Editorial

The year 2013 saw some very negatives as well positives in the NMT sphere. One side the city of joy took a retrogressive step of banning cycling on many of the city roads, on the other side, cities such as Gurgaon and Bangalore took up some really positive measure of car free day and cycle day with the strong support of civil society and government agencies. What was heartening to note was that the media highlighted these stories indicating a rising maturity and increasing awareness on sustainable transport and social issues.

In this annual edition, we have put together some of the interesting views, features and news of 2013. We will strive to bring interesting news from within India and from across the borders too and continue to look forward to your suggestions and patronage.

Happy Reading!
ParthaaB osu
**Interviews**

**Stefan Bakker**

Stefan Bakker is a transportation and climate change specialist working in South East Asia, as the team leader for energy efficiency and climate change mitigation in the land transport sector of ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) region for GIZ (German Society for International Cooperation).

What is a sustainable transport model for Asian countries and what is the role of non-motorised transport (NMT) in the model

For me a sustainable transport model lies in planning road and public space and resources for people rather than cars. The question is whether sustainable transport can be achieved without a large role for NMT. NMT or active transport is fast and convenient for trips up to at least 5 km, which means for many or even most trips. For longer trips, NMT provides access (and last-mile) to public transport. High quality (fast, comfortable and reliable) public transport, both rail and road-based, is the second pillar. Thirdly, in proportion to the users and the benefits it provides the society, convenient facilities for private vehicles, especially in the less-central parts of the urban environment. (Semi) car-free zones can provide a more liveable environment.

Read the rest of the interview: [http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/11/07/2528/](http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/11/07/2528/)

**Brij Sethi**

**Nurturing NMT: Corporate style**

India's vehicular population is growing at a phenomenal pace, more than 12.24 percent in fiscal 2011-12, with most auto giants looking at making India a hub. While automation and vehicular growth is a regular feature in a developing economy like India, how can India leap frog the demerits of a boom in the auto-motor segment?

As a developing economy it is important for people and goods to be able to move towards their opportunities, so the idea should be to provide alternative opportunities for fast, smooth and easy movement of goods and people. For inter-city movement of goods, we should explore faster movement, better scheduling and longer lengths of rolling stock (rail) in addition to looking at inland water ways, where feasible.

For inter-city movement of people, we should continue to build capable highways at full speed and at the same time, encourage public modes of transport by ensuring fast, timely and regular service. It is also important to complement this service with last mile connectivity such as by providing 2 wheeler and bicycle rentals for movement within the urban setup.

For more, please click: [http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/02/19/tete-a-tete-with-brij-sethi/](http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/02/19/tete-a-tete-with-brij-sethi/)
**Prof Geetam Tiwari**

As someone who spearheaded a bicycle master plan for Delhi, what do you think is the relevance of non-motorised traffic in the area of research for design solutions in the country?

The potential is huge. The more number of people who work in this area, the more solutions we will have. That will become easy for the government to implement. The potential is huge, so is the relevance. The concerns in the 21st century are different from those in the 20th century. Therefore, we have to look at an alternate paradigm now because our constraints are different now.

*Prof Geetam Tiwari* teaches transport planning at the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi and is the Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD) chair. Prof Tiwari’s research interests in transportation issues are of special relevance to low income countries.

What long term and short term steps will India have to take to bring back the focus on non-motorised transport (walking, cycling, rickshaws, etc.) and also shift the rising motorized mode share towards NMT?

We already have a large share of NMT. Our challenge is to retain that share because the trend is towards people leaving this mode. In the short term, the concerns would be to address the safety requirement in NMT. In the long term, it would be from the academic level, teaching different paradigms to our students, training engineers to become sensitive to the needs of NMT and coming out with guidelines and design manuals to help practitioners.

**Chandan Roy Sanyal**

*Chandan Roy Sanyal* is an Indian actor, well known for his performances in several Hindi and Bengali films. Born and educated in Delhi, Sanyal’s first film was ‘Rang De Basanti’ and he earned critical acclaim for his role in Hindi thriller ‘Kaminey’. He worked with The Royal Shakespeare Company and has a theatre group in India, called Proscenium. He lives in Mumbai.

*People want to walk, but they need space*

On making India walkable

It would be a revolution if we can make India walkable. Economically and socially, the country was changed through walking. Remember how Mahatma Gandhi walked 390 km from the Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi as a resistance against the British during the freedom movement. Walking was a tradition in India. If we can return to walking, we can save fuel, we can save energy and we can save the environment. The people want to walk, but they need the space. If the government gives them the space to walk, they will be happy.

Read the entire interview: [http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/04/19/people-want-to-walk-but-theyneed-space/](http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/04/19/people-want-to-walk-but-theyneed-space/)
S K Lohia, MoUD

India has a large share of nearly 40 per cent users of non-motorised transport (NMT). In this background, how can the infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists be provided in the country?

The issue is not of money. Had the money been an issue, we would not have been able to build roads and flyovers. The issue is more of understanding and awareness. So the focus has to be right. At present, unfortunately, the focus has still to move from vehicles to people. Through various actions like the comprehensive mobility plan, the parameters for national mission on sustainable habitat, advisories, tool kits and training programmes, we have been trying to raise awareness on NMT.

The National Urban Transport Policy spells out that cities should be designed for people, not for vehicles, yet funds for transport projects go to car-friendly infrastructure and mass transport like metros rather than for last mile connectivity or footpaths. How can we realize NUTP’s vision for cities designed for people?

The NUTP also talks of prioritizing investment in public transport and NMT. It doesn’t say we should forget about non-motorised transport. We take up most of the projects like the Metro, which are all for public transport. The issue is of first mile and last mile connectivity. Henceforth all MRTS and DPRs will be multi-model to include feeder buses, public bike sharing and pedestrianization.

Anumita Roychoudhury

One of the measures recommended by CSE following the Global Burden of Disease Report recently is scaling up non-motorised transport. Would you elaborate?

We cannot deal with our air pollution and public health crisis if we kill our zero emitters. Certainly not now when the new Global Burden of Disease estimates for India has shocked and stunned the world. It has ranked air pollution as the fifth leading cause of death in India. About 620,000 premature deaths a year from air pollution-related diseases virtually works out to be 80 deaths per hour! To this is added the loss of 18 million healthy years of life due to illness. Our cities are not liveable anymore.

We are shocked but not surprised. We know from our air quality data that more than half of our urban population breathes unacceptable level of pollution. Smaller and more obscure cities are among the most polluted in the country. Walking and cycling are part of the solution. The scale of this practice is still very substantial in our cities. This is an opportunity. To read the rest of the interview click: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/03/21/our-right-to-walk-is-non-negotiable/
A look at Bicycling Clubs in India

From the north to the south of India, more and more women and men are slowly yet steadily joining the global biking bandwagon. We have chosen three Indian cities - Gurgaon, Delhi and Cochin - to understand the passion and commitment driving their biking clubs.

Five years after it became Gurgaon’s first biking club, Pedalyatri is today one of the best-known bicycle clubs in India. Founded by Times Internet Chief Editor Rajesh Kalra along with his three friends, it has grown to a present strength of 600 members. A motley group of students, doctors, journalists, lawyers and corporate executives, Pedalyatri has members who use bicycles to go to office everyday. “We have members who never drive a car,” says Kalra. Safety is a top priority for Pedalyatri, which insists on its members using helmet, reflective clothing, front and rear lights and gloves. No wonder then that the club’s motto is: ‘To cycle and cycle the right way”. Pedalyatri’s efforts to help inexperienced cyclists are laudable. For the rest of the article click: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/01/14/a-peek-at-cycling-clubs-of-delhi-and-kochi

Institutionalising Encroachment

Providers becoming the snatchers

One of New Delhi’s imposing avenues, the Lodhi Road is a dangerous zone for pedestrians due to encroachment of pavement by several institutions for parking vehicles. Lodhi Road, part of the Lutyens Zone, has the famous Lodi Gardens and several cultural institutions. The road begins from Safdarjung’s Tomb, a major tourist attraction, and ends at the Humayun’s tomb, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Road remains an eyesore on the Indian capital’s traffic scheme. The reason: encroachment of pavement by massive power generators and number of cultural institutions for parking vehicles, making the avenue dangerous for walkers at some stretches. Are the institutions listening? To read the rest of the article click: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/04/19/institutionalizing-encroachment/

How to start a cycle share system

Urban centres around the world are dedicating a slice of their streets and transportation infrastructure to the friendliest mode of getting around—bicycles. By keeping brand new bikes at major city nodes to help people commute easily and comfortably, these sharing programmes extend high quality and in some cases free transportation combined with the best of modern technology. Information Technology, a term India loves because of her status as the software superpower, is the key in the bicycle-sharing systems, which uses technology to help users pick and drop their bikes at any points they want with only the click of a button. To read more click on http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/06/20/how-to-start-a-cycle-share-system-in-your-neighborhood/
Delhi Government wakes up to transit-oriented development program to ensure women’s safety

The plan’s objective is to increase individual access to Delhi’s expanding Metro rail and public bus network. Well-designed streets and neighborhoods are vital to securing women’s safety in public places. The so-called transit-oriented development (TOD) program was notified quietly as protests raged in the city over the brutal torture and gang-rape of a 23-year-old student inside a moving private bus on 16 December. Read more: http://cleanairinitiative.org/portal/node/11590

1.24 million people die every year in road accidents

The Global status report on road safety 2013 indicates that worldwide the total number of road traffic deaths remains unacceptably high at 1.24 million per year. Only 28 countries, covering 7% of the world’s population, have comprehensive road safety laws. The report reveals that pedestrians and cyclists apart from 2 wheeler users form the majority of the fatality group. Over a third of the victims in low and middle income countries are pedestrians. Read More: http://www.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/78256/1/9789241564564_eng.pdf

Cycle rickshaws save over a million liters of fuel in Punjab

A common man’s transport mode, more than 3 lakh cycle rickshaws help 6 million people commute to their destinations every day without spewing any toxic emissions. The cycle rickshaw is a source of income for 16 lakh persons and 3.2 lakh urban poor families of Punjab. Of the 5.5 crore commuter trips recorded in the state, 6 million are by the cycle rickshaws. It is undoubtedly the safest mode of transportation with the least number of accidents as compared to other modes. Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/10/20/cycle-rickshaws-save-almost-a-million-liters-of-fuel-in-punjab/

Kolkata: Cyclists demand reversal of ban

Dozens of cyclists, members of the group ‘Ride 2 Breathe (R2B)’, assembled at Victoria Memorial early on Sunday morning to protest against the decision to ban cycles in the city. They rode down from all over the city - Rajarhat, Kasba, Sinthee and Alipore - to show their stand against the decision, pointing out the imminent environmental damage if more and more commuters depended on smoke-belching buses and cabs. The worst sufferers of the ban would be vendors and daily-wage workers, they said. Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/09/03/kolkata-cyclists-demand-reversal-of-ban/

Bangalore kick starts monthly ‘cycle day’

Bengaluru (Bangalore) kicked off the Cycle Day campaign with its first event, Feel Bengaluru Cycle Day at Cubbon Park. With close to 1200 cyclists in attendance, the Mayor of our city opened the event by ceremonial inauguration of a new cycle stand at Cubbon Park. He then led all the cyclists off on a 1-km ceremonial kick off ride till the Central Library. After this, all the cyclists rode together on a 5-km rally around Cubbon Park touching several heritage spots along the way. Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/11/11/bangalore-kicks-off-cycle-day/
Mapping the City Better for Cyclists and Walkers

Transport planners, architects, social NGOs, development agencies, students and teachers came together at the beautiful Sanskriti Kendra in Indian capital New Delhi, for a mapping exercise aimed at understanding how transport points served walkers and cyclists so that solutions could be found out to make walking and cycling in cities safer and comfortable. Hosted by Clean Air Asia with the support of the ‘Steer to Safety’ campaign of PVR Nest, the corporation social responsibility arm of multiplex chain PVR Limited and an NGO, the exercise was conducted by a team representing University of Michigan, USA’s SMART (Sustainable Mobility & Accessibility, Research & Transformation).

Led by Susan Zielinski, M.D of SMART, the half-day mapping exercise was attended by over 30 participants, who were divided into three teams to give a balanced background. In the exercise, the participants were asked to look at a map to understand how the different transport points such as metros, bus stops, auto stands and cycle rickshaw stands are connected. The exercise enabled them to realize how the transport points could be better connected and what the possible improvements are.

Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/09/17/mapping-a-city-better-for-cyclists-and-walkers/

Dial a Cycle Rickshaw

In June 2008, the Fazilka town in India’s north-western state of Punjab began an experiment with its rickety local transport system by adding cycle rickshaws that a person could hail by dialling a phone number. Eco Cabs, as the ‘Dial a Rickshaw’ project was called, went on to transform the way people travelled in the town with a population of 67,000. Within three years, Eco Cabs won the Indian government’s Rs. 500,000-award for the Best Urban Non-Motorised Transport model in the country.

Last month, Eco Cabs launched the service in the Union Territory of Chandigarh. Christened ‘Rapid Rickshaw Transit’, the facility will be available to the residents of 30 of Chandigarh’s 56 sectors to begin with. Eco Cabs, which made the air of Punjab cleaner by drawing people out of their cars, will now try to repeat its success in Chandigarh, the most well planned city in India. Along with the dial service, ‘Rapid Rickshaw Transit’ has also added a mobile application to help commuters get a rickshaw faster and easier.

Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/09/05/dial-a-cycle-rickshaw/
Suwon: Residents applaud car free month
Residents in the South Korean city of Suwon have just spent a month without cars. Organizers and participants say the project could be a model for city life in the future. A joint initiative between the Germany-based International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) and the city of Suwon, the EcoMobility World Festival is forcing residents here to go car-free for a month. It’s a project aimed to show the world that you don’t really need a car to survive in a city. Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/09/30/in-suwon-citizens-applaud-car-free-month/

Bike to work day
Plenty of people cycle to their offices every day, and more than a few hard-working D.C. residents made to work from home because their company doesn't provide an office get around town during the day by bike, but today is special. It's Bike to Work Day, the annual event in which the area's cycling advocates encourage folks to use their bikes for commuting. More than 14,000 people are signed up to participate in Bike to Work Day, according to the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. For more: http://dcist.com/2013/05/today_is_bike_to_work_day.php

Kathmandu: Paved Sidewalks in Central Areas
The Government has stepped up efforts to improve road around the historical sites and tourist routes in Kathmandu. In order to promote walking culture and also enhance the aesthetic beauty of the commercial and historic sites in the inner areas of Kathmandu, the Government has decided to develop stone paved sidewalks and convert several streets into pedestrian walkways. As part of the Kathmandu Sustainable Urban Transportation Project (KSUTP), the Kathmandu Metropolitan City is set to develop 7.5 kilometers of stone paved footpath on both sides of the road in the inner areas with the help of the ADB. The KMC has decided to develop 3.6m wide sidewalks along the road stretches in Kantipath, Tipuroshwar, Thapathali, Putalisadak, Sahid Gate and Durbar Marg. Read more: http://walkabilityasia.org/2013/09/12/kathmandu-paved-sidewalks-in-central-areas-to-enhance-walking/