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Session on Strategies for accelerating Urban Electric Mobility: Exclusive Discussion on Innovative Policies, Technologies and Applications Organized by The Bengal Chamber & British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata on 7th February 2020 at Chamber premises.

Soon, ropeway services to connect areas in New Town

OUR CORRESPONDENT

KOLKATA: The New Town Kolkata Development Authority (NKDA) is trying to introduce ropeway services to connect areas in New Town that are outside 500 metres zone of the proposed Metro route.

“According to our engineers, usually people do not want to walk beyond 500 metres. The East-West Metro from Salt Lake Sector V till Salt Lake stadium will commence its operation from February 14. The Garia-Airport Metro link will go over New Town. So, we have started thinking of pollution-free and hassle-free connectivity with the interiors of New Town to the Metro alignment. We have also discussed the matter and options could include ropeway or elevated tramways. We are preparing the DPR,” said Debashis Sen, Chairman of NKDA, at a ses-



sion on “Strategies for Accelerating Urban Electric Mobility” organised by British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata, in collaboration with The Bengal Chamber.

Sen mentioned that dur-

ing the London Olympics, a long ropeway route was created to connect Canary Bay to the main parts of the city.

Three electric buses that were launched in 2018 in New Town have proved to be very

popular and 2.5 lakh tickets have been sold till date. Previously, the NKDA had mulled monorail services for this connectivity but has presently shelved the idea as it has proved to be a costly proposition. The

ropeway is a cheaper option.

N S Nigam, Secretary, state Transport department, opined that a public share in the transportation system has to be retained. He maintained that 50 electric buses are being launched in New Town, Kolkata. “Old buses were in Capex (Capital expenditure) model but the new buses would be launched in Opex (Operational expenditure) model. We wish to increase the charging stations and bring tariff reforms,” Nigam added.

Nick Low, British Deputy High Commissioner, Kolkata, stated: “Kolkata has accomplished a remarkable feat in piloting electric buses. The City of Joy rightly received a C40 cities award in Copenhagen for its efforts on electrification of the public transport system. Transport for London has already been engaging with the Bengal government on integrated transport planning for the city.”

106 d, block-f
new alipore
kolkata 700 053
i n d i a

W +91 33 2445 2766
info@greymatterpr.com
www.greymatterpr.com

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NKDA plans to bring in elevated trams, ropeways to connect to metro links

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
KOLKATA, 7 FEBRUARY

The residents of New Town can look forward to easier travel options in the less connected parts of the township in the near future. The New Kolkata Development Authority, (NKDA), is considering plans to put in place elevated trams and ropeways, to connect the distant places of the township to the Metro links. Despite a well-developed network of transport in New Town, there are areas that are far away from the upcoming Metro projects. As areas like Action Area III are quite a distance from the forthcoming underground transport system and traffic congestion at some of the points like Narkel Bagan have already become a concern for the authorities, plans to introduce ropeways or elevated

tram services are being considered.

Speaking during a seminar on 'Strategies for accelerating Urban Electric Mobility' organised by The Bengal Chamber and British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata, Mr Debashis Sen, chairman and managing director, Housing Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited, said, "According to our engineers, usually people do not want to walk beyond 500 meters. Considering this, options are being explored to connect far-off places that are located at a distance of 500 meters or more from the main Metro link," informed Mr Sen. "As Metro is very costly to put in place, we are looking at cheaper solutions of green connectivity. We are, therefore, considering options of elevated trams and ropeways to connect distant cor-

ners of the township," he added.

Notably, such patterns of connectivity are used in adjacent areas of London for connecting Canary Bay to the main parts of the city. The main focus of the strategy planners of the NKDA is to minimise the traffic load on the roads and maximise the spaces available.

According to sources, a detailed project report is being prepared on the proposed eco-friendly transport system. The HIDCO authorities initially were considering introducing monorail services in the township. However, as the project is expensive, a financier is yet to be found. Meanwhile, the state transport department is also mulling over plans to provide sustainable options to the owners of electric vehicles.

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THE TELEGRAPH CALCUTTA SATURDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2020

XXCE

METRO

Govt plans to reduce tram and

JAYANTABASU

Calcutta: The Bengal government plans to reduce the number of trams, as well as routes, at a time e-vehicles are being recognised across the world as the most sustainable and environment-friendly form of public transport.



A tram in the city. File picture

N.S. Nigam, the state transport secretary, said at a meeting on "electrical mobility" on Friday that the government planned to retain trams only on a few routes, where they would not add to the traffic congestion by competing with other forms of public transport.

"Trams will stay in Calcutta as part of public transport but we will run them on routes where they will not compete with other public transport modes and cause congestion," Nigam said at the meeting organised by the British deputy high commission in collaboration with the Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

"We are planning to run around 10 air-conditioned sin-

gle-coach trams from next year on about two routes, where they won't compete with other public transport options," Nigam told Metro on the sidelines of the meeting.

The city has around 40 trams running on eight routes, down from around 125 on close to 30 routes a few years ago.

"We still have the ability to run about 190 trams but the government does not seem keen. It looks like the government is trying to push the system towards death," a senior official in the transport department said.

"It's strange that while trams have returned to almost all important cities of the world, in Calcutta they are being ignored. Trams are the need of the hour given the pace of climate change and ever-increasing air pollution," said Debasish Bhattacharya, a tram crusader.

"We are working on a report on the importance of trams and plan to launch a major movement to save them. We suspect trams are being withdrawn to facilitate commercial exploitation of the tramways properties, most of which are in prime areas in the city," said Naba Dutta of the environment platform Sabuj Mancha.

At the meeting, Nigam also said the number of electrical buses would be increased gradually in the city. "We now have 80 electrical buses, per-

haps the largest fleet in any city in India. In the next few months, another 50 buses will be added, connecting different

points in the city with New Town," he said.

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+91 33 2445 2766

fo@greymatterpr.com

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A tram in the city. File picture

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Nick Low, the British deputy high commissioner in

Calcutta, said the UK government had been continually engaging with the Bengal government and the Calcutta Mu-

nicipal Corporation "to identify ways to accelerate the development and deployment of electrical vehicles".

Hidco chairman Debasen pointed out that electrical buses were running successfully in New Town-Rajarha

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Solar panels on depot roofs to charge e-buses

Krishnendu.Badyopadhyay
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) is set to generate power through solar panels on depot roofs to recharge its electric vehicles. The Energy and Resource Institute (TERI) has conducted a study and found significant savings in annual electricity bills.

In a study at the WBTC Kasba depot, TERI found highly feasible strategies for electrification of public transport in Kolkata by powering the charging stations at major WBTC depots through solar energy. Actual site survey and measurements of power consumption patterns were performed as part of the study.

At a discussion on electric mobility, organised by the British Deputy High Commission and Bengal Chamber of Commerce on Friday, transport secretary N S Nigam hinted at significant increase of its electric bus fleet with its policy shift from Capex to Opex.

In the Capex system, the state transport undertaking has to buy electric buses out right. In the Opex model, WBTC needs to pay on per-km basis, which will make the total cost of operation half or even less than that of conventional internal-combustion engine buses, or the fuel-run vehicles. WBTC, which now runs 80 electric buses, has decided not to add to the diesel buses.

FOR ZERO CARBON FOOTPRINT



➤ Kasba bus depot has 6 DC slow chargers and 1 DC fast charger

➤ **Yearly peak-energy demand: 1,854 kWh**

➤ **Roof-top solar energy expected to be generated: 150 kWp (approx)**

➤ **Average annual savings**

with applicable tariff scheme: ₹14,86,660

➤ **Average annual savings with optional tariff scheme: ₹9,43,395**

(Annual estimated savings based on analysis of 10-day data and values are indicative)

“We have developed a fairly good charging infrastructure, but to increase the number of electric buses, we need to boost the infrastructure,” said a transport official.

TERI has proposed that the roof on the depot sheds be used to install solar-power panels. “GIS-based estimation of the plant capacity on the available rooftop area has been found to be enough to power the buses plying during the day,” said Shashank Vyas, associate fellow (electricity and fuel), TERI. WBTC can further save on its annual power bills if the depots were to opt for CESC’s time-of-day tariff, under which the electricity

prices are different, depending on the peak and non-peak hours.

Alekhya Datta, fellow & area convenor, electricity and fuels convenor, TERI, who conceived and performed the study, along with Ram Krishan and Neshwin Rodrigues of TERI, said, “Such models using localized renewable energy and battery storage can provide benefits of reduced operating costs for depot operators and better grid-management for the electricity distribution company.”

TERI also plans to boost this model for other bus depots so that a sustainable and viable operational model can be established.

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बंगाल में बनेंगे एलिवेटेड ट्राम वे और रोपवे : सेन



सन्मार्ग संवाददाता, कोलकाता : बंगाल चैंबर ऑफ कॉमर्स एंड इंडस्ट्री (बीसीसीएंडआई) द्वारा आयोजित विशेष सत्र में हिडको के चेयरमैन व राज्य अपर मुख्य सचिव देबाशिष सेन ने कहा कि राज्य में जो अनकनेक्टेड जगह हैं और जहां मेट्रो की यात्रा महंगा समाधान है वहां के लिए नया सामाधान लाने की कोशिश है, जिसमें एक एलिवेटेड ट्राम वे और दूसरा रोपवे हैं। हम रोपवे समाधान की तरफ काम कर रहे हैं। यह अभी डिटेल प्रोजेक्ट रिपोर्ट्स (डीपीआर) स्तर पर है। चार्जिंग स्टेशन से दो, तीन और चार पहिये वाहन को चार्ज किया जा सकता है, लेकिन सबसे ज्यादा तीन पहिये वाहन चार्ज हुए हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि 13 ई-बस चल रही हैं। चार्जिंग स्टेशन की संख्या जितनी जल्दी बढ़ेगी उतनी जल्दी बाकि 40 बसें भी यात्रा के लिए आ जाएंगी। राज्य परिवहन विभाग सचिव एनएस निगम ने कहा कि जल्द 10 और एसी ट्राम आएंगे। हम ईवी पर कर सुधार की कोशिश में हैं। इस अवसर पर बीसीसीएंडआई के प्रेसिडेंट डेविड डेब ए मुखर्जी ने स्वागत भाषण दिया। इस दौरान सीईएससी लिमिटेड के कार्यकारी निदेशक (एचआर एंड एडमिन) गौतम रे, ब्रिटिश हाई कमिशन अंतरराष्ट्रीय ट्रेड विभाग के पहले सचिव जेनीफर फगन व महिंद्रा के सीएसओ अनिबान घोष व अन्य उपस्थित थे।