

Badly planned city offers wrong travel choices

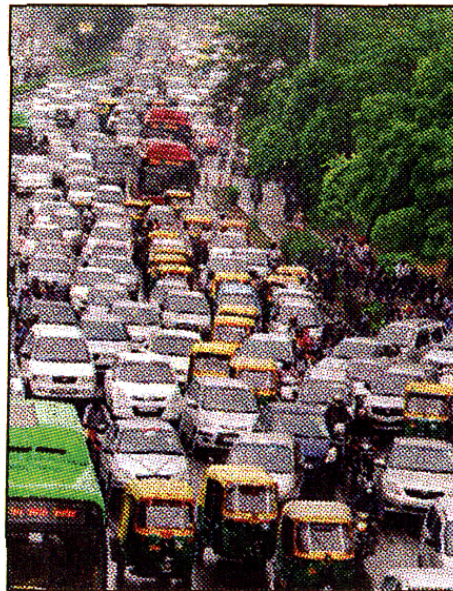
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Transport contributed almost half of the carbon dioxide in the city and if nothing is done about it, then the gas emissions will rise by a massive 526% by 2030, says a study by Delhi IIT. Experts also say that Delhi government's focus on car-centric infrastructure in the form of flyovers and signal-free corridors, is adding more vehicles on the roads.

At a conference on transport and climate organized by the Centre for Science and Environment, experts said that badly designed cities promote the wrong travel choices, in the form of personal vehicles, which is highly detrimental to the environment.

Delhi is suffering from poor planning. As more and more flyovers and roads are being added to the capital, the number of vehicles, especially private ones, have recorded an exponential growth. The road network went up from 28,508 km in 2000-01 to 32,663 km in 2011. The number of vehicles went up from 31.64 lakh in 1999-2000 to 74 lakh in 2011-12.

CSE says that the urban design of Delhi has led to an increase in travel distances. "Delhi has the most sparsely populated central core compared to all prominent global



FOCUS ON CAR-CENTRIC INFRASTRUCTURE

cities. New Delhi's density is more than six times lower than the core regions of New York and Madrid. Delhi has a population of about 17 million, about 1% of which lives in Lutyen's Delhi," it adds.

Since density control bars more construction in the core area, travel distances and car dependency have increased. Improved planning in the core and in-

creased density can free up a lot of valuable urban land also in the hinterland.

Research shows that a walking trip replaced by a car trip near the Nehru Place flyover, because of the detours, can lead to as much as 434 gm/person trip of carbon dioxide emissions.

In Gurgaon, replacement of direct walking access to metro stations at IFFCO Chowk or MG Road can increase walking distance by as much as 800m. If replaced by a motorable trip, travel distance increases by almost 5 times and the resultant gas emissions go up to 504 g/person trip.

Sunita Narain, CSE's director general said: "We often tend to ignore the design of the city when we talk of urban issues. How we design our cities decides how we travel to our offices and homes. Getting the design of the urban space right is crucial especially now when India is urbanizing very rapidly, promoting sprawl, making gated communities, forcing longer travel distances and putting enormous pressure on farmlands."

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