



## **ANGVA2U Info** 15/2021. 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2021 (for ANGVA members only)

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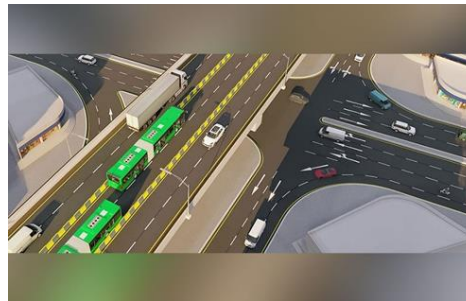
### **1.0 Selected News / Articles**

#### **1.1 Bangladesh**

#### **130 luxury buses to operate in BRT corridor**

9<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Tribune Report.

**The project with a budget of Tk4,200 crore is scheduled to be launched within 2022**



*MTWA An illustration of the BRT Courtesy*

The authorities concerned will operate 130 luxury buses in the dedicated bus corridor from Gazipur to Dhaka Airport under the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, a new transport mode in Bangladesh.

The BRT system is scheduled to be launched in December 2022.

Safiqul Islam, managing director of Dhaka Bus Rapid Transit Company Ltd, told Dhaka Tribune: “We will buy a total of 130 luxury buses to operate the country’s first BRT service. Of the buses, 80 will be CNG-run and 50 will be battery-driven electric buses.”

“Our consultant has estimated [that we will need] Tk200 crore for procuring 80 CNG-run special buses. However, the price of electric buses has not been estimated yet,” he added.

“All the buses will have a capacity of carrying 70-80 passengers as there will be space available for standing. The floors of the buses will remain at the same level as the platform of the bus stoppages. So, passengers cannot get on or get down without platforms,” he added.

On Thursday, at a press conference, Safiqul Islam said It would be the first AC bus service between Dhaka and Gazipur under government initiative, which is scheduled to be opened next year.

“It will take only 35-40 minutes [for the journey] and some 20,000 passengers can move per hour,” he added.

The project’s feasibility was tested by the World Bank in 2012 and in the same year the government approved the project. However, a delay in construction work has led to immense suffering for people. After missing several deadlines, the authorities are now optimistic that operation will be started in 2022.

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader recently visited the project site, where he stated that the ongoing construction work of the BRT project from Gazipur to Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport was causing huge sufferings for people of Gazipur and the northern districts as well.

The project is being implemented with a Tk4,200 crore budget as one of the most expensive BRTs in the world.

Prof Dr Md Musleh Uddin Hasan, chairman of the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet), told Dhaka Tribune BRT was one of the low-cost traffic solutions as there was no massive infrastructure cost. However, in Bangladesh BRT has turned into a huge infrastructure development project, which is very unexpected.

*Source:* <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/dhaka/2021/09/09/130-luxury-busses-to-operate-in-brt-corridor>

## 1.2 Pakistan

### Surging prices diminish CNG’s attraction as fuel of choice

19<sup>th</sup> September 2021. By Aamir Shafaat Khan. Published in Dawn.



*A CNG station in Karachi looks deserted on Saturday night, apparently because of high price of CNG compared to that of petrol. — Fahim Siddiqi / White Star*

**KARACHI: Running vehicles on compressed natural gas (CNG) against petrol to cut travelling cost has lost its charm as some stakeholders say that the saving has dropped to only five per cent while others say it is almost zero.**

CNG was launched in Pakistan in 1992 with much fanfare as an environment-friendly and alternative fuel with a primary objective to curtail costly petrol imports. For rapid development of this sector, the Musharraf government in 2002 announced massive incentives including duty waivers on CNG plant & equipment, kits and cylinders. As a result, investors set up CNG stations across the country amid booming demand for the fuel and was it used to save over 50pc cost in contrast to running vehicles on petrol.

However, with growing uncertainty over availability of CNG amid severe gas shortages coupled with meteoric hike in its price, a large number of private car owners have shifted to petrol despite keeping the cylinder and kit intact in their vehicles.

### *Petrol regains its status a primary fuel for vehicles*

“After the latest hike petrol is selling at Rs123.30 per litre, but CNG still provides a saving of 5pc,” claims Ghayas Paracha, group leader of the All Pakistan CNG Association (APCNGA).

In Punjab and Islamabad, CNG is being sold at an average price of Rs121 per litre. Despite very low savings commercial transport owners and 20pc private car owners still rely on CNG, he added.

Mr Paracha said the influx of used imported 660cc vehicles with EFI engines and high mileage benefit has also given a major blow to the demand for CNG as these vehicles cannot be converted to gas.

The government allowed import of CNG kits and cylinders last year after maintaining a long ban. With the passage of time; new kits have been invented for EFI engines, thus ensuring high mileage than petrol but consumers are still shy to use these new kits, he said.

APCNGA Coordinator for Sindh Zone Samir Najmul Hussain said gone are the days when private car owners used to save 50pc on using CNG against petrol.

“Today, there is no saving. Running the vehicle on CNG and petrol is the same,” he claimed, adding that CNG sales of 15mmcf in Sindh as compared to pre-Covid sales of 70-90mmcf is enough to justify massive switch over to petrol.

He recalled that saving through CNG was 30pc when the gas was available at Rs123 per kg, but now running a vehicle on gas at a price of Rs165-180 per kg in Sindh does not hold any attraction for the consumers.

Mr Hussain claimed that over 40 CNG outlets have closed in Sindh due to low turnover of vehicles making it impossible for the owners to sustain huge expenses of power bills, labour salaries etc.

He said CNG demand in Punjab is now 30mmcf which was 170mmcf in 2014 when local natural gas was being utilised. After shifting to RLNG in 2017, the CNG sales in Punjab were estimated at 60mmcf.

Karachi Transport Itehad (KTI) President Syed Irshad Hussain Bukhari said 95pc private big buses, mini buses and coaches were running on CNG when the fuel was available at Rs123 per kg a few months back.

“Now transporters have been shifting to diesel after meteoric rise in gas price,” he said, claiming that 60pc public transport is now on CNG and 40pc on diesel as Rs165-180 per kg for gas is not feasible for big vehicles.” Total big buses, mini buses and coaches in Karachi are 4,500 approximately. However, diesel price has risen to Rs120 now from Rs110 per litre in January.

Despite no permission given by the Sindh government, public transport owners have raised the fares by an average Rs5 last month to offset the impact of rising diesel and CNG prices.

A number of rickshaw owners said that they have stopped using CNG owing to lingering anxiety over non-availability especially in winter and even in summer amid unbearable high prices.

However, consumers are in a limbo. Previously rickshaw owners used to charge higher fares attributing rising CNG prices. In the last few months, they have found another excuse to charge

more money citing rising petrol prices. In January, petrol was available at Rs106 as compared to Rs123.30 per litre now.

Most of the rickshaw owners are seen demanding extra money by ensuring the passengers of driving rickshaw on petrol instead of gas, while there are still a number of rickshaw owners who are still using gas and demanding higher prices. Irrespective of using gas or petrol, rickshaw owners demand Rs500 for a 12-13 km journey instead of Rs400.

Whether CNG saves money or not, there has always been a dark side of using CNG for destroying petrol engines with the passage of time as no CNG engines have ever been developed so far by any foreign car assemblers. The money saved by the consumers on using CNG has finally gone to waste owing to engine repairing after a gap of two to four years depending on extensive running of vehicle on gas.

For 800-1,000cc vehicles, the engine remake costs between Rs30,000-50,000 while it costs more on 1,300cc and above vehicles.

Pakistan had seen record petrol sales of 0.731m tonnes in May despite early market closures and Eidul Fitr holidays, rising to 0.755m tonnes in June and 0.81m tonnes record high sales in July. In August, petrol sales was 0.733m tonnes. In July-August, petrol sales went up by 10pc to 1.549m tonnes as compared to same period 2020. Diesel sales in July-August had swelled by 18pc to 1.390m tonnes.

*Source:* <https://www.dawn.com/news/1647141>

### 1.3 Pakistan

#### **Cylinder blast at CNG station in Peshawar injures four**

20<sup>th</sup> September 2021.



*Police and Rescue1122 teams reached the spot and shifted the injured to Lady Reading Hospital.*

PESHAWAR, (Dunya News) – At least four persons sustained burn injuries when a gas cylinder exploded during filling CNG (Compressed Natural Gas) in a rickshaw in Peshawar on Sunday, Dunya News reported.

According to details, the explosion occurred at a CNG station located at the Kohat Road during filling CNG in a rickshaw. Several other vehicles were also damaged by the blast.

Police and Rescue1122 teams reached the spot after being informed and shifted the injured to Lady Reading Hospital. Rescue sources said that all the injured were in stable condition.

*Source:* <https://dunyanews.tv/en/Pakistan/620485-Cylinder-blast-at-CNG-station-in-Peshawar-injures-four>

## 1.4 India

### GAIL launches offer for owners of CNG vehicles

16<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Staff Reporter. Bengaluru

#### Pre-paid CNG fuel card, which can be used at any outlet in Bengaluru



*The pre-paid CNG fuel card will offer a daily limit of ₹150 to ₹300 depending on the type of vehicle. | Photo Credit: The Hindu*

GAIL Gas Limited launched a special scheme for Bengaluru Urban and Rural districts for the benefit of CNG-vehicle owners.

The CNG Promotional Scheme is valid for any person or organisation purchasing a new car, auto, taxi, LCV, HCV, or converting them to CNG with effect from September 10, 2021.

A pre-paid CNG fuel card ranging from ₹14,000 to ₹25,000 by GAIL Gas Limited will be offered to CNG customers, which can be utilised to fill CNG (free of cost) at any CNG station within Bengaluru. The card carries a validity of 120 to 180 days from the date of activation, and will offer a daily limit of ₹150 to ₹300 depending on the type of vehicle.

The scheme was launched on September 15 by Minister of Transport B. Sriramulu, in the presence of Raman Chadha, Chief Executive Officer, GAIL Gas Limited.

*Source:* <https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/bangalore/gail-launches-offer-for-owners-of-cng-vehicles/article36489150.ece>

## 1.5 China

### China's oil consumption seen peaking around 2026, Sinopec exec says

17<sup>th</sup> September 2021. Reuters. Reporting by Chen Aizhu in Singapore and Muyu Xu in Beijing; Editing by Jacqueline Wong; Editing by Rashmi Aich



*Trucks carrying liquefied natural gas (LNG) are seen at Sinopec's LNG terminal in Tianjin, China October 22, 2018. Picture taken October 22, 2018. REUTERS/Stringer*

SINGAPORE, Sept 17 (Reuters) - China's oil consumption is likely to peak around 2026 at about 16 million barrels per day and that of natural gas by around 2040, according to a top executive of Sinopec Corp.

Sinopec's oil peak forecast echoes a prediction by consultancy Rystad Energy in April that cited rapid adoption of electric vehicles as the main cause for global oil demand to peak over the next five years.

Oil will shift eventually to become a raw material for chemicals rather than fuel, Ma Yongsheng, Sinopec's acting chairman told a seminar in Beijing on Thursday that was confirmed by a company representative on Friday.

The top Asian oil refiner will "forcefully promote" green growth of its refining and petrochemical business and remove inefficient and energy-intensive capacities.

"We will accelerate the transition from oil to chemicals and boost production of high-end materials...and raise lower-carbon feedstocks to cut down the carbon footprint throughout the manufacturing cycle," said Ma.

The firm aims to have its average single refinery's crude processing capacity to reach 10 million tonnes per year, or 200,000 bpd, he added, without giving a comparative figure.

China's natural gas consumption is forecast to peak around 2040, when demand is estimated at 620 billion cubic meters, and it will become China's top fossil fuel resource around 2050, Ma said.

China sees natural gas a key bridge fuel that is going to expand steadily in demand for the next two decades.

*Source:* <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/chinas-oil-consumption-seen-peaking-around-2026-sinopec-exec-says-2021-09-17/>

## 1.6 Indonesia

### Jakarta court finds president, governor liable for city's air pollution troubles

17<sup>th</sup> September 2021. By Hans Nicholas Jong, Mongabay.com



*A student goes to school wearing a mask to protect him from the smoke that blankets the city of Palangka Raya, Central Kalimantan. Image: Aulia Erlangga/CIFOR, CC BY-NC-ND 2.0.*

The judges order the government to carry out serious actions to improve air quality in Jakarta and ensure the rights of citizens to clean and healthy air.

A court in Jakarta has found the Indonesian government, including President Joko Widodo, negligent in a citizen lawsuit filed against the poor air quality in the capital.

In its landmark ruling handed down Sept. 16, the Central Jakarta District Court ruled the government was liable for the air pollution caused by millions of motor vehicles and by coal-fired power plants in the neighboring provinces of Banten and West Java.

Jakarta is routinely ranked among the most polluted major cities in the world, with experts [estimating](#) that poor air quality causes 5.5 million cases of disease here each year, amounting to 6.8 trillion rupiah (\$477 million) in health costs.

Ayu Eza Tiara from the Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (LBH Jakarta) and a member of the legal team representing the 32 citizen plaintiffs who filed the lawsuit back in July 2019, *called the verdict a "landmark ruling" as it's the first air pollution lawsuit in Indonesia.*

Named as respondents in the lawsuit were President Widodo and three of his ministers — home affairs, health, and environment — as well as the governors of Jakarta, Banten and West Java.

Saifuddin Zuhri, the presiding judge in the case, said the government had “violated the law” by failing to fulfill citizens’ rights to healthy air. He called on the government to take serious measures to improve air quality.

Among the court-ordered measures is an update of the national air quality standard, which is much laxer than elsewhere in Asia or World Health Organization recommendations.

The WHO considers exposure to harmful PM2.5 particles at concentrations of more than 25 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) over a 24-hour period as considered unhealthy. Indonesia’s previous national standard, which was determined in 1999 and in force until 2020, was nearly three times higher, at  $65 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ .

The government [updated](#) the national standard in 2021 through a [new regulation](#). But at  $55 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ , the new national standard is still less stringent than the WHO standard.

“Even though the government has revised the national air quality standard through the 2021 government regulation, it hasn’t been proven to contribute to air pollution mitigation,” Ayu said. “Because the regulation is still new, there has to be an evaluation [to see if the new standard is strict enough] in the next one year.”

### **Pollution from power plants**

The court also ordered improvements to be made in the air quality of Jakarta specifically. It ordered Governor Anies Baswedan to come up with a strategy to mitigate air pollution in the capital.

This is similar to what the Chinese government did in 2014 when it [declared war](#) on air pollution and unveiled an [action plan](#) to improve overall air quality across the country within five years.

To come up with a similar strategy, the Jakarta administration needs to study the city’s air quality and the sources of pollution, the judges said, and craft science-based policies in response.

In 2019, Anies [issued](#) an instruction on how to tackle air pollution in the city, which included planting trees. Ayu, however, said the instruction hasn’t been effective as it’s not based on science or concrete data.

“Until now, Anies always takes pride in his instruction, but the judges said what the governor has done has no clear benchmark [to measure against]. So they’re asking for an action plan that has a benchmark,” she said.

The court also ruled the Ministry of Health had failed to communicate the health risks posed by air pollution to the public, and ordered it to help the Jakarta administration in coming up with a target for air pollution reduction and an action plan.

“During the trial, the health ministry was in denial, saying that they’ve done a series of activities [to inform the public on the danger of air pollution],” Ayu said. “But in its ruling, the court said that there’s no proof that they’ve done that.”

The court also took into account air pollution coming from the neighboring provinces of Banten and West Java in its ruling, and thus ordered the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to supervise emissions in those jurisdictions to identify the sources of transboundary pollution.

A [2020 study](#) by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA), a think tank, shows that the persistently high levels of PM2.5 pollutants in Jakarta come from coal-fired power plants within 100 kilometers (60 miles) of the city.

Activists say [they're worried](#) that air pollution in Jakarta could worsen with more coal plants planned to be built in the vicinity of the city in the coming years. These planned plants will be required to meet emissions standards that are much laxer than regional or global standards.

### **To appeal or not to appeal**

The government has 14 days from the date of the ruling to decide whether to file an appeal. Responding to the verdict, Jakarta Governor Anies said he wouldn't challenge it, saying on Twitter that his administration "is ready to carry out the court's decision for better Jakarta air."

When the plaintiffs lodged the lawsuit in 2019, Anies sought to shift the blame to the public, including the activists, for not using public transportation often enough.

"Those people filing the lawsuit have also contributed to the air quality decline. Unless everyone rides a bicycle, it would be different if that's the case," he [said](#) at the time. "The air quality is not only caused by one or two professions, but by all of us, including those that filed the civil lawsuit."

Ayu said it's good that Anies has now accepted the ruling.

"But we can't rest easy yet because based on our past experience in our lawsuit against the privatisation of Jakarta's water, the governor of Jakarta was Widodo," she said. "When he became president, he [decided](#) to file an appeal [in 2015]."

Ayu called on the central government to follow the Jakarta administration's example and not appeal against the ruling.

"The lawsuit itself already took two years," she said. "If it's appealed, how many more years would it take? Rather than wasting time and money, it's better for the government to work together with us and researchers and the public to improve air quality."

Khalisah Khalid, political coordinator for the Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Walhi) and one of the plaintiffs, echoed Ayu's sentiment.

"We hope that the defendants don't file an appeal because what we're fighting for is the interest, the health and the safety of all citizens," she said, "including the future generation so that [all of us] can get a better quality of life."

*This story was published with permission from [Mongabay.com](#).*

**Source:** <https://www.eco-business.com/news/jakarta-court-finds-president-governor-liable-for-citys-air-pollution-tribbles/>

**End**