

Clean Air News

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Eight Regional Environmentally Sustainable Transport (EST) Forum in Asia, Ways Forward

Suggestions were made to include or deepen a number of areas in upcoming Regional EST Forums. This includes a possible focus in the specific challenges of Small Island Developing States. This in combination with a focus on maritime transport, which is becoming an increasingly important topic of transport planning for several of countries in the EST region as well as ports.

Progress in the implementation of different components of the Avoid- Shift –Improve approach varies with most progress having been made in the Shift (e.g. public transport) and the improve (e.. fuels and vehicles) components has been made. Future action will have to intensify action on the Avoid (e.g. land use planning, TOD and TDM) will have to be made.

Rural transport was another area identified in discussions as being of importance to promote economic, social and human development including livelihood security of rural communities. Achieving sustainable transport will require that efforts to improve urban and national transport are balance with efforts to improve the sustainability of rural transport

A greater focus on the alignment of poverty alleviation and sustainable transport is considered desirable and to support such better alignment the EST Forum could address this issue in future meetings.

The 8th EST forum confirmed the importance of railways, especially in the context of na-

tional and regional transport. The EST Forum can play a larger role in supporting the renaissance of railways in several parts of EST region and thereby also provide support to the implementation of the Railway Commitment made at the SG Climate Summit in September 2014.

Road safety is human right and human security. Its measures can significantly contribute towards the economic growth, social integration, national productivity and human development. In order to build on the progress made in improving road safety it is important that countries in the EST region increasingly participate in and coordinate with, regional and global processes on road safety.

The Regional EST Forum can also act as the Asian voice on sustainable transport in the global discussions on the SDG's as well as on climate change. A better integration of transport in these processes will help countries and cities in the EST region in accelerating action on sustainable transport and thereby improving the quality of life.

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8th Regional EST...

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An area of continued importance that has not yet received the attention it requires is freight transport and logistics whereby especially green freights is of importance. This requires that efforts to promote dialog on effective

action on green freight be stepped up. Such additional efforts on green freight will link up with the intensified attention on maritime transport and railways.

A new "WALK " Campaign was launched at the integrated conference that nudge people to drive less and walk more; it involves the dissemina-

tion of signs that remind people of the benefits of walking.



Govt to Fix Educational Criteria for Driver: Minister Nidhi

Minister for Physical Infrastructure and Transport, Bimalendra Nidhi, has said the government would bring a new plan to reduce growing road accidents.

At a press meet organized by Nepal Press Union Chitwan Chapter here today, Minister Nidhi said the recklessness of driver is the main cause behind the road accidents. The Ministry was planning to set new criteria for driving, he said, adding that the

driver must pass at least SLC level and cross 25 years before sitting for license exam.

The training to the drivers and their monitoring would be made rigorous, according to the Minister.

Similarly, the vehicles would not be allowed operation in new area without route permit, and the road repair and blacktopping given top priority.

Minister Nidhi admitted that the road construction was not up to the expectation due to the lack of budget. So, the repair and reconstruction of the road would be carried out in cooperation with the donors as World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

Source: www.myrepublica.com, November 10, 2014

House Panel Seeks Bill for Safe Travel

A parliamentary committee on Sunday directed the authorities to table a new Transport Management bill that would focus more on road safety and the rights of passengers.

In the wake of an accident involving two buses at Basamadi-2 in Makwanpur district on Saturday morning, the Development Committee of the House ordered the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport to revise the existing Transport Management Act (1993) and come up with a new bill within two months. Ten people, including a Russian national, were killed and 30 others injured in the accident.

In the meeting, parliamentarians sought explanations on the growing number of road accidents.

Jiwan Shahi, a parliamentarian from Humla, charged traffic police with focussing more on penalising people than disseminating knowledge on traffic rules. Similarly, many other lawmakers demanded that the drivers of vehicles who cause accidents should serve jail terms and get freedom only after paying

additional compensation.

The committee chaired by Rabindra Adhikari had summoned Home Minister Bam Dev Gautam and Home Secretary Surya Prasad Silwal, Transport Minister Bimalendra Nidhi and Secretary Tulasi Prasad Sitaula and Inspector General of Police Upendra Kanta Aryal, among others.

The directives issued by the committee have asked the Home and Transport ministries to end the syndicate practice in the public transport sector and create an environment conducive for passengers to travel safely on reasonable fares.

It has also asked the Nepal Police Headquarters to deploy personnel to inspect the activities of drivers, the condition of vehicles and passenger overload. Similarly, the committee has asked them to conduct patrols on highways and book careless drivers.

Government data show that a majority of accidents are caused by reckless driving followed by speed and mechanical

defects. Responding to queries, Secretary Sitaula said that they had tried in the past to implement minimum educational qualification while issuing driving licences but this was not taken seriously. The committee directed the government on Sunday to enhance the skill of drivers and make them more accountable by regulating licence tests. IGP Aryal said the police will propose a plan to curb accidents and promote road safety. In the past 3 years, 5,440 people have been killed in road accidents while 11,520 critically injured.

Source: www.ekantipur.com, November 3, 2014

Traffic Police to Fine Unruly Pedestrians

Traffic Police has announced to take action on pedestrians crossing roads haphazardly.

After the traffic islands readied for the SAARC Summit got damaged due to reckless stepping by pedestrians, the Metropolitan Traffic Police Division came with a decision to fine Rs 200 to such unruly pedestrians.

“Those crossing road except from overhead bridges and zebra crossings

will face the music,” DIG Keshav Adhikari told Myrepublica, “Rs 200 will be fined and they have to compulsorily attend a class on traffic rules.”

Source: www.myrepublica.com, November 29, 2014

Metropolis to Continue Green Kathmandu Campaign Post SAARC

The Kathmandu Metropolitan City is to continue the 'Green Kathmandu' campaign after the successful conclusion of the 18th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit.

The Metropolis will continue maintenance of the garden created with particular emphasis on the occasion of the 18th SAARC Summit at the road sides with plantation of a varieties of flowers and tree saplings.

The Municipality had spent nearly Rs. 900,000 for flower vessels also while Rs. 1 million for small and big tree saplings

and Rs. 1.3 million for 475 tree fencing.

The flowers, flower vessels and rubbish bins that had been installed previously at the road sides and between the road lanes had been stolen.

The Municipality Spokesperson Shantaraj Pokharel said that the metropolis would give continuity to the campaign in view of its responsibility of keeping the capital city clean and beautiful.

The Municipality had been operating the campaign as its regular procedure along with necessary preparations for the SAARC Summit.

A special sanitary campaign had been launched in all 35 wards of the capital city with an aim to instill a sense of the city's beauty and traditions in the visiting guests .

Source: www.myrepublica.com, November 28, 2014



Photo Courtesy: www.nepalmountainnews.com

India Court Slams Delhi's Worsening Air Pollution

India's environment court has slammed the government over the capital's horrendous air pollution, which it said was "getting worse" every day, and ordered a string of measures to bring it down.

The National Green Tribunal directed all vehicles older than 15 years be taken off New Delhi roads, pollution checks undertaken for all state-run buses and air purifiers installed at the city's busy markets. Environmentalists welcomed the decision, saying policymakers were failing to heed the "emergency" facing the city of 17 million people.

"We applaud the tribunal's urgency on Delhi's pollution which is reaching toxic levels," Chandra Bhushan, deputy director general of the Delhi-based Centre for Science and Environment.

"But the measures need to go further to deal with issues like the 1,000 new vehicles coming on to the roads each day," he told AFP.

"The government has a legal obligation

to introduce the tribunal's measures," he added.

The tribunal hit out at prime minister Narendra Modi's government for failing to provide to the court any "substantive" action plans to tackle Delhi's smog-filled air despite requests.

"Nothing substantive has been suggested ... for providing and controlling air pollution in Delhi primarily resulting from vehicular pollution and burning of plastics and other materials in (the) open," the tribunal said in a ruling on Wednesday.

"It is undisputed and in fact unquestionable that the air pollution of (National Capital Territory) NCT, Delhi is getting worse with each passing day," it said.

The WHO said Delhi had the world's highest annual average concentration of small airborne particles known as PM2.5, following a study this year of 1,600 cities across the globe.

These extremely fine particles of less than 2.5 micrometres in diameter are linked with increased rates of chronic bronchitis, lung cancer and heart disease as they penetrate deep into the lungs and can pass into the bloodstream.

Delhi authorities have disputed the WHO's report and bristled at suggestions the capital was worse than Beijing, where thick smog has triggered public health warnings and concerns that are mostly absent in Delhi.

The tribunal, in a case filed by a lawyer and activist, directed authorities to crack down on burning rubbish in the open, construct cycle tracks and by-passes for heavy vehicles.

Source: www.theguardian.co, 27 November 2014

Good Reads

1. [Clearing the Air](#): Sandhya Regmi, *ekantipur.com*, November 29, 2014
2. [France Falls Out of Love with the Car](#): Jean-Michel Normand, *theguardian.com*, November 9, 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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