

## Govt should fulfill its promise for plying cng 4000 buses in karachi: NFEH

KARACHI: Increase in road trauma and accident and resultantly the enhancing fatality rate in the city of Karachi calls for measures to streamline the traffic flow and prevent citizens' casualties. The decision to outsource the CNG Bus operations by the defunct CDGK administration was a manifest of complete ineligibility and poor management that has tormented the citizens and deprived them of a means of respectable travelling facility. The fleet of 75 dedicated CNG buses has been ruined, which was once a source of ease and comfort to the urban commuters. The bureaucracy and non-elected administration of the defunct CDGK have ruined the transport system in the city. National Forum for Environment Health (NFEH) President Naeem Qureshi stated this while talking to a delegation of representatives of different NGOs and group of students that called on him at his office Friday. The defunct CDGK has a fleet of 75 dedicated CNG buses of which 35 have been parked at mechanical garages meaning they are out of service. This has curtailed 5 trips in a day and 1500 passengers have lost their travelling sources, he said adding that neither the defunct CDGK administration could successfully run the buses neither it was able to earn from the private operators to who the entire fleet was outsourced. Gross loss is the end result of all experiments. Government had frequently announced to ply 4,000 buses in the city but it is still a dream to come true, he lamented. The government has to fulfill its promise to ply 4000 buses for the convenience to the citizens, he demanded. He said federal govt had allocated 4.5 billions & CDGK also allocated 500 millions for 8000 CNG buses in 2006 but this project in doldrums due to

bureaucratic hurdles & negligence he added.

On the issue of traffic management through traffic signaling system, Qureshi said that the signalisation and cross sections opening into the main avenues of city, placement of thousands of takeaway stalls and encroachment of footpath are not traffic police concerns but are directly linked to the traffic management system of city. Placing traffic personnel for vehicle-to-vehicle would also be not able to improve the system but the corruption would be increased. The ambulances and school vans get stuck amid traffic gridlock due to unscientific installation of traffic signals every half a kilometer. The traffic management system could not be streamlined unless it is placed under one authority. Different authorities are managing the traffic signal system in city and there are 177 traffic signals in city of which 116 are managed by CDGK TCD.

The DHA has 54, Civil Aviation Authority has 3, Karachi Port Trust has 1 and SITE Association of industry has 1 traffic signal in control, he informed. There are at least 300 sites in city where traffic signals are absolutely missing. Machine Tool Factory, Shamama arcade on main University road, Abul Hassan Esphahani Road, Liaquatnagar No. 10, Karimabad, Petrol Pump Nazimabad and few venues in Gadap town urgently need traffic signals, he added. He briefed the delegation on the statistics as he said that



there are only 3000 traffic police in Karachi, which population has crossed 20 million. The traffic volume in terms of number of vehicles is as: Mini Buses 14966, Buses 6400, Mini Trucks 10025, Trucks 12504, Van/Pickups 82014, Taxi 45760, Rickshaw 43583, Lifter 2293, Tractor 2972, Oil Tanker 2276, Small Van 336, Private Vehicles 813281, Motorcycles/Scooters 7713315, Ambulance 1198, Coffin Carrier 68, Disable Person Vehicle 108, Charitable trust Vehicles 124, School Buses 239, Church Vans 38 (Total 1,809,500) (as on 31.12.2007). He said due to non-availability of public transport system every day, 300 private vehicles register daily in Karachi which is a huge burden on the road & parking places. NFEH has urged govt. should provide a best public transport system in Karachi. NFEH also demanded strict action on violators of traffic rules encroachments in all area "The Supreme Court of Pakistan should take Suo Motto notice of the negligence a gross level in the defunct CDGK and the transport departments of the province", he appealed. ■

## OGRA blacklists six manufacturers

ISLAMABAD: The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) has blacklisted six Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) cylinder manufacturers for not meeting the set standard. According to Ogra officials, the companies blacklisted on account of not having international standard cylinder testing certificate includes: Kioshi, BTC, IGVI, Vintec, N K Corporation, MESCO, Taylor Wharten, Chongching and UEF. The authority has directed the following CNG cylinder storage supplying companies namely Cilbrass, BTIC, EKC India, EKC UEA, Inflex and Dalmine to acquire Canadian Power Tech Laboratory Certificate. If the Canadian Power Tech Laboratory issued international standard certificate for these blacklisted companies the authority will allow them to operate in the market. The authority has taken the decision due to the continued CNG cylinder blasts in the vehicles, which resulted in the deaths of dozens of people. The companies blacklisted by the authority are Indian, Argentina, America, UK, Brazil, UAE, Italy and Korea. It should be mentioned here that hundreds of CNG cylinders supplied by the abovementioned companies have been installed in the vehicles. The authority has forwarded the names of the companies to the Federal Board of Revenue and Custom officials so that the companies could not import CNG cylinders. ■

## Authorities told to conduct raids on cng stations

ISLAMABAD: The government has directed all the departments concerned to conduct raids on Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) stations, filling CNG in faulty cylinders in order to minimize increasing incidents in the future. The decision was taken at a high level meeting of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources, chaired by Muhammad Ejaz Chaudhry Secretary Petroleum and Natural Resources, here on Thursday. Chaudhry said serious notice to check the faulty kits fitted vehicles, used as means of public transport, has been taken on account of rise in the incidents of loss of human lives across the country. He also directed the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) to take necessary action against the culprits. The meeting was called to investigate the root causes of the incidents took place recently due to faulty CNG kits/cylinder. Acting Chairman Ogra, Director General Hydrocarbon Development Institute of Pakistan (HDIP), representatives of Chief Inspector of Explosives (CIE), Director General (Gas) and other relevant officials were also present. The Ministry for Petroleum had already submitted a detailed report to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The factors responsible for the accidents



in CNG fitted vehicles are as follows: poorly trained drivers; improper maintenance of vehicles and improper certification by motor vehicles examiners; installation of substandard CNG kits/cylinders and control equipment by the unauthorized conversion workshops; increased number of cylinders in public vehicles without considering the design specifications/axle loading to counter the impact of gas loadshedding. The meeting decided that joint teams comprising representatives of Petroleum Ministry, Ogra, HDIP and CIE would conduct surprise visits of the CNG stations in compliance with the CNG Safety Rules (Production & Marketing), 1992. Any CNG station found filling gas in any vehicle that contains faulty CNG kit/cylinder would be penalized. Moreover, the concerned departments were directed to launch public awareness campaign to educate both transporters and general masses regarding installation of quality CNG kits and cylinders from licensed and authorized vendors. The Secretary Petroleum Ministry directed Ogra to devise and implement a comprehensive inspection plan for CNG stations and take strict action against them if they fail to adopt safety measures. The Ministry would also communicate with the provincial governments to implement CNG safety rules. Chaudhry expressed great sorrow over the loss of 10 human lives in Wednesday's Matiari incident. ■

## Barred from importing CNG cylinder: FBR notifies foreign cos



Islamabad: The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has notified the foreign companies, which have been disallowed import of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) cylinders. In this connection the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has amended Customs General Order (CGO) 12 of 2002 through another CGO issued here on Friday. The FBR also issued the CGO to the Collectors of Customs, Model Customs Collectorates asking them to disallow imports of CNG cylinders being manufactured by notified foreign companies. In order to ensure compliance by the field formations, the details have been communicated to the field formations by the FBR, sources added. ■

## BAN ON RICKETY VEHICLES RUNNING ON FAULTY CNG KITS DEMANDED

KARACHI: Steady rise in the incidents of loss of human lives on account of faulty CNG kits in the public transport vehicles calls for immediate ban on such rickety vehicles. Coordinator, National Forum for Environment Health (NFEH), President Naeem Qureshi in a statement yesterday urged the concerned authorities to ensure that only factory fitted CNG vehicles, used as means of public transport, be allowed to ply on city roads and inter-city routes. There is also an urgency to ensure that a mechanism is developed and strictly followed viz-a-viz fitness of public vehicles in particular and private vehicles in general, he said. Qureshi also took strong exception to the decision to outsource the CNG buses operations by the defunct CDGK administration. This was a manifestation of complete ineligibility and poor management that deprived the citizens



of a safe and respectable means of transportation, he said. The NFEH Coordinator said the fleet of 75 dedicated CNG buses, that was once a source of ease and comfort to the urban commuters, had been ruined due to indifference of the concerned officials.

The bureaucracy and nonelected administration of the defunct CDGK have ruined the transport system in the city, said Qureshi. He mentioned that 35 buses of the defunct CDGKs fleet of 75 dedicated CNG buses are presently dumped at its different mechanical garages and are out of service. This has deprived 1500 passengers of a safe means of transportation as each of these buses made five trips a day from their home to respective work places. The activist pointed out that due to lack of will neither the defunct CDGK administration could successfully run the service nor the private operators to whom the entire fleet was out-sourced at one point of time. Qureshi said that while the government had frequently announced to introduce 4,000 new CNG buses in the city the matter could not be materialized till date. ■