दुर्गा शंकर मिश्र
सचिव
Durga Shanker Mishra
Secretary

भारत सरकार
आवासन और शहरी कार्य मंत्रालय
निर्माण भवन, नई दिल्ली—110011
Government of India
Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi-110011

D.O.No.K-14011/13/2018-UT-I

June 02, 2020

Dear Chief Secretary,

Sub: **Advisory on the measures to be taken by States/ UTs/ Cities/Metro Rail companies in view of Covid-19 for providing Urban Transport Services.**

The coronavirus outbreak is an unprecedented disaster in its sheer scale and loss. This pandemic is putting an incredible strain on public transit systems. With the gradual and phased lifting of the lockdown in India and re-start of economic activities in many areas across the country, there is a definite need for mobility services to resume for transportation of people to jobs, educational institutions, factories etc.

2.   Ministry have made several rounds of consultations with subject matter experts, industry, operators, World Bank and other eminent transport experts in the country and other parts of world, who have clearly outlined that there will be change in characteristic of urban mobility post COVID-19. Based on the discussion, following concerns emerged, which needs to be addressed:

a) Recommencement of public transport with all precautionary measures of social distancing, sanitization regime etc; and

b) Reinventing environment friendly transport mode like Non Motorized Transport (NMT) to move people around with some degree of self reliance in view of likely increase of private vehicle on road, which has lower risk of spread of COVID-19; and

c) Use of cash and tickets could be potential transmitter of COVID-19 in Public Transport. Therefore, this needs to be discouraged and to be replaced by cashless transaction specially switching to National Common Mobility Card (NCMC)

d) Developing Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for operation of public transport system like buses, BRTS, Metro etc to address the requirements to curtail spread of COVID-19 infection.

Office Address: Room No. 122 'C' Wing, Nirman Bhawan, New Delhi-110011
Tel.: 011-23062377, 23061179; Fax: 011-23061459; Email: secyurban@nic.in
Website: www.mohua.gov.in

3.   In this background, my Ministry has devised three pronged strategy for public transport in the form of short, medium and long term Advisory. This Advisory may be used as an opportunity to make new interventions to provide people a safe, technology driven, self-reliant and less polluting urban transit system.

4.   I am enclosing the Advisory with this letter to share with cities/ towns having hundred thousand plus population, metro rail system or other urban transport system like buses, BRTS etc. This Advisory has also been uploaded on the Website of my Ministry. I hope this Advisory will be useful for cities and towns in your State/ UT for urban transport planning and operation in post COVID-19 scenario.

5.   I would further request to kindly make it part of your regular periodic reviews with Urban Development / Transport Department for its quick and effective implementation.

Regards,

Yours Sincerely

(Durga Shanker Mishra)

Encl: As Above

Chief Secretaries of all States / UTs

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Administrator, UTs of Chandigarh / Daman & Diu / Lakshadweep / Dadra & Nagar Haveli / Ladakh

Advisory on the measures to be taken by States/ UTs/ Cities/Metro Rail companies in view of Covid-19 for providing Urban Transport Services

COVID-19 pandemic has suddenly impacted our way of life and that of our local, regional and global transport systems. Evidence shows that there is a steep drop in public transport ridership volumes by 90%. Further, it has been observed that there is upto 60%[1] reduction in air pollution. Re-establishing the earlier level of ridership in public transport is a big challenge for cities, as people may be looking for more options specially personal modes that allow for safer travel in the post lockdown scenario.

2. In order to avoid resurgence of car and other private vehicle usage, many cities around the world have encouraged e-ticketing, digital payments and reallocating street space for cycling and pedestrians through street closures, creating Non-Motorized Transport (NMT) priority zones, pop-up bike lanes & sidewalks, providing parking and charging equipments and financing options to make cycling more accessible. Some of the important initiatives taken recently in view of COVID-19 to promote NMT by these cities are as follows:

- New York has added 40 miles of new NMT lanes to support cyclists;
- Oakland, USA has closed 10% of its streets for motor vehicles;
- Bogotá, Colombia has added 76 km of cycle overnight;
- In Milan, Italy, 22 miles of streets has been transformed to cycling lanes
- Auckland, New Zealand has removed on-street car parking and built up 17 km of temporary bike lanes in addition to widening of existing bike and foot paths. Also, city has developed a program to fund pop up bike lanes;
- Promotion of bike sharing in China has led to 150% increase in trips nationwide during lockdown; and
- In UK, local businesses relocate road space for pedestrians to allow residents to respect social distancing guidelines, while queuing outside shops

3. Various studies conducted by MoHUA shows that about 16-57%[2] of urban commuters are pedestrian and about 30-40%[3] of commuter use bicycles in the

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[1] World Bank
[2] http://mohua.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/NMSH_UT_Parameters_DRAFT.pdf
[3] Traffic & Transportation Policies and Strategies in Urban Areas in India, MoHUA, 2007

country depending on the size of the city. Considering this as an opportunity, elevating the priority of these modes in this testing times gives travellers another private vehicle alternative, which is clean, safe, secured particularly, if it is integrated with other modes and affordable for all. This area is one of the thrust areas of National Urban Transport Policy-2006 [NUTP-2006]. It will also generate employment opportunity for the work force in NMT industry.

4. India has a robust 700 Kms of operational metro rail in 18 major cities and a BRT network of about 450 kms operational in 11 cities across the country carrying 10 million passengers daily. But due to the social distancing norms being practiced, their capacities would be utilised at 25 to 50 percent of pre-coronavirus levels[4]. Such dramatic and dynamic changes in demand and supply will require complementing these public transport systems with alternative modes of transit.

5. MoHUA has undertaken several rounds of discussions with the subject matter experts, Industry experts, operators, World Bank and other eminent urban transport experts in the country and other parts of world, who have clearly outlined, that there will be change in characteristic of urban mobility post COVID-19. With a sense of insecurity in the minds of the public in travelling in public transport during these testing times, in all possibilities, there will be increase in number of private vehicles on road, which will not only create pollution but eat away space for other modes of public transport besides adversely affecting road safety and increase air pollution level and serious congestions on the roads.

6. However, in India, where ownership of personal modes is still at relatively low level and a large majority of public transport users are captive users with limited transport options, providing safe and reliable mobility options for these users will be a priority for cities, especially those that can no longer be catered owing to the capacity constraints imposed by social distancing. Public transport, both buses and metro, form the backbone of many cities, and with more than halving of capacity, cities will need to ensure alternative mobility options to keep their cities moving as the economies restart.

7. Taking the above in cognizance, a three-pronged strategy is advisable which the cities/States/UTs may adopt in a phased manner [**Short (within 6 months), Medium (within 1 year) & Long term(1-3 years)]** as follows:

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[4] https://blogs.worldbank.org/endpovertyinsouthasia/rethinking-indias-public-transport-after-covid-19-lockdown-over

i. **Encourage & Revive Non-Motorised Transport (NMT)-** As most of the urban trips are clocked in under five kilometres, NMT offers perfect opportunity to implement in this COVID 19 crisis as it requires low cost, less human resource, easy & quick to implement, scalable and environment friendly.

ii. **Recommencing Public Transport with greater confidence of Commuters-** Public transport is the backbone in urban areas specially for the low/middle income commuters for which these services are the mainstay of their daily transit needs. However, it is imperative at this stage that transmission of infection through usage of public transport should be curbed by adopting the right sanitization, containment and social distancing measures.

iii. **Active utilization of technology to curb the spread of virus-** Enabling technologies such as Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), indigenous cashless and touch less system like BHIM, Phone Pe, Google Pay, PayTM etc. and National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) will reduce human interaction, in operations of public transit systems.

8. COVID-19 has given us opportunity to visit different Public Transport options and come out with solutions, which are green, pollution-free, convenient and sustainable. Such a strategy has to give major focus on Non-Motorised Transport and Public Transport with use of technology in a big way for making all kinds of payments before or during the transit and providing information system to commuters. Even the shopping area should and gradually be pedestrianised to decongest them and make them more accessible to public for a pleasant and safe experience.

The details of each strategy mentioned above is outlined in the **Annexure-A.**

Strategy	Short (6 months)	Medium (one year)	Long (1-3 years)
1. **Encouraging & Reviving Non-Motorised Transport**	• Map the important routes connecting residential areas from where large number of people travel and major centres of work. • Create temporary pedestrian areas, footpath and cycle lanes such as barricades, removable tape, cones, road markings/painting and mobile signs on the identified corridors/areas. • Encourage closure of one or more lanes or shopping streets to promote higher walking and cycling trips for a specific time or day. • Cone off part of road outside big retail outlets to follow social distancing. • Signage to be displayed at	• Create or Adopt policies, guidance and regulations regarding pandemic management • Enforce hygiene norms & social distancing • Create a Master Plan • Create permanent interconnected infrastructure which includes exclusive walking and cycling lanes, walkways and wide footpaths, cycling tracks, interconnected parks and resting areas and set speed limit[1] • Continuous monitoring of measures taken to promote NMT • Remove encroachments and parking from footpaths and cycle tracks. • Provision of adequate streetscape and furniture (tree cover/ shade, benches, public convenience, streetlights). • Reconfigure signal timings to reduce	• Cashless E-booking of bicycle shall be ensured by various means such as National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) or other mobility cards, apps. etc. • Dedicated and controlled hawker zones along the footpath and vehicle parking could be restricted to encourage these stalls • Strict regulation and disincentives/ fines from vehicles entering in NMT lanes/ zones/area • Repair, maintenance and widening of existing footpaths (wherever applicable) • Provision of parking/ waiting areas for cycle rickshaws/

[1]Guidance document: http://mohua.gov.in/cms/sustain-sutp-NMT.php and http://mohua.gov.in/cms/sustain-sutp-PBS.php

Strategy	Short (6 months)	Medium (one year)	Long (1-3 years)
	prominent location cautioning passengers to follow rules of COVID 19 • Regular cleaning of footpath, street furniture, street lights, cycle tracks and roads • Develop communication plan to build trust • Develop plans to leverage digital solutions • Identify Innovative ideas to promote NMT • Create Annual Budget allocation and human resources	waiting time at intersections. • Building public awareness about the benefits of walking/cycling across agencies (in transport/ others, local leaders, influential citizens etc. across agencies) on benefits of these initiatives and integrated planning, execution. • Installation of camera, speed monitors, vehicle counters along NMT infrastructure	PBS near transit stations, bus stops, public spaces, neighbourhood markets, education institutes and residential complex. • Closely monitor the system • Create mechanism for carbon credit system/ carbon tax benefit for cyclists. • Walkability and road safety assessment
2. Recommencing of Public Transport with greater confidence of Commuters	• Develop preparedness plan/guidance/ training documents • Reduce services in places with high COVID incidence • Rearrange the seating capacity keeping in mind the social distancing • Markings be made for queuing of the passengers at all relevant places • Clear and frequent communication with commuters /staff on do's/ don't before and after and during the trip	• Enforce hygiene norms & social distancing • Implement preparedness plans dynamically • Preventing guidelines to be issued by each operating agency and communicate it clearly to staff and commuters • Continuously monitor situation and limit risk exposure • Implement NCMC and Promote contact less payment • Undertake capacity building for service providers (especially informal sector) in terms of safety precautions, customer	• Rapidly increase PT capacity to reduce crowdedness • Encourage e-ticketing/ digital payments for the journey and suspension of cash transactions • Build the database to understand the mobility patterns post COVID-19. • Control and maintain quality implementation of policies, guidance and regulations regarding hygiene and sanitation norms • Establish sustainable funding based on customer centric

Strategy	Short (6 months)	Medium (one year)	Long (1-3 years)
	• Set up an emergency helpline number for prevention against COVID-19. • Ensure personal protection by equipping staff facilities with necessary supply and reduce contacts • Compulsory use of face mask and provision of sanitizers/gloves at multiple locations • Regular sanitization of rolling stock, stations and employee areas/ rooms on daily basis • Encourage short trips to be shifted to NMT trips especially on busy corridors by not allowing the passengers to exit in less than 3 stations of travel. • Setup a Staff Health Committee (SHC) to keep the status of Health of the staff and their family members • Develop plans for bus fleet expansion • Institute measures to physically separate between driver and passengers.	behaviour, response mechanism, etc. • Adjust operational models and Re-routing/ re-organizing the routes and services • Comprehensive impact assessment to understand the post-lockdown public transport travel demand • Prepare plans focussed on cost intensive mass rapid transit system such as Metrolite[2] or rubber tyred based Metro Neo (Attached) as per the Metro Rail Policy 2017. • PBS stands may be put up at all major bus stations/interchanges to facilitate the last mile movement of passengers. • Relief packages to support operators and scale up efficient supply • Parking at metro stations may be initially stopped to curb large gathering at such locations	action plans • Develop schemes for consolidation of fragmented urban bus operators
3. Active utilization	• Aarogya Setu app should be	• Implement NCMC in all modes of public	• Contactless access to AFC

[2] http://mohua.gov.in/upload/whatsnew/5d2c1268929e3standard%20specification%20LURTS-Metrolite.pdf

Strategy	Short (6 months)	Medium (one year)	Long (1-3 years)
of technology to curb the spread of virus	mandated for usage of any public transport system • Dissemination of Information for passengers through various channels. Posters, operators' websites, ticket applications, PA systems, Aarogya Setu App/ etc. • Create ITS plan to make better informed decisions, when to travel, which route to take and which mode to take i.e. bus, metro, car or intermediate public transport	transport (formal & informal) • Encourage e-ticketing/ digital payments card for the journey • Leveraging digital data to provide route and service information and information on passenger loads can be displayed to customers to indicate the crowdedness of every service. • Implement ITS plan and monitored closely • To increase natural ventilation and reduce the risk of infection, window vents in buses may be retrofitted to air-conditioned fleets, if required.	through QR code • Implement Home-grown cashless and touch less systems • Facilitate digital platforms to anticipate, diagnose and solve challenges.