**Why talk about**

Because the parking lot is full! There is no space left around. The pavements on which you may walk to school are blocked with parked cars... and because the private cars parked along the school (after its over) create a kind of jam everyday.

With over a 1000 vehicles being registered in a city like Delhi everyday, soon we would be left with no space to park our vehicles (there's already a crisis). The only option is to park these vehicles on public land thereby encroaching on pavements, roads, parks, in front of people's houses, virtually any public space available.

Excuse me... what would the public walk on if all public spaces are gone? Is that the only problem... Let's explore

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**Gobar Gyan:**
Most of the vehicle owners in cities park their vehicles on public land in front of their houses. Interestingly, nobody pays as it is in front of their house. The result—along with rows of houses, we also have rows of vehicles parked, which eat up the buffer on alleys and service lanes, making them more congested. It's difficult even to play street cricket these days as there are cars and vehicles all over. Let's find out if you can play cricket in your colony.

**Activity:** If you own a vehicle—a car or two-wheeler or your neighbour has one. Do this survey in your colony.

- Where do/does your neighbour park the car/ two-wheeler?
  - [ ] Inside the house compound
  - [ ] Outside the house on public space
  - [ ] Car parking on the ground floor
  - [ ] Public space—Common parking in the colony
  - [ ] Others ____________

Take a simple measuring tape and find out the area occupied by your car/two-wheeler when it's parked. Just find out the length and breadth and multiply to find the area.

Area used for parking: ____________ sq. m

Find out the approximate number of vehicles in your city and estimate the amount of space occupied by them.

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Hi! I am Pandit Gobar Ganesh.
You will find me in Gobar Times—a magazine that tells you how your everyday life is linked to the world around you. Hooked, huh? If you want to know more about me and GobarTimes visit us at www.gobartimes.org
Interview at least 10 friends in your class and ask them about the place where they park their vehicles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of parking</th>
<th>No. of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parking on public space</td>
<td>__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal parking</td>
<td>__________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>__________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can also ask your friends to measure up the space occupied by their vehicles and find out the average space required by a vehicle.

Gobar Facts:
- A typical vehicle stays parked 95% of the time i.e 22.8 hours in a day.
- A typical vehicle requires reserved space at three different points:
  i. At home: where it is to be parked for the night
  ii. On the road: so that it can move
  iii. At office: for parking during office hours

And if someone else takes this reserved space, there are arguments and fights. Find out if there are any major problems regarding parking in your colony.

Activity: Talk to the President of the Resident Welfare Association of your colony or any senior person living in the locality for more than 10 years. Ask him/her the following questions:

Name of the President: _______________________________________

How many vehicles does he own: _______________________________________

Is the parking in the colony sufficient for residents?

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Are there any problems relating to parking among residents? If yes, what are the reasons for the same

____________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Is any parking fee charged from the residents? If yes, How much?

____________________________________________________________________________________

Gobar Gyan: Most of our cities were never built for such numbers of private vehicles. Experts believe that demand for parking is infinite and no amount of supply can meet it. Then what's the answer?

Some believe that people must be asked to prove they have space to park their vehicle in their house before their vehicles are registered. Others believe that vehicle owners should pay to government for parking vehicles even in front of their houses – it would be a disincentive towards owning a car and thus people may start using public transport. But the public transport system needs to improve (That’s another story but atleast start putting disincentives on something).
Experts believe that the parking fees even at commercial spaces are too low to discourage people from using cars. The worldwide trend now is to use high parking fees to deter the use of cars in cities and thereby relieving city roads of congestion and lowering air pollution.

**Activity:** Let’s try and find answers to the same from all the stakeholders:

The parking attendant: Go to a nearby parking lot and interview the parking attendant

Name: _____________________________________________

Ask him how much does he charge for a car and a two-wheeler?

Car: _________________________________  Two Wheeler: __________________________________

Did he ever hike the parking fee? If yes How much? Did it work. If not, then ask him, what would happen if the fee is hiked?

______________________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________________

Is the area big enough or does his parking lot get full at times? What times?

______________________________________________________________________________________

Your parents/neighbours: Ask your parents or your neighbours, if they would be ready to pay to the government for parking vehicles in front of their houses. What was their reaction?

______________________________________________________________________________________

Traffic policeman: Try and catch a traffic policeman/woman off duty and ask him about his opinion about the issue of parking. What are his comments

______________________________________________________________________________________

**Gobar facts:** What are other countries doing about the parking problem?

- Public parking fee was increased in Bogota, Colombia and private companies were allowed to charge as much in parking fees as they wanted. This created additional revenue, which was dedicated to road maintenance and public transport.
- Extremely high parking fee and conscious limiting of parking space has dampened car ownership phenomenally in New York.

After having interviewed so many people and collecting information. What do you think Indian cities should do to solve the problem. Don’t bother what the experts say, write your own opinion—may be you can find a solution.

______________________________________________________________________________________

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If you found the activity sheet interesting, E-mail us at eeu@cseindia.org or write to: Activity Sheet, Centre for Science and Environment, 41 Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi-110062 or Call 29955124 Extension 219