



## Highlights- Urbanlogue - S02 E01 - 19th May, 2020 at 3pm IST

### Public transport Standard Operating Procedures to ensure the safety of crew and passengers

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#### Summary ([Link to full video](#))

The session began with Ms. Shreya Gadepalli, South Asia Programme Lead of Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP), introducing Urbanlogue, a platform to guide city officials to tackle COVID-19 and ensure safe transport systems. She then introduced Mr. Kunal Kumar IAS, Joint-Secretary, Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

He introduced the session, which began with three presentations: Shreya Gadepalli on 'Post-lockdown guidelines for bus operations'; C Shikha IAS, Managing Director, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), on the 'Indian city experience of responding to COVID-19'; and Gerald Ollivier, Lead Transport Specialist, World Bank on a 'COVID Green Label'.

Following the presentations, the session proceeded with a panel discussion moderated by Shreya and Juergen Baumann, Project Director, SMART SUT, GIZ with a panel comprising Kunal Kumar, Dharmendra Pratap Yadav IAS, Principal Secretary, Tamil Nadu Transport Department, C Shikha IAS, and Sandeep Raizada, General Manager, Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System Ltd. (DIMTS).

**Over 650 participants joined the webinar from various universities, organisations, media houses, and city corporations. The webinar had attendees from over 130 Indian cities and 20 International cities.** The participants raised more than 130 questions during the session and almost 600 questions during registration. This webinar is the first one in the series of webinars being organized by the Smart Cities Mission in collaboration with the India Programme of the Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) aimed to help Indian city officials develop robust transport solutions in response to the pandemic. The Transport & ICT Group of the World Bank and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ) are knowledge partners of the webinar series.

## **Introduction - Mr. Kunal Kumar IAS - Joint-Secretary, Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) ([Link to Video](#))**

- The aim of the webinar series is to discuss how mass transit, walking and cycling can be reimagined in the future. It is important to note what interventions that have succeeded and the ones that haven't.
- Conversations around this topic should focus on the needs of the ecosystem. Panelists and participants must use this platform as an opportunity to interact and have meaningful discussions by rooting it to the problems on the ground.

## **Post-lock down guidelines for bus operations - Ms. Shreya Gadepalli, South Asia Programme Lead, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) ([Link to Video](#))**

Many question whether people will come back to public transport. Before this, nearly 70 percent travelled by walking, cycling, and public transport. It is crucial that we reimagine what public transport can be to serve these people. ITDP India Programme has created the following set of guidelines for cities

1. **Ensure the safety of staff** - prepare schedules, and provide safety gear, healthcare, and insurance
2. **Disinfect buses before every trip and terminals every 2-3 hours** - display record of disinfection and install sanitisers at terminals
3. **Communicate with passengers** - use all media to inform on safety protocol, bus schedules, and alternative modes
4. **Ensure the safety of passengers** - ensure masks, control crowding, and deploy contactless payment solutions

**Bonus - Financial support** - stimulus package for public transport as a social good- control private vehicles to deal with congestion, road safety, and health problems. Holistic measures to ensure cities work for everyone -

- a) state and national priority - should treat PT as a social obligation
- b) leverage technologies - improve user experience
- c) professionalise informal transport
- d) ensure cities are expanding walking and cycling measures

## **Indian city experience - Ms. C Shikha IAS, Managing Director, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTTC) ([Link to Video](#))**

Ms. C Shikha IAS presented the actions taken by BMTTC during the lockdown and the post-lockdown strategy in ensuring safe bus operations for passengers and crew.

1. During lockdown - BMTC operated only for essential and health services - and customised routes accordingly. It also assisted in evacuation programs by providing 250 buses for 21,000 stranded labourers.
2. Measures for safety - Established a Strategic Working Group - Preparation of an SOP for post-lockdown operations
3. Measures for crew - Health checkups and daily thermal scanning - provided protective equipment - incentives for working during the lockdown
4. Measures for passengers - Frequent sanitisation and 50% capacity - No standees have been allowed - Boarding from rear door and alighting from front door
5. Communication and Outreach - Dynamic information display in terminals and inside buses - training programs from the Department of Health and Welfare
6. Other Measures - Need for digital ticketing - Introducing weekly passes and QR code scanning on buses - Opening of Bus Priority Lane to reduce time

### **COVID green label - Mr. Gerald Ollivier, Lead Transport Specialist, World Bank** ([Link to Video](#))

Our response in the coming months will define the next decade of public transport, a large ecosystem with a number of STUs and also several private operators.

#### **1 - COVID green label**

To build public trust, the green label would be a voluntary certification process to qualify bus operators and allow them to communicate that they are taking the right steps to ensure safety. It would apply to the three sectors of Public Transport (PT), Intermediate Public Transport (IPT), and Shared Transport

#### **Approach**

- **Prepare** - Create SOPs for all three sectors, and develop training modules
- **Certify** - Ensure operators' due diligence, capacity building with third party review
- **Monitor** - fortnightly renewal of label with internal and external reviewing
- **Rebuild trust** - Digital platform for passengers to raise concerns with operators
- **Reward** - Support operators who comply

**2 - Shift to digital ticketing** - can reduce the high transmission risk through contact, and trace passengers. Long term - customer-centric to improve public transport mode share, and optimise operational efficiency and enable strategic planning.

**Recommendations - Short term** (App agnostic QR codes on tickets), **Medium term** (mobile tickets and passes on an app, closed loop card), and **Long term** - open loop card

## Key points discussed in the Panel Discussion and the Q&A session ([Link to Panel Discussion Video](#))

### *Ms. Shreya Gadepalli (moderator) South Asia Programme Lead, ITDP India Programme*

- Cities of one million can get USD 10 million (around INR 70 crores) annually from parking charges. Cities like Bangalore and Chennai can get 100 million dollars every year that can ensure public transport is affordable. London has recently increased its congestion pricing charge, and the city wants more people to walk and cycle and reduce congestion.
- Self-sufficiency to be brought at the city level, but also supported from the state and national levels.

### *Mr. Juergen Baumann (co-moderator) Project Director, SMART SUT, GIZ*

- With the lockdown in Indian cities starting to ease and public transport resuming in urban areas, there is a challenge for cities to provide reliable transport and ensure safety. In India, public transport will be the most preferred mode.
- Questions raised to panelists: Do you get sufficient information about the expected demand for transport services? Can you provide sufficient staff to ensure at the bus stops that there are no conflicts if the bus cannot take on more passengers?

### *Ms. C Shikha IAS Managing Director, Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTCL)*

- We should give thought to CUMTA and BMLTA - Congestion and parking fees will be enough to take care of the needs of the STUs.
- There is a cap on access to digital solutions but many people use smartphones nowadays to access essentials
- Digital payment is the way to ensure total contactless travel.
- BMTCL has not hiked any fares for digital passes and are working to make it more affordable
- There is a need to move to digital solutions so people can check the availability of seats on buses and the estimated waiting time to manage overcrowding.

### *Mr. Dharmendra Pratap Yadav IAS Principal Secretary, Tamil Nadu Transport Department*

- TN government has mandated hand sanitisers, masks, and disinfection of buses and increased the number of buses.
- Daily coupons with QR codes as a short term solution, and for the long term, we should divide the e-ticketing into hardware and software and procure the hardware immediately.
- Regarding finance, transport departments are negotiating with banks and transport funds at cheaper rates will be useful. Government will not give immediate support to private operators when public transport is affected.
- Contracting private buses will be considered if there is an insufficient capacity of buses while opening up fully.

- STUs pay 5000 crores to Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEMs) through subsidies and concessions. Also pay a lot of taxes - GST, cess on diesel and it would be good to recover this money. OEMs need concessions because they provide employment. There are issues like pollution and congestion which need to be addressed.
- Public transport is becoming a priority in TN - The DPR for Bus Rapid Transit System is ready and under review. TN is trying to push for BPL - Dedicated bus lanes will be able to carry the same number of passengers at one-sixth of the cost of metro or other rails

*Mr. Kunal Kumar IAS Joint-Secretary, Smart Cities Mission (SCM), Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)*

- There is a need to construct the problem of financing public transport well in terms of what kind of support STUs need to help put the agenda at the forefront.
- This is the best time to discuss alternate sources of finance - carbon tax, charging parking, money from transit-oriented development, vehicle ownership.

*Mr. Gerald Ollivier Lead Transport Specialist, World Bank*

- World Bank is currently providing two kinds of emergency support for -
  - Health systems - a million dollars put together over 10 days to be disbursed over three months - scale up testing, build isolation wards, infection prevention
  - Social Protection - million dollars in two phases - for migrant and lower-income groups through food benefits and cash transfers
- Fast-tracking - a typical bank project would be 12 months, but now it's being done in a few weeks - from preparation to rollout.
- To ensure the survival of the public transport sector, thinking about alternate sources of finance is crucial. Banks are looking at short term and long term measures in the new normal.
- We need to look at phases. Start by stabilising the sector with safe COVID-responsive measures. Then we look to optimise operational efficiencies and finally, build the sufficiency. The crisis is an opportunity to make the system more efficient.
- Bus priority lanes are a great way to reduce the cost per kilometer and redirect the money saved.

*Mr. Sandeep Raizada General Manager, Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System Ltd. (DIMTS)*

- The need of the hour is to go digital. App for payment, tracking of buses and information on the availability of seats considering the shortage in supply
- DIMTS has created an app which shows the availability of seats - digital payment, ticketing, and QR codes will be used soon
- In Delhi, the government has a budget for public transport and has been supporting us all throughout.
- The DTC and cluster operations are owned by the government.