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सचिव भारत सरकार
Secretary to the Government of India

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D.O. No.K-14011/1/2013-UT-I

14th January, 2013

Dear Chief Secretary,

Urban transport is among the top challenges for cities due to its impact on economic vibrancy, environmental sustainability and quality of day to day life. However, provisioning of urban transport services has not kept pace with urbanization leading to rise in number of personal vehicles, increased congestion, air pollution, higher incidents of accidents as well as increasing consumption of petroleum products, not only in major cities but also in many of smaller cities and towns. The pace of urbanization is posing an unprecedented managerial and policy challenge.

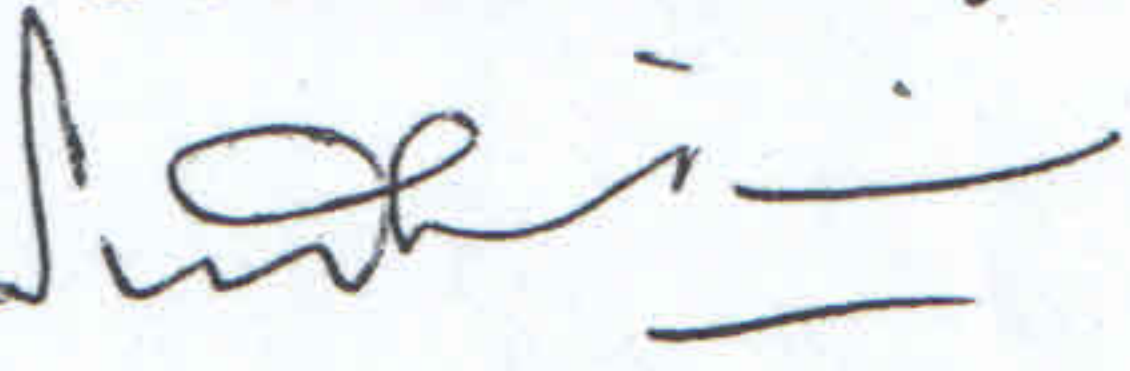
2. Most of the cities, specially small and medium size cities, today have informal public transport through shared auto-rickshaws, tempos, vikrams etc. which is highly polluting, totally unorganized, unsafe and passenger unfriendly. In this connection, I would like to draw your attention to the initiatives taken by a medium city in the NCR region called Alwar in Rajasthan. They have shown the way forward by launching a project called "The Alwar Vahini" on 3rd December, 2011. Alwar Vahini is a passenger service (of Euro IV compliant Vehicles for about six passengers) which has replaced the old polluting autos, tempos and vikrams with the joint efforts of various organizations like the RTO, lead bank (PNB), UIT Alwar, UIT Bhiwadi and Deputy Registrar Co-operative with the District Administration playing the coordinating role.

3. The most impressive feature is that a modern, comfortable, safe, organized and self sustainable public transport system has been implemented without any financial outgo from the Government. The Alwar Vahini strength has already reached 1310 vehicles now from 58 at the launch and has aimed to have 2200 vehicles shortly. It has not only improved their public transport service, but has generated 3000 plus jobs also. The mobility of people has increased and there is a tremendous shift from private vehicles to Alwar Vahini public transport. The Administration has launched a website www.alwarvahini.com, a Mahila Alwar Vahini, a city taxi service with Alwar Vahini Helpline number. The city Administration has taken various other steps to make Alwar Vahini more attractive and acceptable to public. A brief write-up on Alwar Vahini is enclosed with this letter. It will be important to destroy the old polluting autos / vikrams / tempos once they are replaced by Euro-IV compliant vehicles.

4. 'Alwar Vahini' is a model worth emulating in all cities, and specially small and medium size cities to act either as the public transport system or act as the feeder system for other high capacity systems like city buses, BRTS, Metro etc. to make the system more safer and passenger as well as operator friendly. You may have GPS/GPRS installed on these vehicles so that they can be monitored, controlled and co-ordinated from a central control centre. The control centre can be set up on PPP basis and the individual small public transport vehicle owners / operators pay a small monthly fee to the PPP control centre operator.

5. I would, therefore, request you to direct concerned officials to take urgent steps for modernization of public transport system in all cities taking a clue from 'The Alwar Vahini' example so as to provide greener, cleaner and safe mode of transport to the masses.

With regards,

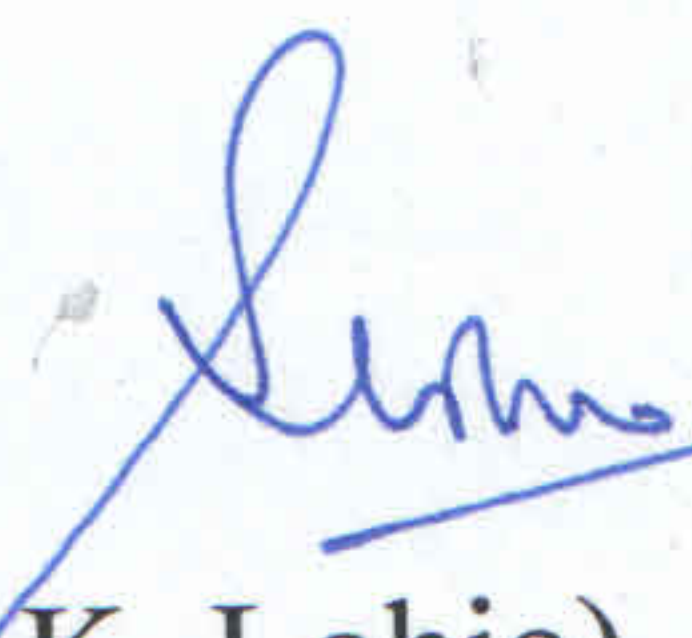
Yours sincerely,

(Sudhir Krishna)

To,

The Chief Secretaries of all the States / UTs

Copy to:-

1. The Principal Secretary of all the State / UT Urban Development Departments
2. The Principal Secretary (Transport) of all the State / UT Transport Departments
3. US(UT-II)
4. NIC for uploading the advisory on MoUD's web-site


(S.K. Lohia)
OSD (Urban Transport) &
Ex-Officio Joint Secretary

TRANSFORMING URBAN & RURAL TRANSPORT

THE ALWAR VAHINI

Alwar city with a population of 3.6 lakhs is one of the most rapidly growing urban areas of the National Capital Region (NCR).

The burgeoning growth of the industrial base of Alwar district (population 38 lakhs) has been matched by a rapid growth of residential and commercial areas. This has placed a great strain on the existing infrastructure of Alwar. The cities of Alwar and Bhiwadi had clearcut commercial, industrial and residential areas with poor interconnectivity.

This infrastructure gap had been most acutely felt in the public transport sector with a lack of an efficient means of public transport. The most prevalent means of public transport till recently had been three wheelers in the form of auto rickshaws, vikram's and tempo's. A majority of these were more than a decade old and in very poor mechanical condition. These three wheelers were noisy, polluting, overcrowded, uncomfortable and unsafe. Also, they were generally shunned by women, elderly and children.

Due to the medium size of the town, a metro system or a BRTS would have been unviable. Even a city bus service would not have been viable due to the lack of sufficient passenger traffic spread out throughout the day.

Also, Bhiwadi with a population of 1.10 lakhs is one of the fastest growing urban centres in the country and yet inspite of the rapid development the state of public urban transport in Bhiwadi was non existent.

To deal with this issue, Alwar Vahini was launched in Alwar with 58 vehicles on 3rd December 2011. Alwar Vahini is a passenger service of Euro IV compliant Tata Magic and Mahindra Maxximo vehicles which have replaced the old auto's, tempo's and vikram's.

The Alwar Vahini Project has been a joint effort of various organizations like the RTO, Lead Bank (Punjab National Bank), UIT Alwar, UIT Bhiwadi, and Deputy Registrar Co-operatives with the District Administration playing the co-ordinating role.

Bank: The lead bank of the district, Punjab National Bank was approached to be the principal banker for the project. PNB agreed and also launched a special scheme with the approval of the PNB HQ. Under this scheme, the rate of interest would be 14.25% with an extended payback period of **5 years** and no collateral would be taken from the applicant and the government would act as the guarantor under the CGFTI -Credit Guarantee Fund Trust of India scheme. PNB

also fast tracked all the applications for loans and has been disbursing loans through a special team set up for the purpose.

RTO: The RTO office has been responsible for allotting the route permits to the Alwar Vahini applicants. The RTO has also been keeping a regular field vigil to ensure that all passenger vehicles ply as per the government norms.

UIT: UIT Alwar and Bhiwadi have borne the cost of providing Uniforms, ID cards, Group Insurance and soft skills training of the drivers. The UIT has also built the support infrastructure in the form of modern bus stops, signages, high mast lights, traffic signals, CCTV traffic monitoring cameras and an advanced police control room.

Tata Motors and Mahindra & Mahindra: Dealerships of both companies have given very sizeable discounts and have also borne the expenditure of stickering of the vehicles. Both companies acknowledged that this was a one of a kind project and deputed their respective teams from the corporate HQ to study the implementation details of Alwar Vahini for propagation to other places.

Alwar Vahini: Co-operative society. A Co-operative society is being formed of all the Alwar Vahini owners so that common benefits like insurance can be provided to the members. All members shall have to undergo a free annual compulsory medical check-up which shall involve physical fitness, eyesight check etc. The office bearers chosen by the society shall be the contact persons so that administrative orders can be conveyed to all members through the co-operative. To engender a feeling of belonging to a close knit group and build up an unique group culture of "*samman aur seva*" – which is the motto of Alwar Vahini, regular meetings and get-togethers are held.

A **NGO** specializing in soft skills training has been engaged in training the drivers in etiquette and driving discipline. Attention is being given to the small but significant details such as keeping the vehicles clean and well maintained, always being smartly dressed in uniform and addressing all passengers respectfully.

An attractive **exchange programme** had been provided for the three wheeler owners. The intention was that the persons who are presently engaged in the public transport trade are given the first opportunity to upgrade to a better means of transport. 710 three wheeler owners from Alwar city submitted their names for the exchange offer.

Alwar did not have a **city taxi service**. On 26th January 2012, Alwar Vahini 24 hour Taxi service was launched. Any person requiring a taxi can call for the vehicle through the **Alwar Vahini Helpline**. The taxi shall be despatched to the customer after verifying the address of the caller. Predetermined and approved rates shall be charged.

A **Mahila Alwar Vahini** with lady drivers was also launched on 26th January 2012. This vehicle has a special light red colour scheme for easy identification.

A website www.alwarvahini.com was launched on 1st January 2012 so that citizens would get complete information about the routes serviced. The website alongwith a facebook page would serve as a feedback mechanism from the citizens. It has also been attempted that the entire documentation of the Alwar Vahini story is made on the website so that districts in India desirous of replicating the model can do so easily with Alwar as a frame of reference.

Projection: At present, **1310** Alwar Vahini vehicles have been launched. It is projected that the total requirement would be for about 2200 vehicles in the entire district.

Salient features of the scheme:

- 1) The Alwar Vahini Project is almost completely **privately funded** from bank loans with the District Administration only playing a coordinating and facilitating role.
- 2) The time from the conception of idea to launch of the project was only **two months**.
- 3) This is a very **high visibility project**. The attractively painted vehicles carry thousands of passengers every day and are seen by all other commuters on the road. Introduction of hundreds of these attractive vehicles radically transforms the 'feel' of the town.
- 4) There is a great increase in the overall **satisfaction levels of commuters** who feel Alwar Vahini to be a modern, fast and respectable means of transport.
- 5) Every Alwar Vahini vehicle has a **unique number** prominently displayed. This helps in easily identifying the vehicle if any sort of traffic violation has been made. The 15 high resolution CCTV cameras provide an overwatch so that the **highest standards of discipline** are maintained.
- 6) One of the aims of the project is to reduce the congestion on roads caused by private vehicles. Rough surveys among two and four wheeler users has clearly indicated that they would most willingly shift to using Alwar Vahini if the service connects their origin and destination and is timely. As Alwar Vahini vehicles have become pervasive throughout the city, **private vehicle usage** has reduced considerably and provided benefits like reduced pollution and congestion thus making the city more liveable.
- 7) A constant demand of representatives from many areas is for the opening of **RSRTC roadways (State owned Transport) routes** in many areas. In a majority of cases this is not possible due to viability constraints. Hence a lot of areas went unserved. Alwar Vahini stepped in to provide the means of catering to this unmet demand and also of providing employment to youth. Very soon the entire district will be covered by organised means of transport through the Alwar Vahini service.

- 8) Stress has been laid on the seemingly **small but significant details** with a lot of emphasis on driver behavior and etiquette. The motto of *Samman aur Sewa (Respect and Service)* would be the guiding principle.

Support Infrastructure Development: A holistic approach has been taken to ensuring a well managed traffic situation in the city. Towards that end, the following measures have been taken

- 1) Construction of 20 modern bus stops on the New Delhi pattern
- 2) Installation of 25 high resolution CCTV cameras throughout the city
- 3) Construction of a modern Police control room
- 4) Widening of main city thoroughfares (67 kms in total underway)
- 5) Erection of 45 High mast lights
- 6) Beautification and reengineering of 5 city roundabouts
- 7) 1040 Signages installed throughout the city on the New Delhi pattern
- 8) 6 City entry gates with traditional Rajasthani architecture
- 9) Reengineering of all T – junctions which are accident prone and construction of slip lanes.
- 10) 4 New ROB's which have been approved by the government.
- 11) Collapsible traffic management gates installed
- 12) Police watch towers installed

As a part of the **composite traffic management plan**, 50 cycles have been purchased to be stationed at various parts of the city so that they can be used by commuters for a nominal fee and then returned. This service could also be of use to tourists who come to Alwar in large numbers.

The ALWAR VAHINI Project has the potential to quickly transform the public transport scenario with no expenditure on part of the government while at the same time creating jobs and benefitting almost all citizens in a highly visible and tangible manner.

The Alwar Vahini Principles:

- 1) Harness Entrepreneurial Energy of Youth
- 2) Plan, Regulate, Manage and Encourage

- 3) Involve Citizens and give them Pride of Ownership of the Project
- 4) Don't spend Government Funds Directly – instead spend on Support Infrastructure

FACTFILE:

Alwar Vahini's launched: **1310 vehicles** (projected – **2200**)

Three wheelers Replaced: **720**

Direct Employment provided to **3000+ persons**.

Independent Market Survey shows extremely high level of satisfaction among citizens.

Government Expenditure: **Zero**

Revenue generated through tax (VAT, Central Excise etc) on Alwar Vahini vehicles : **Rs 17 crores**

Individual Private Expenditure (through bank loans) on Alwar Vahini: **Rs 48 Crores**

Daily Passengers currently carried – **1,15,000+ passengers**