansion Picks Pace In Capital

By Rojina Sthapit

The Metropolitan Traffic Police Division (MTPD) in collaboration with the Kathmandu Valley Town Development Implementation Committee (KVTDIC) bulldozed roadside structures constructed along Lainchhor, Bansbari stretch in the Capital on Saturday morning.

The road expansion has been initiated from two places--Lainchour and Panipokhari--. The road will be expanded by nine meters, sources confirmed. Earlier, it was 11 meters.

Boundary walls of some houses, garage, temporary structures have been demolished, the KVTDIC has given few more days to shift their belongings, one of the locals said.

The locals have been protesting the government move to bulldoze infrastructure alongside roads.

They have been demanding compensation claiming their houses were built legally meeting all the procedures.

They had also taken out a rally on Friday and initiated relay hunger strike since yesterday.

Meanwhile, police detained eight people who created hurdles in the road expansion process.

The KVTDIC expedited bulldozing structures after the officials at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) on Wednesday directed concerned bodies to give pace to the ongoing works of expansion and reconstruction of roads inside the Kathmandu Valley.

The road-expansion drive was initiated inside the Kathmandu Valley to widen narrow roads and make the Valley safe and clean for its residents. The campaign was

halted for about four months due to regular protests from locals before it resumed on Saturday.

Officials say the demolition move is in line with the government decision in 1976 on road expansion. The decision was revised again in 1988, according to the Ministry of Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management.

Source: <http://www.ekantipur.com/> June 30, 2012

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2012/06/30/business/road-expansion-picks-pace-in-capital/356391.html>

Kathmandu Valley's Ring Road Widening Works To Start Next Year

The widening of the Kathmandu Valley's Ring Road will start from the next year under the assistance of People's Republic of China. In the first phase, the current four-lane road of the Koteshwor—Kalanki stretch will be upgraded to eight lanes, according to the Ministry of Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management.

Third Railway Survey and Design Institute Group Corporation, a consultant hired by China, has completed a preliminary design for the Koteshwor—Kalanki section of the road. China has also sought suggestions in the design work from Nepal. Currently, the Department of Roads is studying the design report for the necessary inputs.

"As we are busy with budget preparation for the next fiscal year, we have not been able to concentrate on the design report," said a senior official at the department. "A team will review it at the earliest and suggest inputs to be incorporated into a final design."

The design report, submitted to the Ministry of Physical Planning about a month ago, has asked for suggestions within 20 days. Nepal and China had signed an agreement to widen the ring road under grant assistance from China in February last year. However, the work regarding the improvement project had caused the procedural delay.

The Ring Road improvement project will upgrade the current four-lane road to eight lanes, with a four-lane carriageway that will also include a two-way relief road, two-way bicycle track and two-way pedestrian path,

including bus stations and parking lots. The road-widening project is expected to be completed by 2015. Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, Secretary at the Ministry of Physical Planning said that Chinese government was doing the final preparation to call tender for the selection of a contractor for the project. "Improvement work will start from the next fiscal year and it would take three years to complete the entire project," he added.

Along with the report, the consultant had expressed concern over the borrow pit location advised by Nepal, saying it was far from the project area. Borrow pit is a location chosen to dig gravel, soil, and sand for use in another location. Department officials said that they had suggested Tika Bhairav in Lalitpur as the location for extracting gravel for the purpose.

Similarly, the report had also asked the government to arrange enough space, mainly for the construction of an interchange at the Kalanki junction. "As per the preliminary design, 0.8 km interchange is planned for smooth operation of vehicles at the junction," said the official at the department. In the road engineering term, an interchange is a road junction that typically uses grade separation, and one or more ramps, to permit traffic on at least one road to pass through the junction without directly crossing any other traffic stream.

Under the Ring Road improvement plan, the current 27km-long Ring Road will be upgraded in three phases. Apart from the plan

for the main road, according the Ministry of Physical Planning, the detailed design on improvement will also devise plans for management of public utility services lines such as drinking water, electricity, telecommunications wires and demolishing or incorporating roadside physical infrastructure affecting the road widening work.

Source: <http://www.ekantipur.com/> June 06, 2012

<http://www.ekantipur.com/2012/06/06/business/kathmandu-valleys-ring-road-widening-works-to-start-next-year/355155.html>

NASA SERVIR MINX Workshop held in Kathmandu

By Amita Thapa Magar



Photo Courtesy: ICIMOD

Under SERVIR-Himalaya framework, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in collaboration with The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) organized NASA-SERVIR MINX Workshop from 11 - 13 June, 2012 with the objective to train SERVIR - Himalaya and East Africa teams and also participants from relevant institutions of Nepal in the use of MINX (MISR Interactive eXplorer) software in order to expand the holdings of the MISR Plume Height Climatology Project. Mr. David Nelson from Jet Propulsion Laboratory, NASA was the main resource person of the training.

The three day training workshop was aimed to train the participants in the use of MINX. The program was framed into presentation/lecture sessions and workshop on the material from the presentation.

The training content included presentations

and workshop on -MISR-the instrument, Orbit, Data Products and Tools for ordering and viewing, MISR Algorithm and MINX basic features, Measuring Aerosol Height and Motion with MINX: Algorithms and Procedures, Plume Case Studies and handling Complexities in Height Retrievals.

Regional SERVIR hubs are located in Panama, Kenya and Nepal.

It is anticipated that the presence of SERVIR hubs in Nairobi and Kathmandu will allow a significantly greater geographic and temporal extent of the plume database over Africa and HKH region than is currently available.

Book Launched in Ktm

June 8, 2012 (Teku, Kathmandu)

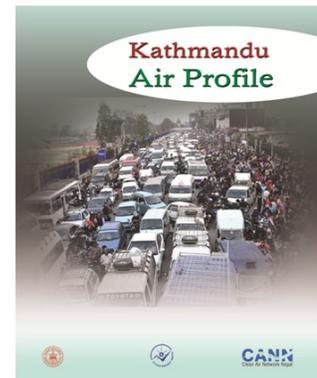
Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC)'s Chief Executive Officer Mr. Kedar Bahadur Adhikari launched a resource book, Kathmandu Air Profile and a video documentary on Kathmandu's Air Pollution amidst a function in the Environment Management Department, KMC, Teku on the occasion of World Environment Day 2012. More than 50 people attended the program.

KMC and Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) jointly published the book which provides an overview of air quality management in Kathmandu. In the program, Ms. Amita Thapa

Magar (CEN), author of the book did a brief presentation about the publication. She gave an overview of the contents of the booklet and also discussed about the challenges and ways ahead in the future to come up with the publication.

Mr. Bharat Basnet, Chairperson (CEN) expressing his remarks in the program, said that the initiative is appreciative and should continue in future as well. Following his remarks, Mr. Shantaram Pokhrel, Chief, Environment Management Department of KMC stressed the need of such a resource book. He acknowledged help and support from KMC's officials and staffs and CEN and Clean Air Network Nepal for their contribution in publishing the publication.

Speaking at the program, Mr. Kedar Bahadur Adhikari expressed his remarks. He said that publishing such a resource book is a good start and it should go along in future. Further, he also urged to look for its continual revision with updated information in the future.



Development Banks Pledge \$175bn for Public Transport at Rio+20

By Jonathan Watts

Development Banks Pledge \$175bn for Public Transport
The world's biggest development banks have made a fundamental investment shift from roads to public transport, under a \$175bn (£111bn) initiative to promote buses, trains and cycle lanes that was unveiled on Wednesday at the Rio+20 Earth summit.

The eight largest multilateral development banks (MDBs) announced they will invest these funds — the biggest sum committed at the conference so far — over the next ten years to transport systems that help to reduce greenhouse gases, improve access for the ur-

ban poor and reduce road accidents.

It is estimated that the \$175bn from the banks will leverage 10 to 20 times as much money from city governments and the private sector.

The Asian Development Bank, World Bank and other participants at the launch said the transport sector was the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases largely because urban planning has focused on improving mobility for motorists.

Estimating that current car-focused transport systems cause congestion, air pollution, traffic accidents and climate change impact equivalent

to 5-10% of global GDP, they said it was important to collaborate and invest substantially in low-carbon transport.

"These unprecedented commitments have the promise to save hundreds of thousands of lives by cleaning the air and making roads safer; cutting congestion in hundreds of cities; and reducing the contribution of transportation to harmful climate change. They will create more efficient passenger and freight transportation, spurring sustainable urban economic growth," said Joan Clos, Executive Director of UN-Habitat.

Millions of people will move into cities over the coming decades, particularly in Asia, Africa and Latin America "We've made a breakthrough here by persuading banks to shift from roads to public transport," said Michael Replogle of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, which has worked with cities like Guangzhou in China and Ahmedabad in India to improve urban transport systems. "This is the culmination of 27 years work."

Cornie Huizenga of Slocat, a partnership of UN organisations, development banks and other

groups committed to low carbon transport, said the transport strategy was a politically astute way to cut emissions, which can be a sensitive issue in many countries. By comparison, it was easier to work with cities.

"Once the shackles of climate change are lifted, we are able to build constructive partnerships. The mayor of Beijing might ask for help with problems on public transport, but it would be hard for him to do that on climate change.

"The real success story of Rio is bottom-up partnerships to advance sustainability, even though governments can't agree what to do at the top level," Huizenga said.

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/> June 20, 2012

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2012/jun/20/development-banks-rio20-public-transport?newsfeed=true>

UK Cities Face Ban on Heavily Polluting Traffic

Twelve UK cities and urban areas may have to ban or fine heavily polluting traffic from their centers within months after the European commission refused to allow Britain more time to reduce dangerous exhaust emissions, according to air quality campaigners.

Newcastle, Liverpool, Tyneside, Sheffield, Bristol, Brighton, Birkenhead, Preston, Swansea, Belfast, south-west England, north-east Scotland and south Wales are all likely to have to introduce "low-emission zones" to curb the toxic gas nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) which is linked to heart diseases and respiratory problems.

Forty of 43 UK zones exceeded NO₂ legal limits in 2010.

Air pollution from NO₂ and minute particles of partially burned soot (PM₁₀s) is recognised by the government and medical experts as the second-biggest public health threat after smoking, costing the UK an estimated £20bn a year.

The government's report to the European commission in September 2011 estimated that 698,543 people in London in 2010 were exposed to concentrations of NO₂ above the WHO guideline and legal limit.

Source: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/> June 28, 2012

Nanoparticles Have Serious Health Impacts

New groundbreaking research by scientists at Trinity College Dublin has found that exposure to nanoparticles can have a serious impact on health, linking it to rheumatoid arthritis and the development of other serious autoimmune diseases.

Source: <http://www.sciencedaily.com> June 11, 2012

<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/06/120611105311.htm>

Compiled by : Prashanta Khanal
Edited by : Anjila Manandhar

Clean Energy Nepal

POB No. 24581, 140 Bulbule Marg,
Thapagaun, Baneshwor,
Kathmandu Nepal
Email: info@cen.org.np
Web: www.cen.org.np
Tel: 977-1- 4464981

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.

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

For more information: www.cen.org.np/cann

<http://cleanairinitiative.org/portal/countrynetworks/nepal>

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