



Proceedings

Discussion Program

On

**Should the Policy for electric vehicle
and petrol/diesel vehicle be the
same?**

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Introduction

The Government of Nepal (GoN) has enacted several policies and regulations related to transportation. The Nepal Transport Policy 2001 was formulated to develop a transport system that is sustainable, dependable, less expensive, safe, comfortable and self-reliant. However, the policy mainly focuses on road infrastructures rather than holistic approach of transport management.

With an ambitious target to control city pollution and manage public transportation system in the country, the government is all set to put a ban on public vehicles older than 20 years from February 28, 2017. According to Department of Transport Management (DoTM) officials, an estimated 12,000 vehicles more than 20 years old are currently in Kathmandu Valley.

Transport system is increasingly reliant on imported petroleum products. Kathmandu Valley alone consumed Rs.14.4 billion worth of petrol and diesel in scale year 2010/2011. The Valley consumed 45.5% of total petrol and 15.5% of total diesel sales in Nepal (NRB, 2012), which is largely consumed by transport sector. The total petrol sales in Kathmandu Valley in fiscal year 2012/13 were 90,003 Kl and for diesel were 106,684 Kl.

On the other hand, there are 2,000-plus electric vehicles are currently running on the roads of Nepal from branded model cars and electric bikes to Safa Tempos. In 1993, seven electric three wheelers, locally known as “Safa Tempo” were introduced in Nepal. The number of Safa Tempos, increased significantly after diesel- powered three wheelers was banned in 1999. The Safa tempos are locally produced in Nepal. The introduction of electric vehicles in large masses for public transport is first kind in the world and has been a model for other cities. There are currently 600 Safa tempos operating in 17 routes within Kathmandu Valley, however this number has remained static since 2000 largely because of lack of proper support from the government. These Safa tempos provide environment-friendly mobility to about 100,000 commuters daily.

Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Transport (KSUTP) project has proposed three-tier hierarchy of public transport routes based on the demand and width of the road infrastructures which has envisaged operating higher capacity mass transit service with 12 meter or 18 meter articulated buses with dedicated bus-lanes, 9-10 meter buses in secondary routes providing feeder service to primary routes and low occupancy vehicles such as tempos in tertiary routes.

An inclusive urban transport policy should be devised putting mobility, accessibility, environment friendly and sustainability at the center. The government has decided to ban vehicles more than 20 years old from plying in Kathmandu in this context Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) has planned for a dialogue amongst stakeholders to have a discussion on should the policy for electric vehicle and diesel/petrol vehicle be the same.

Objective

The objective of the program was to understand the views of various stakeholders regarding the decision of government to ban the vehicles more than 20 years old from plying in Kathmandu. In this context the discussion program focused on **“Should the ban of 20-year-old vehicle rule be the same for diesel/petrol vehicle and electric vehicle?”**

Target Participant

The participant included mixed group over 35 of selected government representatives, civil society, networks, academicians, researchers, media person and like-minded groups and individuals.

Program Proceeding

Presentation

The program started with the presentation by Ms. Rassa Manandhar from Clean Energy Nepal on 'General Overview Of Public Transport in Kathmandu Valley'. From the history of transport to policies and current trend of vehicles in Kathmandu, she presented the overview of transport system of Kathmandu valley. She stated that Environment Friendly Vehicle and Transport Policy 2014 have approved and adopted to increase electric vehicle by 20% of total vehicle by 2020. The presentation was followed by the discussion program.

Discussion Program

Moderator: Mr. Manjeet Dhakal

The panelists for the discussion program were;

- Dr. Toka Raj Pandey, Spokesperson, DoTM
- Mr. Deepak Shrestha District Commissioner, Kathmandu Valley Development Authority
- Mr. Lokendra Malla, SP, Metropolitan Traffic Police
- Mr. Umesh Shrestha, President, Electric Vehicle Association Nepal

The discussion was focused on whether it is an appropriate option to remove electric vehicle because of congestion or not. and should there be preferential treatment to electric vehicles compared with other petrol/diesel vehicles?

Mr. Umesh Shrestha informed that due to same policy for all vehicles this issue was put forward in Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Transportation by EVAN. Electric vehicles are expensive than petrol and diesel vehicles because IRR (Internal Rate of Return) is not enough. He said that the technology should be different for different vehicle type. Safa tempo once recharged can run up to 400 to 500 km, which saves 64800l fuel per vehicle. He remarked that using hydroelectricity, we can have sustainable energy source.

New technology like use of Lithium Ferrous Phosphate Batteries which gets charged easily can be used instead of lead acid battery in safa tempos which is energy and environment friendly.



Figure 1 Panelist during the discussion

Mr. Deepak Shrestha stated that electric vehicle is needed for environment conservation. He informed that unlike everything has a expiry date, age of vehicles should be determined. He added, “We need electric vehicle but the ban of 20 years old vehicle should be decided by the experts.”

Mr. Lokendra Malla stated that, “Traffic police are vulnerable to air pollution of Kathmandu hence electric vehicle can help to reduce air pollution as it is zero emission vehicle.” He further added that electric vehicle should be promoted and vehicle emission test should also be carried out effectively.

Dr. Toka Raj Pandey, Department of Transport Management (DoTM), clarified that 20 years old vehicle are restricted to ply on roads of Kathmandu Valley from Falgun 18 and from Falgun 30 out of Kathmandu Valley keeping congestion in mind. Giving the data of increasing number of vehicles along with the increasing population inside the valley, he informed that it is very challenging to manage the traffic congestion in Kathmandu. He stated that 40% of air pollution is due to vehicles and 30% is due to old vehicles. Since, there is no other feasible option, the policy of banning the vehicles has been adopted. ‘It’s today’s need, we should go for mass transportation and small vehicles should be removed’, he added.

Member of parliament, Honorable Kamala Biswokarma and Honorable Madan Amatya also participated in the discussion program. They emphasized on the need of new modified Safa tempos. They assured that the suggestions from this discussion program would be included in policy formulation and NEA should support electric vehicles as well.

Mr. Krishna Gyawali, Ex Secretary of Government of Nepal stated that the Public vehicle is not passenger friendly so it should be upgraded with technology. He remarked that decentralization is important for reduction of congestion in Kathmandu valley. He also stated that safe disposal of batteries should also be addressed. He added more seated Safa tempo is needed to keep up the demand of the city.

Mr. Bijay Man Sherchan, stated there should be two criteria for vehicles to be banned i.e physical state and age of vehicle. He added that ban of the vehicle should depend upon the sticker system rather than their age.

Mr. Ashok Raj Pandey, Nepal electric vehicle industry, stated that air pollution is high in morning and evening time which is unsafe according to WHO standard. Electric vehicle is the suitable technology for Nepal, so, it should not be removed. He further added that if there is no proper planning then such policies can’t be implemented effectively.

Mr. Nabin Devkota, Department of Urban Development and Building Construction, informed that the policy of banning the vehicles can’t be changed at the last moment. Roads are widened due to congestion and technology like safa tempo is not reliable due to its slow speed and.

Mr. Bimal Subedi from KSUTP informed that, as per the plan developed from ADB, vehicles would be distributed in primary, secondary and tertiary route. However, more focus should be on mass transportation.

Mr. Rajan Thapa, Clean Energy Nepal said that, 75% vehicles in Kathmandu Valley are private whereas 3.38% vehicles are public transport. He questioned the government whether the congestion is being caused by private vehicle or public vehicle. He stressed that people centric development should be prioritized than the vehicle centric development

Mr. Hitendra Dev Shakya from Nepal Electricity Authority said petrol/diesel vehicle should not be preferred; instead we should promote electric vehicles. The time period for electric vehicle should be increased at least by 10 years. He also added that innovation should be made in electric vehicles for its promotion like prioritizing usage of Lithium Battery in safe tempo to increase its efficiency.

The discussion program concluded with remarks from Mr. Toka Raj Pandey, DoTM. He stated that citizen should also be aware about the management of traffic congestion. The rules and practices of developed countries can't be compared with the developing country like Nepal. He said that the ban of 20-year-old vehicle is just a message to the public. The main aim is to promote the big public transportation, which will automatically discourage the small vehicles. Since the policy is already formulated it cannot be changed so we should take this as an opportunity.

The program highlighted that mass transportation is important. Electrification is necessary for sustainable transport system. Safe tempo should be rerouted to tertiary routes of Kathmandu Valley. Electric vehicle should be promoted and supported from the policy level as well and preferential treatment is needed for electric vehicles and petrol/diesel vehicles.

Over 50 participants from government, civil society, networks, academicians, researchers, media person and like-minded groups and individuals participated in the program.

Annex

List of Participants

Discussion program on "Should the policy for electric vehicle and diesel/petrol vehicle be same?"					
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