



Environmental



Social

Governance Initiatives

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Report of the second webinar held on 7 August 2020 as part of

“Better Bus Bengaluru”

A campaign initiated by ESG in collaboration with #BengaluruMoving

ESG’s campaign “Better Bus Bengaluru” stepped up into the 2nd webinar today addressing the theme **“Bus from anywhere to anywhere else – Making Bus lanes a priority”**. In this campaign ESG, in collaboration with #BengaluruMoving, is working to develop imaginaries that would ensure this sprawling metropolis’ functionality is enhanced without any further destruction of its greenery, of homes, neighbourhoods and villages, and thus make this city a space of ingenuity moving towards carbon neutral mobility.

Opening the webinar, Mr. Leo Saldanha, Coordinator and Trustee of Environment Support Group shared the intent behind launching the “... is to focus on the humble bus - because it does not get enough attention from Finance, from Governance and even in our own minds”.

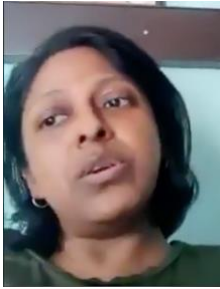


Professor Geetam Tiwari, Professor at Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi and key designer of Delhi’s BRTS, drew attention to unfair priority private vehicles, especially cars, are given over buses on Indian roads. A major concern she highlighted was how policy makers personal experiences influence the decisions they take. “Decision makers at the City, State and National level are all car users. Unfortunately, their personal experiences are extended towards public policy”, observed Professor Tiwari. This structural inadequacy needs to be addressed *a priori*, Prof Tiwari held,

Dr. Usha Rao, urban anthropologist and co-maker of the documentary “*Our Metropolis*”, drew focus to the problematic lack of democratic decision making in large mobility projects like Metros, elevated corridors and flyovers. “Large projects with so much capital riding on them



are not open to public consultation. They have no space for any interrogation or engagement”, asserted Dr. Rao. While acknowledging the aesthetics and functionality associated with the Bengaluru Metro, she drew attention to how in building such mega projects, the destruction and destructive transformation of the existing city is never internalised in public memories.



Ms. Shaheen Sasha, representative of the Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike, discussing the various challenges of bus commuters highlighted how the bus is also becoming increasingly unaffordable. This even when it is the most desired, and accessible, form of public transport. The persistent lack of connectivity and accessibility of buses is something that affects both middle and working class passengers, she argued.

Ms. C. Shikha, IAS, Managing Director of the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transportation Corporation, highlighted some of the key efforts being taken to improve the quality of bus service in the city. There are plans to increase the fleet size from current 6,500 to 8,000 buses, even as she argued at least 10,000 buses are needed for this massive city. There are efforts to integrate cycling with taking a bus and so cycle-rack mounts on buses are being installed. Besides, MyBMTC app is being made more user friendly and also there are conversations to make them inter-modal transport friendly.

In response to Ms. Bhargavi Rao (of ESG) asking what efforts are being taken to make buses safe, secure and accessible to all, the BMTC MD shared: “We are installing cameras and panic buttons in all our buses to ensure safety of women. We are also having training sessions to sensitise our staff on the same.” Ms. Shikha also highlighted the critical importance of making bus lanes available on all roads, and of the need to integrate all public transports as a public service, instead of treating them independent stand-alone profit making ventures.



The panel concluded addressing various questions of the audiend and identified a key need is to integrate all public transport systems (Metro, buses and suburban railways) under a



representative Metropolitan Transport Authority. As Professor Tiwari put it, this would enable them to act as complementary systems rather than competing systems.

Recording of this webinar is accessible at: <https://tinyurl.com/y3ksxly7>

ESG continues “*Better Bus Bengaluru*” campaign with #BengaluruMoving next Friday, 14th August 2020 (4-6 pm on Zoom and Facebook) addressing the theme: **Fearlessly cycle, walk and bus everywhere - Making urban mobility infrastructure accessible to all.**

Register to participate in the next webinar: <https://tinyurl.com/y68jmweb>

For more details of ESG’s “*Better Bus Bengaluru*” Campaign, please visit: <https://bit.ly/esgbbb>

[This report has been prepared by Ashwin Lobo, Research Associate at ESG and Himanshu Umesh, Sneha Ghosh, Satvika Krishnan and Shreya Saxena who are interning at ESG. Leo Saldanha, Coordinator, ESG provided inputs.]

WEBINAR
Bus from anywhere to anywhere else: Making bus lanes a priority

...
07 AUG
4-6 P.M. IST
...

Leveraging the experience of experts to discuss innovative ideas to make our cities faster, smarter and more equitable

MODERATOR
Mr. Leo Saldanha
Trustee, Environment Support Group

PANELISTS
Prof. Geetam Tiwari
Architect of Delhi's BRTS + Professor of Transport Planning + Policy, Traffic Safety, Public Transport + NMV Planning at Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
Dr. Usha Rao
Co-maker of "Our Metropolis"—a documentary about Bangalore's Transformation
Shaheen Sasha
Representative of the Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike
C. Shikha
IAS, Managing Director, Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation