

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Government Urges Contractors to Expedite Road Expansion** 2

**Sajha Bus Service Lands in Route Trouble** 3

**Cable Cars can ease valley Traffic— Promoters** 4

**People Centric mobility (MAYA) Campaign launched in Kathmandu** 4

**Fact: Air pollution Kills More People than AIDS and Malaria Combined** 5

## Sajha Begins Bus Service

Comedy artist duo Haribansa Acharya and Madan Krishna Shrestha, the bus conductors, ticketed Rs 15 to Chief Secretary Lilamani Poudel as the latter boarded a dashing green bus amid people's cheers in Kathmandu. The Maha duo was, however, not shooting for another comedy series for the screens. The occasion was the much-anticipated launch of the Sajha bus service in the Capital. Poudel became the first passenger as Sajha Cooperatives officially flagged off the buses. The service, which was defunct for around five years, started anew under a new management with 16 hi-tech buses that will ply on two different routes. Launching the service, Poudel said Sajha should set a benchmark in the public transport system. "Sajha should live up to

its name and set an example," he said. He emphasised on the need to promote mass public transport system and urged Sajha to expand its services.

At the ceremony, Haribansa Acharya talked about the 'legacy' of the Sajha buses and how, as a boy, he dreamt of becoming a Sajha bus driver. "I used to steer my dinner plate and imitated the Sajha bus drivers," he said. Chairman of Sajha Cooperatives, Kanak Mani Dixit, said the service will be expanded in the next few months. "We plan to add up many more services like the commuter card system, while also making a few buses friendly for people with disabilities," he said. As it began the service, Sajha offered 'test rides' to the public in different routes on Saturday. The buses will ply on two routes—

Satdobato-Lagankhel, Jawalakhel-Tripureshwore, Ratnapark, Maharajgunj, Basundhara, New Buspark being one route and the Kalanki-Kalimati-New Baneshwore-Tinkune, Airport road section being the other. Both the routes will have two-way services from 5 am to 11 pm. Sajha has okayed a minimum fare of Rs 15 that can go up to Rs 20, according to the distance travelled, while there are discounted minimum fare for students, elderly and the disabled.

Source: [www.ekantipur.com](http://www.ekantipur.com), April 13, 2013



## Government to Ban Government-owned Vehicles on Friday

Niraj Khadka

The Government is planning to ban the use of all government and Corporation vehicles every coming Friday with an objective to keep tabs on the Growing Urban Pollution.

"This is a part of "Safa sahar" (Clean City) policy to be implemented by Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), "said Mr. Kishore Thapa, Secretary for MoUD. The "Safa Sahar" policy

includes 31 other key policies.

The main objective of banning the government vehicles on Friday is to encourage the staffs of government and corporations to use public transport and prioritize walking and cycling.

The "Safa Sahar" policy includes other key points such as planting of at least two plants in one's personal residence; painting of telephone, electric wires; uniformly painting the public vehicles

etc. The policy thematically focuses on Solid Waste management, Urban Greenery Planning, Pollution Control and Water Pipeline and Drainage System Management.

The program will be implemented by a team of secretaries and unit chiefs of 5 different ministries and will be led by Secretary of MoUD.

Source: [www.nayapatrika.com](http://www.nayapatrika.com), April 16, 2013

# Govt. Urges Contractors to Expedite Road Construction

While the government has blacktopped only 15 kilometers of road in the last six months, the government officials have claimed that 90 percent of road construction in all 65 road sections of the road network that is being expanded in Kathmandu and Lalitpur would be completed within the running fiscal year. The officials have claimed that more than 9 km road construction would be over in first week of May and additional 24 km would be blacktopped by mid-May, according to Tulasi Prasad Sitaula, secretary at the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works (MoPPW).

The Kathmandu Valley Town Development Authority (KVTDA) is carrying out road expansion along more than 130 km road that were encroached. The road expansion campaign was launched in August 2011 to ease the increasing traffic congestion in the Valley. The Kathmandu Road Division Office had said that telephone and electricity cables would be set underground during the re-construction and above ground electricity poles would be done away with.

Chief of Kathmandu Town Development Authority Bhai Kaji Tiwari, however, said that the delay in installing electricity poles and laying down water supply pipes were slowing down rebuilding of the roads.

## Govt officials on regular inspection

Amid growing complaints from public about the delay in the construction of roads in Kathmandu and Lalitpur, a monitoring team led by the secretary of the Office of the Prime Minister and Minister's Council has been making regular visits to the construction sites to keep a tab on the progress. The Chairman of the Interim Election Council Khil

Raj Regmi has also instructed the government officials responsible for construction to complete the work as soon as possible.

The leader of the government's monitoring team, Krishna Hari Banskota, who is the secretary of the office of the prime minister, has asked contractors to speed up construction work on the Airport-Tinkune-Maitighar road section with more priority.

## Govt wants private buildings to maintain aesthetics

While the Ministry of Urban Development plans to revive greenery along city roads once they are blacktopped, the new private buildings that are to be built on the expanded areas should add to the green environment, said Banskota during his inspection visits.

After construction of roads, the government would turn its focus on constructing traffic islands and overhead bridges, said Kishor Thapa, secretary of the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD).

## Widened area turns into parking lot

While the Kathmandu Road Division has graveled some of the extended areas, many of those areas are strewn with dug out drainage pipes, uprooted electricity poles and cables. The vehicle users have been randomly parking vehicles at the expanded areas. However, the Metropolitan Traffic Police Division has said that they are finding it tough to control the encroachment as the construction work goes on.

## First disabled-friendly road

The government officials announced in the initial phase of road expansion that construction of roads along the expanded section would be done considering the problems faced by disabled people. However, the authorities seem to have abandoned that plan later.

Egged on by the National Disabled Federation and Independent Living Center Advocacy, the government for the first time agreed to construct a disabled-friendly road for the convenience of visually impaired and persons with other forms of disabilities.

Disabled-friendly roads are built to aid visually impaired, wheelchair users and persons with various disabilities to move on their own.

The Khagendra Disabled Friendly Road Campaign Implementation Committee, formed to pressurize the government to build disabled-friendly roads has several times staged protests demanding the government to construct disabled-friendly roads.

The first disabled-friendly road will be built on the two sides along the 2 km main road stretching between the main gate of Nepal Disabled Association and Narayantar-Jorpati intersection.

It will be constructed with assistance of various organizations, donor agencies and general public. The government has earlier assured the physically challenged community to allocate 60 percent of the total construction cost on building disabled-friendly road.

Source: [www.myrepublica.com](http://www.myrepublica.com) , April 21, 2013

# Sajha Bus Service Lands in Route Trouble

Samik Kharel

Less than a week into its operation, the Sajha bus service has landed in trouble. Transport entrepreneurs have objected to the operation of the green buses on two routes, saying that the permit was issued without their consent. The entrepreneurs have also been complaining that Sajha 'snatched away' their 'daily bread,' as smaller vehicles operating on the two routes have been hit hard. General Secretary of the Federation of Nepalese National Transport Entrepreneurs, Dol Nath Khanal, said they have serious objection to the routes of the Sajha buses. "The Sajha service began without prior discussions with us. The routes were also granted without consultations," Khanal said. He demanded that the authorities concerned urgently address the matter.

Tulasi Gautam of the Bagmati Zonal Office of the Transport Management Office, however, said other bus services are opposing the Sajha route simply because the latter "has broken their domination

by providing a great service to the passengers." "Everyone has the right to acquire a route permit. Moreover, Sajha is not a new service, it is just the revival of the old one," Gautam said. The entrepreneurs also claimed that the routes currently given to Sajha are not what they had applied for. The two routes applied by Sajha were Harihar Bhawan-Tripureshwor-Ranipokhari-Kamalpokhari-Gaushala-Koteshwor-Satdobato-Lagankhel and Satdobato-Lagankhel-Jawalakhel-Tripureshwor-Teku-Kalimati-Kalanki. However the granted routes were Satdobato-Lagankhel, Jawalakhel-Tripureshwor, Ratnapark, Maharajgunj, Basundhara, New Buspark, and Kalanki-Kalimati-New Baneshwor-Tinkune-Airport. Gautam said there were slight changes in the routes due to protests from other bus owners. "These routes were granted to Sajha as alternatives to the earlier routes. While giving the permits we have to assure smoothness of the service. We had to even consider the size of the (new) buses and the bends it

must negotiate in major areas," he said. Gautam said they discussed the routes with the transport entrepreneurs before okaying them for Sajha. "We initially agreed on the routes on various conditions like no additional buses for three years. And even if the buses had to be added, it should be with consent from the entrepreneurs," said Gautam. Sajha is also in controversy with its buses entering the Tirbhuvan International Airport (TIA) premises. Due to security reasons, the buses may not be able to enter the airport any more. Despite the controversies, Sajha Cooperative Manager Mahendra Pandey said the service is admired by the public and has public support.

Source: [www.ekantipur.com](http://www.ekantipur.com) April 19, 2013



## Cable Cars can Ease Valley Traffic: Promoters

Good news is at the door of Kathmandu residents fed up with daily traffic congestion and worsening pollution. B&S Urban Cable Car will make the dream of capital residents to see hassle-free movement in a clean environment come true if the firm's plan to operate cable cars materializes.

This will provide an alternative mode of transport in the Valley, which is full of narrow roads and devoid of any underground sub-ways. B&S Urban Cable, a Nepali firm, is carrying out a detailed study to operate urban cable cars in Kathmandu. Entrepreneurs Bhawani Rana and Shyam Mohan Shrestha are the promoters of the firm. "We estimate that the project will cost between Rs 13 billion to Rs 14 billion at current prices. The cost will hover between Rs 15 billion to Rs 20 billion when the project is completed in four years, with the rise in cost of production over the period," Rana told Republica on Mon-

day. Rana said the company has submitted a preliminary study to the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport. The firm has sought permission from the government for a detailed study. "We will start the detailed feasibility study once the government gives us the go-ahead," said Rana.

The company has conducted a preliminary study for operating cable cars from Narayan Gopal Chowk to Lagankhel and from Kuleswor to Boudha, with stops at different places. As per the preliminary study, it will take 15 to 20 minutes to cover a distance that normally takes one hour, due to traffic jams. "Our study showed that around 200,000 customers can travel daily on both cable car routes," said Shrestha. If the government grants permission, it will take two years for the company to start construction and another two years to complete it. "If everything goes as per plan

we will bring the cable cars into operation in four years," said Shrestha, adding that the government is positive about the project. The company plans to import ready-made poles for the cable cars, and they don't require changing the existing infrastructure. "If the project succeeds it will change the face of the Valley, making it more beautiful and at the same time environment-friendly," said Rana.

According to the company, a cable car can carry 25 to 30 persons at a time. Rana said the fares for will be similar to other public transport vehicles. Rana said many foreign companies have shown interest in working with B&N Urban Cable, and they are currently holding talks with some French companies.

Source: [www.myrepublica.com](http://www.myrepublica.com) April 30, 2013

## People-Centric Mobility(MAYA) Campaign Launched in Kathmandu

Krity Shrestha

Manav Kendrit Yatayat (MAYA) or People Centric Mobility Campaign was launched in Kathmandu on April 22, 2013. The program was launched by UN-Habitat in partnership with Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) and Clean Air Network Nepal (CANN). Mr. PS Joshi, Habitat Program Manager welcomed the guests to the launch event and spoke about the importance of Sustainable Urban Transport (SUT). Then, Ms. Henriette Vamberg, Director of Gehl Architects in Copenhagen, shared her experiences in planning cities for and by the people themselves. She shared the experiences from Istanbul, Copenhagen and New York City. She also highlighted the need of action while planning for a sustainable city.

Then, Mr. Bhusan Tuladhar from UN-Habitat gave an overview of the Urban Mobility in Kathmandu and shared the current opportunities in Kathmandu which can give a new direction to the scenario if acted reasonably and on time. He also formally launched the MAYA campaign.

In the program, Mr. Tulasi Sitoula, Secretary, Ministry of Physical Infrastructures and Transport said that the government is determined for making Kathmandu a people friendly city, and Mr. Kishore Thapa, Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development said that the ministry is initiating 'Safa Sahar' (Clean City) campaign.

In the program, youths from Kathmandu Cycle City 2020 also handed over their campaign T-shirts to the secretary duo Mr.

Tulsi Sitoula and Mr. Kishore Thapa.

The overall aim of this project is to promote Sustainable Urban Mobility (SUM) in Kathmandu so as to contribute towards the development of cleaner and greener city. These objectives will be met by conducting different activities under the following major pillars: (1) Supporting Government of Nepal in Formulating environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Strategy, (2) Sensitization and Capacity Building of Stakeholders on Sustainable Urban Mobility Issues, (3) Knowledge Sharing (city-to-city learning) and (4) Support City Government on Pedestrianization in Urban Core Areas

# Fact: Air pollution Kills More People than AIDS and Malaria Combined

Michael Graham Richard

Over the past few years, the World Health Organization (WHO), an agency of the United Nations concerned with international public health, has conducted the largest ever global systematic study to find the distribution and causes of a wide array of major diseases, injuries and health risk factors. The group's findings contain all kinds of insights about how much progress has been made in certain areas (compared to 20 years ago, there are fewer deaths from infectious diseases, maternal and child illness and malnutrition), and how much work there is left to do in others.

The statistics about air pollution stood out to me, especially because the victims of air pollution don't get too many headlines.

The latest data shows that there are about 3.5 million deaths a year that are caused by indoor air pollution.

About 3.3 million deaths are caused by outdoor air pollution.

About 0.5 million deaths have been caused by a combination of indoor and outdoor air pollution, so the total number of deaths caused by air pollution is closer to around 6.3 million.

This is about twice as many deaths as previously thought.

According to the U.N., AIDS kills about 1.7 million people a year worldwide and malaria 660,000. This means that air pollution kills more people every year than both of those terrible scourges combined. (This doesn't take anything away from the urgency needed to combat AIDS and malaria, but it should mean that we need to pay more attention to air pollution.)

If nothing is done, it's expected that the number of deaths caused by air pollution worldwide will go up because of rising fossil fuel use. (For example, in 2011, China built as many coal plants as there are in Texas and Ohio combined.)

The good news is that we know what to do to — from replacing dirty electricity sources with clean ones, bringing electricity to the poor or at least providing clean-burning cook stoves (cooking is the #1 source of indoor air pollution), tightening emission regulations and enforcing them, etc. Many areas that used to have terrible air quality have successfully cleaned up their acts. We just need to do it.

Source: [www.mnn.com](http://www.mnn.com) April 26, 2013



## Good Reads:

1. [Time For Comprehensive Urban Transport Policy](#)—Krishna Shrestha, The Rising Nepal, April 2013
2. [Dreams of mobility](#) - Kanak Mani Dixit, The Kathmandu Post, April 12, 2013
3. [Roll Baby Roll](#) - Editorial, My Republica, April 20, 2013
4. [Sajha Bus after 12 years](#) - Salokya, Blog-Post , April, 2013
5. [As Seen In Sajha](#) - Makar Shrestha, Kantipur Daily, April 18, 2013
6. [Is Air Pollution Contributing to hardened Arteries?](#) - Alexandra Sifferlin, Time, April 26, 2013

Compiled by : Krity Shrestha  
Edited by : Anjila Manandhar and  
Prashanta Khanal

**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](http://www.cen.org.np)

[www.cleanairinitiative.org](http://www.cleanairinitiative.org)

## Building Partnership for Clean Air

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](mailto:info@cen.org.np) or [anjila@cen.org.np](mailto:anjila@cen.org.np)

**Clean Energy Nepal**  
POB No. 24581, 140 Bulbule Marg,  
Thapagaun, Baneshwor,  
Email: [info@cen.org.np](mailto:info@cen.org.np)  
Web: [www.cen.org.np](http://www.cen.org.np)  
Tel: 977-1- 4464981