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FEATURES & CONCEPT OF BRTS ACCORDING TO ACCEPTED GLOBAL STANDARDS VIS-À-VIS INCOMPLETE, INCORRECT & PENDING ASPECTS EXECUTION & IMPLEMENTATION OF BRTS PHASE – 1 BEFORE ROLL-OUT OF SERVICE

Enrique Penelosa, the originator of Bus Rapid Transit System says,

- (1) "An advanced city is not one where even the poor use cars, but rather one where even the rich use public transport"
- (2) "It is hard to do a bad quality rail system because the costs for entry are so high. But it is much easier to do a bad bus system because you can get away with cutting costs."
- (3) "Public transportation is not a technical problem, it is political".
<http://www.modeldmedia.com/features/penalosa112.aspx>

Enrique Peñalosa was Mayor of Bogota from 1998 to 2001 and turned one of the world's most dangerous, violent, mafia infested and corrupt capitals into a peaceful model city populated by caring citizens who number 1.6 million daily on the public transport.

→ So if Bogota's administration can do it, why not Pune's administration ?? ←

❖ BASIC FEATURES AND CONCEPTS ACCEPTED GLOBALLY FOR BRTS :

BRTS is actually a metro rail with buses instead of rail coaches, roads for rail tracks and is wholly over ground. Additionally, it has footpaths, cycle tracks and service lanes on both sides. The seven basic features of a standard BRTS are the following: :

No 1. Exclusive continuous bus-ways utilised on planned segregated BRTS corridors. Buses operate on their dedicated lanes, thus maximizing speed, service and achieving rapidity . → However, in Pune:

a. Bus-ways are either not exclusive or not continuous. Out of 118 km planned corridors 57 % (67 km) of Pilot, Phase I and CYG BRTS, do not have dedicated bus-ways while 43 % (51 km) are dedicated but not continuous. **Through RTI, DMC (S) ref. no. 964 Dated 02.01.2013 states 'BRTS under JnNURM comprising 23 roads measuring around 100 km'. Subsequently through RTI and a BRTS corridor map uploaded**

on PMC's website, it is revealed that PMC will be executing 4 corridors i.e :

Corridor 1 = 22 km Warje to Kharadi

Corridor 2 = 17 km Kothrud depot to Vishrantwadi

Corridor 3 = 17 km Dhayari to Hadapsar Gadital

Corridor 4 = 17.5 km Kalewadi phata to Katraj

b. There are **no continuous footpaths and cycle tracks** along the BRTS corridors. Majority locations do not have footpaths and cycle tracks (pre-conditions for receiving Central Govt funding) at all due excuses of land acquisition issues. Existing footpaths are Illegally occupied by hawkers, vendors, garages, shops, encroachments citing Vendor's Bill. Even though Nagar Road is 1/45 non-hawking zones, PMC has not yet done anything about re-locating them as per High Court orders. Because of vendors on footpaths and their businesses spilling onto MV lanes, there is conflict and burden on this balance space. Specifications of existing footpaths are not according to IRC norms 086-1983 & 103-1988.

c. Pune is the only city in the world where the concept of **"mixed" BRTS** is entertained. "Mixed" in PMC's parlance means that all types of vehicles are allowed to ply on "mixed" stretches. Presently all types of vehicles do ply on all roads not only in Pune but also in the whole country. Then why spend thousands of crores of public funds to construct "mixed" BRTS?

d. An glaring error is that the **lengths of BRTS corridors** are all less than the average passenger lead (average distance travelled by a commuter), which is more than 8.58 km in PMC area, while for PCMC it is over 12 km. For these passenger leads, the route length of corridors for mass transit systems (whether BRT or conventional or rail based) needs be about 17 to 24 km as per Comprehensive Mobility Plan.

e. Corridors in Pune do not cater for **comfort and safety** in travel i.e. without transfers for majority of commuters.

No 2. Pre-board fare collection and fare verification is essential if the service is to be "rapid" as the name implies. Imagine issuance of tickets in the compartments in metro rail!

➔ **However, concept of pre-board ticketing system does not exist in Pune.**

No 3. Bus Transfer Stations with arrangements for parking of private vehicles nearby, ticket sales prior boarding, digital display, bus real time, feeder and trunk connections etc. Bus stations can also be profitably used to display advertisements and earn revenue. Bus Transfer stations would also allot space for CNG re-fuelling in line with NUPT 2006 guideline for cleaner fuel technologies.

➔ **Pune has only bus stops (shelters) and not bus stations.**

No 4. Frequent and quality service and fare-free integration between feeder and trunk services.

➔ In Pune as the number of buses is not adequate, the service is infrequent and fare-free integration either with feeder services or with other trunk-line routes is absent. Also, Pune does not have the system of issuance of direct tickets to be used on feeder and other trunk-line services.

No 5. Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) refer to a range of information technologies that provide more choices and better quality for the customer. It is essential in signal prioritisation to give preference to BRTS at intersections where the system must cross mix with other traffic. Some other facilities are real-time information displays, updated travel information, control & monitoring of traffic signals from a central location, transit security functions, improved safety, pre-board ticketing; all this to make the bus system achieve 'rapidity'.

➔ In Pune, PMC's proposal did not include the budget for ITS which is one of the main value addition components (although estimate of Rs. 325.00 lakhs was allotted as per QPR Jan-Mar 2014). PMC states that DPR prepared by IL&FS Ltd. was submitted in Sept 2013 and there is a provision for Rs. 325.00 lakhs in QPR, so why was intense follow-up for approval not done by PMC when it was known that JnNURM would fold up 31 Mar 2014 ?

No 6. Clean, comfortable and efficient buses to minimize boarding times and to provide easier access for senior citizens and differently-abled commuters. The buses should therefore be low-floor with special arrangements inside the bus for wheel chairs and / or crutches.

➔ In Pune, buses are modified to have 900 mm boarding on the right side for Movement in BRTS lanes and low boarding level 380mm on the left side for Moving into feeder routes.

No 7. BRTS should be planned scientifically logically, rationally and comply with industry practices and transportation systems. Essentially traffic enforcement, deadlines and process flowcharts is part of BRTS planning.

➔ Unfortunately, PMC has yet to adopt the concept of Detailed Project Report (DPR) as per the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Urban Development.

If a DPR had been prepared, there would have been a clear mandate on funding details, timelines, deadlines, process flowchart and execution

➔ PMC has not complied with MoUD directions to form panels to monitor reforms, technical guidance by citizen's participation to achieve transparency.

➔ PMC has also no document to show that it carried out pre-feasibility and feasibility studies prior to selection of BRTS corridors.

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