

Agartala suffering from slow mobility

AGARTALA, Sept 6: Even as Agartala was trying to address its pollution problem, it has fallen in the pincer grip of mobility crisis and speed of movement of vehicles has been reduced to almost one-fourth of what it was five years ago. According to the report of the CSE's 10th Media Fellowship on JNNURM carried out in Agartala along with 10 other mission cities, mobility of the city has become as low as eight to 24 kms per hour while the speed profile revealed that about 40 per cent of the road lengths have speed less than one km per hour.

The study blamed the short-sighted policy and over dependency on bureaucracy for the crisis rather than the urban planners and techno-

crats. More than 60 per cent of the city's roads have been congested and pedestrians do not have any space to walk, the report pointed out.

"Agartala is hurtling towards a congestion nightmare and untamed energy guzzling because of growing dependence on personal motorized vehicles, which virtually are marginalizing more sustainable public transport system," the report underlined and added that a project on road and traffic signaling system in the city at a cost of Rs 261 crore was submitted early this year under JNNURM after four years, which was supposed to end in March 2012. On an average day about 90,000 vehicles enter and exit Agartala.

About 50 per cent of the

road length was revealed to have width of 8-10 metres. High congestion was seen in some of the traffic nodes due to improper road geometry. In Agartala pedestrian volumes are very high on major roads. At present footpaths on both sides of the road have been encroached upon by hawkers.

The report attributed that Agartala does not have any space to increase the width of the road for more personal vehicles, two-wheelers and cars. Due to slow speed and high parking space requirement, cycle rickshaws are being considered as the primary causes of congestion in Agartala. The state government has not been able to do anything effective, the study underlined. (UNI)