

BRT corridor – News and Views

Hindustan Times, 21-4-08

Traffic snarls, vehicles in wrong lanes, cars jumping lanes, jaywalking and traffic signals that were not working - it was chaos and confusion from the word go on the Bus Rapid Transit Corridor where the trial run began on Sunday morning.

There was no dearth of enforcement authorities on the corridor on Monday — traffic policemen, officials of transport department's enforcement wing, private traffic marshals and even senior transport officials. Every one had a 'hands on' approach on Sunday and were literally pushing cyclists and pedestrians to their lanes and shouting their lungs out at bus drivers and motorists for not using the lanes meant for them. There were heated altercations and even scuffles between marshals and road users due to confusion on how to use the corridor.

The Politics of Mobility, Dinesh Mohan www.india-seminar.com/2007/579/579_dinesh_mohan.htm

BRT serves the purpose of being a low cost, at grade, medium capacity public transport system that can be built quickly and in stages. Surface corridors have bus stops on the surface, promote street business development all along the corridor and not only at large metro stations, and provide eyes on the road (bus passengers and staff). This has the result of reducing crime, increasing socialisation, and thus increases in pedestrian and cycling trips. With segregated bus lanes and provision for bicycling, safety improves, further improving the chances of reduction in motor vehicle use.

If it is not easy for city residents to walk, bicycle or use public transport, they would prefer to use private modes of transport. A public transport user is a pedestrian every time she uses a bus. When too many commuters are dependent on motor vehicle use for their essential needs, the system creates a political demand for greater provision of motor vehicle facilities and road space. This in turn makes it difficult for the political system to be harsh on drivers in terms of speed enforcement and controlling drinking and driving. In such a situation, not only do people tend to use motor vehicle for short trips, but also demand facilities that reduce time for long trips. Such conditions serve to increase exposure of people on roads with less than optimal conditions for ensuring road safety. This is why safety on city streets has become a major concern the world over.

Corridor of Stupidity?

<http://dharakhoh.blogspot.com/2008/04/corridor-of-stupidity.html>

Reason #1 is Delhi's mindset - As much as Delhi wallas depend on private vehicles for commuting due to lack of public transport, driving a car is a status symbol de riguer in

this town. One car per house is mandatory and anything more is just to show off your greenbacks (or Gandhis if you prefer). I have been conducting a mini poll of my own and asked anybody I met (which includes people from all socio-economic strata) if they would like to switch from their cars / bikes to a faster, comfortable bus if given the option. The answer without a single exception was a resounding NO!! I asked them if it was an air-conditioned Metro (subway / tube / underground) train instead and almost 90% were ready to give up their personal vehicles. While it doesn't really prove a point - it just shows the lack of willingness on the part of the users to switch to this mode of transport.

www.cseindia.org/AboutUs/press_releases/press_20080425.htm

Consider:

Delhi already has **21%** of its land area under roads

Between 1996 and 2006 road length increased by **20%**. Cars increased by **132 per cent**

So road space decreased, not increased

In 2001; **8.5 km** available per vehicle

In 2007: **6 km** available per vehicle

This will decrease further as the city adds about 1,000 vehicles each day on its roads. The only option is to make the transition to public transport.

“The BRT corridor will provide space to the over 60 per cent of people in Delhi either travel by bus, or bicycle or walk to work. We know that cars take 75 per cent of the road space, but carry just less than 20 per cent of people. It is time we gave the bus its due space on our roads. Also, an improved bus service will certainly attract more commuters,” added Narain.

“There is no doubt that there have been problems in its implementation. But that does not mean that we should give up on this big idea. We will have to learn from this experience and do even better in the remaining corridor. We believe that Delhi, which is faced with the same problems across all its roads, has no other option but to turn towards solutions like the BRT system. Like the transition to CNG, which also went through a lot of problems before we got benefit of its gain, this transition will also take time,” said Bhure Lal and Narain.

Times of India, 25 April, 2008

NEW DELHI: The patrons of the IIT-Delhi department behind the BRT concept include bus manufacturing majors Volvo and Tatas. Ford owns the Volvo brand and is one of the biggest bus manufacturing companies in the world. TRIPP's patrons also include Telco (now called Tata Motors), a major supplier of buses. Tatas are the only suppliers of low-floor buses in Delhi at present, having bagged the order for the first lot of 500 buses to be supplied to Delhi Transport Corporation. While Ford has funded a chair for the programme, both Telco and VERT have given grants.