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**ROAD SAFETY AUDIT OF PILOT BRTS OF ONLY SWARGATE-KATRAJ STRETCH OF 6.10 KM
OUT OF WHICH 3.83 KM IS RENDRED DYSFUNCTIONAL DUE FLYOVER & GRADE SEPARATOR
CONSTRUCTION**

On scrutiny of the safety audit report and subsequent site visits, *Nagrik Chetna Manch* finds that the report lists 68 obstacles affecting safe and smooth movement of traffic on just one portion of the Pilot Project, which would be the situation on all roads in Pune where construction works are in progress. The Report does not make any specific recommendation for greater safety of mainly pedestrian, commuters and all traffic except removal of obstacles.

Intermittent segregated lanes are the biggest hurdle to safe movement of traffic because of entry into mixed traffic lanes from high speed BRTS lanes and vice versa, causing bottlenecks and conflict between BRT buses and other modes. Unauthorised entry of personalised vehicles in BRTS corridors adds to the dangers. Pedestrians suffer the most because dedicated pedestrian crossings to the median busways have been removed during construction of flyovers, subways and grade separator causing infringement of the basic human right of the pedestrians to safe, smooth and unhindered walking.

Apart from this, footpaths (pavements) which should be exclusively for pedestrians on foot, are taken over by hawkers, vendors, other encumbrances and vehicle parking. This compounds existing human trauma.

The completion of Pilot BRTS at the cost of hundreds of crores of public funds was manifestly in 2010 but it still does not have a "completion certificate". Pune Pilot BRTS is a symbol of bad practices because of total disregard to global and GoI-specified BRT standards resulting in complete lack of safety to the citizens. To the shame of Pune-kars, PMC propagated the dangerous concept of 'mixed BRTS', which goes against the basic concept of continuous and uninterrupted dedicated bus lanes that is the very structure of a bus rapid transit system. The pilot BRTS of 17 km has more than half 'mixed BRTS' and the dedicated portion is not continuous but is in bits. PMC has never prepared a DPR as per GoI guidelines for any of the BRTS corridors, Pilot or Phase-1. There is intrinsic inclusive safety measure if BRTS is constructed as per standard norms.

As the Pilot BRTS has never been as per standard specifications and the flyovers and grade separator already constructed and under construction (again at the cost of many more hundreds of crores of public funds) have destroyed what little is left of the BRTS, *Nagrik Chetna Manch* suggests that until completion of the flyovers, the entire Hadapsar-Swargate-Katraj stretch be thrown open to 'mixed traffic'. PMC needs to own up to reality that after the constructions are complete giving priority to ever increasing number of private vehicles, exclusive bus lanes for the BRTS can never be installed in the median. If necessary, the PMC may also consider shifting bus stops to the sides to avoid the hazards, trauma and stress that result in fatalities of both the pedestrians and of mechanised transport operators.

Qaneez Sukhrani, Member – Nagrik Chetna Manch
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