



Responding to the transport crisis in Karachi

Appendices

The Urban Resource Centre, Karachi
with Arif Hasan and Mansoor Raza

Working Paper

July 2015

Urban

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transport

About the authors

The Urban Resource Centre, Karachi is a Karachi-based NGO founded by teachers, professionals, students, activists and community organizations from low income settlements. It was set up in response to the recognition that the planning process for Karachi did not serve the interests of low- and lower-middle-income groups, small businesses and informal sector operators and was also creating adverse environmental and socioeconomic impacts. The Urban Resource Centre has sought to change this through creating an information base about Karachi's development on which everyone can draw; also through research and analysis of government plans (and their implications for Karachi's citizens), advocacy, mobilization of communities, and drawing key government staff into discussions. This has created a network of professionals and activists from civil society and government agencies who understand planning issues from the perspective of these communities and other less powerful interest groups. This network has successfully challenged many government plans that are ineffective, over-expensive and anti-poor and has promoted alternatives. It shows how the questioning of government plans in an informed manner by a large number of interest groups, community organizations, NGOs, academics, political parties and the media can force the government to listen and to make modifications to its plans, projects and investments. Comparable urban resource centres have also been set up in other cities in Pakistan and also in other nations.

Arif Hasan is an architect/planner in private practice in Karachi, dealing with urban planning and development issues in general and in Asia and Pakistan in particular. He has been involved with the Orangi Pilot Project (OPP) since 1981. He is also a founding member of the Urban Resource Centre (URC) in Karachi and has been its chair since its inception in 1989. He has written widely on housing and urban issues in Asia, including several books published by Oxford University Press and several papers published in *Environment and Urbanization*. He has been a consultant and advisor to many local and foreign community based organizations, national and international NGOs, and bilateral and multilateral donor agencies.
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Produced by IIED's Human Settlements Group

The Human Settlements Group works to reduce poverty and improve health and housing conditions in the urban centres of Africa, Asia and Latin America. It seeks to combine this with promoting good governance and more ecologically sustainable patterns of urban development and rural-urban linkages.

Acknowledgements

This study was initiated, designed and supervised by Arif Hasan. The interviews with government officials, transporters, and community members in the low income settlements, were carried out by Zahid Farooq and Rizwan-ul-Haq (Social Organiser and Manager of Documentation respectively of URC, Karachi). These interviews were transcribed from Urdu into English by Dr Qamar-uz-Zaman Yousefzai (Faculty member at Benazir University, Karachi), Saima Shivejee and Ravina Anthony (students of the Social Science Department, ZABIST University, Karachi), and by Rizwan-ul-Haq. The interviews with women commuters were carried out and transcribed from Urdu into English by Anadil Iftekhhar (a school teacher who interned with URC). Anadil also located and identified the respondents.

The questionnaire survey was supervised by Mansoor Raza and Humayoon Waqar (a freelance researcher). Survey participants were URC staff members, Zahid Farooq, Adnan Farooqui, Mukhtar Yousuf, Shakeel Gill, Rao Nasir Ali, Seema Liaquat, Muhammad, Jamil and Shazia Perween. Others who assisted in the survey were RanaSadiq and Shakeel (both community activists). The data feeding of the survey through SPSS was carried out by Rozina Imtiaz, and the analysis was carried out by Engr. Mansoor Raza, who also helped Arif Hasan in putting the document together. The URC Director, Younus Baloch, monitored the URC part of the work.

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Transport-related problems in Karachi have increased considerably in recent decades. Traffic congestion contributes to increased air and noise pollution, leading to health problems, high accident rates, and environmental degradation. It has also meant declining living standards, as to avoid long commutes, people's livelihood choices have become more limited and this has determined where they live. This has resulted in a drop in income and a decrease in personal security, which has affected the most vulnerable, in particular women. This paper presents a historical perspective on the causes of the current crisis, and its repercussions on transporters, fuel suppliers, and the public; outlining current government plans and making recommendations.

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Appendix 1: Literature consulted

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Acts

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Karachi Metropolitan Transport Authority Act, 1998.

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2. **2-stroke rickshaw owners regret changing engines**
(By Irfan Aligi; Daily Dawn, 29/04/2008)
3. **Delays push KCR project cost up to \$1.58 bn**
(By Asadullah, The News-13, 02/07/2009)
4. **CDGK to construct six more flyovers on Sharea Faisal**
(The News-20, 02/07/2009)
5. **Opposition leaders slam carbon surcharge**
(Dawn-15, 03/07/2009)
6. **'85,000 road mishaps in city in 2.5 years'**
(DailyTimes-B1, 08/07/2009)
7. **Cop arrested for selling fake licences**
(By Gibran Ashraf, The News-14, 12/07/2009)
8. **Hapless commuters suffer torrid time**
(By Fawad Ali Shah, DailyTimes-B1, 15/07/2009)
9. **Naval officers making Sharea Faisal prone to accidents**
(By Shahid Husain, The News-13, 21/07/2009)
10. **The beginning of a transport revolution?**
(The News-13, 28/07/2009)
11. **Oil import bill shrinks by 17 per cent**
(By Mubarak Zeb Khan, Dawn-1, 26/07/2009)
12. **Man dies after falling off bus roof**
(The News-14, 29/07/2009)
13. **1,600 CNG buses on Karachi roads soon**
(The News-13, 11/08/2009)
14. **Transport fares register steep rise in 18 months**
(By Bhagwandas, Dawn-13, 09/11/2009)
15. **VVIP movement, Boulton Market reconstruction lead to massive gridlocks**
(The News-13, 05/01/2010)
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(By Tahir Siddiqui, Dawn-13, 17/03/2010)
19. **The Karachi tramway of yesteryear**
(By Owais Mughal, The News-39 Kolachi, 04/04/2010)
20. **CDGK given one week to submit SFC-IV EIA report**
(By M. Waqar Bhatti, The News-13, 09/04/2010)
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(By Naimat Haider, The News-39 Kolachi, 20/06/2010)
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(Dawn-15, 30/06/2010)
23. **Traffic nightmare on city roads**
(Dawn-15, 07/09/2011)
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(The News-13, 12/10/2011)
25. **Karachi Circular Railway victims still awaiting legal cover**
(By Imtiaz Ali, The News-13, 10/11/2011)
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(Daily Times-B2, 23/11/2011)
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(By Riaz Ahmed, Karachi, Dawn-6 6/4/2012)
28. **80pc of CNG rickshaw drivers not qualified to give you a ride**
(By Qadeer Tanoli, The news-13, 223/04/2012)
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(By Qadeer Tanoli, The News-13, 26/04/2012)
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31. **CNG crisis**
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32. **KCR project to be ready by 2017**
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33. **Less people died on Karachi's roads last year, annual report shows**
(*The Express Tribune*13, May 11th, 2012.)

34. **MQM opposes assessment of flyovers, bridges**
(The News-13, 27/04/2012)
35. **Registration, licences for truck stands**
(Dawn-17, 26/2/2012)
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(By Aroosa Shaukat, Tribune-3 10/4/2012)
37. **With new projects in mind, transport dept seeks Rs4.3b**
(The Express Tribune,15, June 4th, 2012.)
38. **Project cost rises by Rs100bn in three years**
(By Imtiaz Ali,The News-20,06/07/2012)
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(By Saad Hasan,The Express Tribune-14,12/07/2012)
40. **SHC moved against ban on import of CNG kits**
(By Jamal Khurshid, The News-14, 29/08/2012)
41. **'A better public transport sector can boost city's economy'**
(The News-14,10/09/2012)
42. **Traffic nightmares may come true**
(The News-20, 16/10/2012)
43. **Roads of Karachi to be cleaned up by checking 3,000 vehicles every month**
(The Express Tribune-13, 02/11/2012)
44. **Rationalisation of bus fares in the city overdue**
(The News-14, 04/11/2012)
45. **In an explosive city, a different kind of bomb roams the streets**
(By Sohail Khatak,The Express Tribune-15,14/12/2012)
46. **Transporters to go on strike against new 'sky-high' traffic fines**
(The Express Tribune-13, 29/03/2013)
47. **Traffic woes: Little being done to ease gridlock on Saddar streets**
(The Express Tribune-14,28/05/2013)

Appendix 2: List of interviewees

A. Interviews with government officials:

Sr. No.	Date	Interviewee	Designation & Organisation / Department	Interviewer	Place of interview	Contact No.
A-01.	29.01.2014	Muhammad Athar	Director, Transport & Communication, KMC	Rizwan & Zahid	Office, 8 th Floor, Civic Centre	021-99230655
A-02.	31.01.2014	Arif Hanif	DIG Traffic Police, Garden Road	Rizwan & Zahid		
A-03.	04.02.2014	Fazal Karim Khatri	DG Mass Transit	Rizwan & Zahid	Office, 6 th floor Civic Centre	
A-04.	12.02.2014	Ghazanfar Ali Qadri	Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA)	Rizwan & Zahid	office, 3 rd Floor Civic Centre	
A-05.	17.02.2014	Tahir Ahmed Khan	Secretary Transport	Rizwan & Zahid	office, 3 rd Floor Tughlaq House, Sindh Secretariat	
A-06.		Syed Iftekhar Hussain	Addl. District Officer Transport & Communication, KMC	Rizwan & Zahid		
A-07.	17.10. 2014	Shamsuddin Abro	Director, Karachi Public Transport Society	Rizwan & Zahid		

B. Interviews with transporters

Sr. No.	Date	Interviewee	Designation & Organisation / Department	Interviewer	Place of interview	Contact No.
B-01.	20.12.2013	Irshad Bukhari	President, Karachi Transport Ittehad	Rizwan-ul-Haq, Zahid Farooq, Mansoor Raza	KTI Office, Akbar Road, Saddar, Karachi	0333-2149965
B-02.	15.01.2014	Shabbir H. Sulemanjee	Chairman, All Pakistan CNG Association	Rizwan & Zahid	Office, 5 th Floor, Business Centre, Shahrah-e-Faisal	0321-9288350
B-03.	20.01.2014	Mehmood Afridi & Tawab Khan	President, Muslim Minibus & Vice President	Rizwan & Zahid		021-32737822 & 0333-2232190
B-04.	07.02.2014	Akbar Khan and Syed Khattri	President and Finance Secretary, All Karachi Qingqis & Rickshaw Association	Rizwan & Zahid		0321-8992782 & 0300-2624937
B-05.	10.02.2014	Hafiz-ul-Haq Hassan Zai	President, Karachi Taxi & Motor Rickshaw, Yellow Cab Owners' Association	Rizwan & Zahid	Office, Patel Para	0300-2416676 & 0321-9209637

D. Interviews with the public

Sr. No.	Date	Interviewee	Designation & Organization / Department	Interviewer	Place of Interview	Contact No.
D-01.	April 2014	Amjad Ali		Rizwan-ul-Haq	Khuda-ki-Basti	
D-02	April 2014	Jawed Sultan		Rizwan-ul-Haq	Khuda-ki-Basti	
D-03	April 2014	Nadeem Bakhsh		Rizwan-ul-Haq	Khuda-ki-Basti	
D-04	April 2014	Muhammad Yaseen		Rizwan-ul-Haq	Khuda-ki-Basti	
D-05	April 2014	Basheer		Rizwan-ul-Haq	Khuda-ki-Basti	
D-06	26.03.2014	Dr. Qazi Mujahid Ali		Rizwan-ul-Haq	Surjani Town	

Appendix 3: Questionnaires and analysis

(English translation of Urdu questionnaire)

Interview with the transport passengers

1. **Name:** _____

2. **Contact No.:** _____

3. **Home Address:** _____

4. **Office Address:** _____

5. What kind of transport do you use to travel to work?

i. Bus ii. Coach iii. Mini Bus iv. Qingchi

v. Rickshaw vi. Taxi vii. Contract Bus

viii. Others: _____

6. Duration of one way travel:

_____ Total: _____

Duration of wait at the bus stop: _____

7. Fare of one way travel:

_____ Total: _____

Note: If the fare is being paid monthly kindly mention the details.

8. Problems faced during travelling:

i. Long waiting for the transportation

ii. The duration of the travel is long

iii. Have to change two buses/vehicles

iv. Have to change three buses/vehicles

v. Others: _____

9. Is the environment of the vehicles/buses proper?

i. Yes ii. No

If no, what are the problems present?

i. They are over-crowded

ii. They are too noisy

iii. Improper seats

iv. Broken windows

v. Others: _____

10. Is it difficult to travel in the buses/vehicles while standing?

- i. Yes ii. No

Details: _____

11. The conditions of the buses/vehicles:

- i. Good ii. Bad iii. Satisfactory

Details: _____

12. Is the route number of the buses/mini-buses clearly mentioned on them?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't Know

13. If the route number is not mentioned on the vehicle, what problems do you have to face?

- i. Have to confirm it from the people or the bus conductor
 ii. Identification of the vehicle becomes difficult
 iii. Have to run after the vehicle iv. No difficulty
 v. Others: _____

14. How do you usually travel?

- i. I find a seat ii. Stand iii. On the roof iv. Have to sit on the engine
 v. By hanging on to the door vi. Others: _____

15. What is the attitude of the drivers and the conductors?

- i. Satisfactory ii. Good iii. Bad iv. Worse

Details: _____

16. The speed of the bus/vehicles:

- i. Satisfactory ii. Slow iii. Fast iv. Very Fast

17. Does the bus/vehicle stop at the bus/vehicle stop?

- i. Always ii. Sometimes iii. Never

Details: _____

18. When climbing up or down the bus/vehicle, are children, women and senior citizens taken care of?

- i. Always ii. Sometimes iii. Never iv. Don't know

19. Do the passengers get hurt when climbing up or down the bus?

- i. Often ii. Sometimes iii. Never iv. Don't know

20. Are women harassed in the buses/vehicles?

- i. Never ii. Sometimes iii. Often iv. Don't know

21. Are passengers asked to get down from the bus in the middle of the road?

- i. Sometimes ii. Often iii. Never

Reasons: _____

22. Do the drivers change the routes by themselves?

- i. Sometimes ii. Often iii. Never

Reasons: _____

23. Is it difficult to catch a ride on a strike day?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Sometimes

24. How do you travel on a strike day?

- i. Skip work ii. Suzuki/Van iii. Rickshaw/Taxi iv. Hitch a ride
v. By walk vi. Qingchi vii. Contract Bus

viii. Others: _____

25. Is it easy to find a bus/vehicle at night?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Sometimes iv. Don't know

Details: _____

26. In case of a CNG strike, it is difficult to find a bus/vehicle.

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Sometimes iv. Don't know

27. If there is no bus/vehicle available, how do you travel?

Details: _____

28. During travel the condition of the clothes/shoes is also affected.

- i. Often ii. Sometimes iii. Never

Details: _____

29. Are you satisfied with the steps which the government is taking to improve the situation of transport?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Details: _____

30. Should the number of seats for women be increased?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

31. Is there a need for separate transport for women?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Reasons: _____

32. Do you think it is safe for women to travel at night?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Details: _____

33. Do the drivers increase or decrease the speed by themselves?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

34. Are the buses stopped at the stands appearing in the middle of the routes?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Duration of the stop: _____

35. In your opinion, are the CNG/LPG cylinders properly fitted in the vehicles?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Your opinion: _____

36. Passenger vehicles have proper foot rests?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

If not, reason: _____

37. Is the rate of the rent uniform throughout?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

38. Do you prefer music while travelling?

- i. Yes ii. No

Details: _____

39. Are you satisfied with the performance of the traffic police?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. To an extent only

Details: _____

40. Do you have to face theft/robbery during travelling?

- i. Never ii. Once iii. More than one time

Details: _____

41. Does a good transport system contribute to a better employment?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Details: _____

42. In your opinion is Qingchi a beneficial ride?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

43. In your opinion is a motorbike a better option than public transport?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

Details: _____

44. Do you or your family own a motorbike?

- i. Yes ii. No

Details: _____

45. Do you think that students and senior citizens should be given a concession on the rent?

- i. Yes ii. No iii. Don't know

46. In your opinion what steps are required to improve the public transport system?

47. What is your occupation?

48. Your monthly salary/earnings?

_____ Rupees

Interviewer's name: _____

Date: _____

Time of the interview: _____

Conclusion/Summary/Preview: _____

Analysis of Questionnaires for Transport Research (March 2014)

The survey forms part of research carried out by Arif Hasan and the Urban Resource Centre. The objectives of the research was to document the economic and social problems and opportunities provided by Karachi's six main commuter transport modes (and their relationship to urban form), to explore the policy implications, and to provide the basis for a film on this topic.

For the purpose of the survey, a total of 150 respondents were interviewed in different parts of Karachi. The places where the survey was conducted include FB Area, North Nazimabad, University Road, Bahadurabad, Saddar, Lyari, Defence Housing Authority (DHA), Korangi, Jail Road, North Karachi, Baloch Colony, Drug Road, Baldia Town, Junejo Town, Rehman Colony, Shadman Town, Nazimabad, Umer Colony, Gulistan-e-Jouhar, Surjani Town, Orangi Town, Moriya Khan Goth, Malir, Gulbahar, Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Shah Faisal Colony, PECHS, Landhi, Manzoor Colony.

Each form of the structured survey took somewhere between 30 to 40 minutes and approximately 80 hours were spent in administering 150 forms. Each form comprises 47 questions. The questions are structured in a closed loop manner, but a couple of queries also seek opinion and further details in the responses.

The findings of the survey are divided into the following three broader categories:

1. Preferred and availability of conveyance
2. Woes of commuters
3. Recommendations by the respondents

1. Preference and availability of conveyance

The preference and availability of the mode varies in normal and unusual days. The unusual days refer to strike calls by various political religious and ethnic parties and groups. The unusual days also signify CNG shut down days. Moreover, as per respondents, the situation also varies as availability during the daytime is different compared to night.

In normal days, the majority of the respondents (32.7 per cent) use two modes of conveyance for commuting; bus and rickshaw, while the second largest group (19.3 per cent) travels only by bus. Coach is the third major option as is used by 16.7 per cent and the least used mode of conveyance is the rickshaw which is 1.3 per cent. Contract buses are also deployed by 1.3 per cent of commuters who took part in the survey.

Nearly half of the respondents, 50.7 per cent, own a motorcycle while just under half (48 per cent) do not. Motorcycles are considered a better means of public transport by 60.7 per cent of the respondents, whereas 34 think otherwise. 19.3 per cent think that it is fast and safe, while 16.3 per cent think that it is a dangerous mode of conveyance. The QINGQI, as mentioned by 60 per cent, is a helpful addition to the modes of conveyance, while 34.7 per cent do not think that way.

90 per cent of the respondents mentioned that it is hard to find transport on strike days. 48.7 per cent of respondents avoid going to work on strike days, while 22.7 per cent find rickshaws to take them to their work place. Another 12.7 per cent ask for lift from somebody in order to commute.

In unusual circumstances, as is the case with CNG shut down days, 86.7 per cent of the respondents mentioned that it is difficult to get a bus/van and only 5.3 per cent mentioned that they do not face any difficulties. On CNG shut down days, rickshaw is the alternate transport for 38.7 per cent of the respondents, whereas another 27.3 per cent rely on 'lifts'. A substantial number, 16 per cent, mentioned that they do not go to work on these days.

It is interesting to note that during the night, 62.7 per cent of the respondents cannot find a bus or van easily, while 16.7 per cent mentioned that this varies, while another 18.7 per cent said that they can find these easily. It appears from the survey that most of the respondents (82.7 per cent) do not consider it safe for women to travel at night, whereas 14 per cent think otherwise.

2. Woes of commuters

The difficulties mentioned by the respondents range from a lengthy time spent travelling and waiting for buses, overcrowding on buses, standing when travelling, travelling on roof tops, suffering injuries, leaving the bus half way through the journey for one reason or another, harassment of women commuters, damage of attire, dangers of faulty installation of CNG/LPG cylinders, and non-standardisation of bus fares.

Commuters spend a considerable time on the roads. Exactly 35.3 per cent of the interviewees spend 41 to 60 minutes on the road, daily and each way. Another 13.3 per cent spend 81 to 90 minutes of their time on the road and only 6 per cent mentioned that they spend 11 to 20 minutes for a one-way commute. The waiting time at bus stops for 48.6 per cent varies from 5 minutes to 20 minutes. Woes of travelling as mentioned by the respondents include long travelling hours (32.7 per cent), to long waits for the buses (31.3 per cent) and changing buses (20.0) per cent. Also, most of the respondents (68.7 per cent) are of the opinion that drivers stay quite long at transit stopovers, whereas 28 per cent think the contrary.

The majority of the respondents (36.7 per cent) were concerned about overcrowding on buses, and 26.7 per cent expressed their unhappiness about noise pollution, broken seats/ interiors. As a result, only 13.3 per cent of the respondents get a seat while travelling by bus. Another 6 per cent mentioned that they travel on the roof and 27.3 per cent mentioned that they travel standing up.

A considerable percentage, 49.3 per cent, opined that passengers 'sometimes' are dropped half way and another 24.7 per cent mentioned that this is done frequently. Another 14.7 per cent responded to the question with 'never'. Reasons for this include disputes on fares, cited by 54 per cent of respondents, while 16 per cent mentioned running out of CNG/LPG, and 2.7 per cent cited mechanical problems. 'Sometimes' was the frequency of bus route changes by 72.7 per cent of the respondents and another 20 per cent mentioned that the bus routes are never changed. The law and order situation was the reason cited by 56.7 per cent.

While getting on or off the bus, 47.3 per cent of the respondents mentioned that they suffer injuries 'sometimes', whereas 36.7 per cent mentioned 'frequently'. Only 6.7 per cent mentioned that they never sustained any injury. A considerable majority, 60 per cent, mentioned that the footrests on the buses are not in a good condition, while 32.7 per cent think otherwise.

There is also a gender dimension to add to the woes of commuting. The majority of the respondents, 46 per cent, were of the opinion that women are harassed regularly on the bus or in vans, while 37.3 per cent mentioned the frequency as 'sometimes'. It is interesting to note that 11.3 per cent mentioned that women are never harassed.

It appears to be a widely shared belief among the respondents that CNG/LPG cylinders are not installed safely on the buses as 79.3 per cent answered 'no' to the question.

A slight majority, 50.7 per cent, are sceptical about the bus fares being standard.

Apart from the above-mentioned difficulties, a considerable number of the respondents, 60 per cent mentioned that they were robbed either once or more than once on public transport, whereas 36.7 per cent mentioned that they were never robbed.

3. Recommendations

Recommendations by commuters include expanding the seating arrangements, increasing the number of buses, having women-only transport and facilitating transport for the elderly.

Most of the respondents, 66.7 per cent, are not satisfied with the measures taken by the government to improve the transport system, though 26 per cent mentioned that

they were satisfied. A considerable majority, 73.3 per cent, of the respondents considered the traffic police to be an asset, while another 13.3 per cent are not so satisfied with the reputation of the traffic police.

An overwhelming majority, 86 per cent, are of the opinion that there is a need to increase the seating arrangements for women in buses and only 10 per cent denied the need for it. The need for separate women-only transport was agreed by 76.7 per cent of the respondents, whereas 18.7 per cent do not consider it necessary. 28 per cent mentioned that it would enable women to travel at ease, 22.7 per cent mentioned that it is good for women and another 19.3 per cent think that it is usual practice that women's seats are occupied by men, hence it is better to have their separate buses for men and women.

Bigger buses are the solution of the transport woes for 30.7 per cent, while another 38.7 per cent think that the transport issue could be handled by increasing the number of buses. The majority, 82 per cent, of the respondents believe that a better transport system would help in securing better job opportunities.

An overwhelming majority, 92 per cent, think that the elderly should be given fare discounts.

Conclusion

With an average monthly income of Rs. 13,482, the respondents spend on average Rs. 1,500 per month (Rs 18,000 per annum), and approximately two hours daily on a round trip (624 hours per annum) while commuting, which is much higher than the world average commuting hours. The time spent on commuting by the respondents in one year is equivalent to 78 working days (assuming there are eight working hours in a day). According to a study, the world average commuting time is 80 minutes a day. Thailand is considered to have the longest commuting in the world, while Malawi has the shortest. A 2007 Gallup survey (in the USA), indicated that on a typical day, a worker's average round trip commute takes 46 minutes. Similarly, according to the UK Office of National Statistics (2011), 75 per cent of workers take around one hour for a round trip from home to work¹.

Despite all the difficulties of travelling, a considerable number travel by bus, though they consider motorcycles and QINGQIs as better modes of conveyance. Besides all perceived misgivings on transport governance, the respondents' recommendations about the scaling-up of the transport system reflect their pinned hopes on a viable mass transit system, as they believe that an improved transport system will contribute to enhanced livelihood opportunities.

¹ www.paycheck.in/main/labour-law-india/travel-reimbursement/commuting-time-and-payment

Gender analysis – Transport Study, 2014

Total Samples

Male		Female		Total
Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
103	68.67	47	31.33	150

Responses

		Male		Female	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
A. Mode of conveyance to office					
1.	Bus and Coaches	29	28.16	20	42.55
2.	Buses	20	19.42	9	19.15
3.	Minibus	18	17.48	6	12.77
B. Travel time – one way and daily					
1.	51 to 60 minutes	19	18.45	10	21.28
2.	41 to 50 minutes	15	14.56	9	19.15
C. One way fare					
1.	Rs 11 to Rs 20	43	41.75	19	40.43
2.	Rs 21 to Rs 30	30	29.13	13	27.66
D. Woes of travelling					
1.	Long travel time	31	30.10	18	38.30
2.	Long waiting time for buses	35	33.98	12	25.53
E. The internal environment of buses/transport					
1.	Overloaded buses	38	36.89	17	36.17
2.	Overload, noise, broken seats and window glasses	26	25.24	14	29.79
F. Difficulties with travelling standing					
1.	Yes	85	82.52	41	87.23
G. Condition of buses/transport					
1.	Bad	57	55.34	28	59.57
2.	Normal	42	40.78	16	34.04
H. Visibility of route numbers of buses					
1.	Yes visible	78	75.73	34	72.34
I. If route number is not visible, what to do for identification?					
1.	Have to ask other people or conductor	30	29.13	14	29.79
J. Do you find seats during the journey?					
1.	Sometimes yes and sometimes travel standing	32	31.07	21	44.68
2.	Travel standing	29	28.16	12	25.53
K. Attitude of bus conductor and driver					
1.	Normal	52	50.49	26	55.32

		Male		Female	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
2.	Bad	29	28.16	13	27.66
L.	Maintained speed of bus				
1.	Normal	42	40.78	20	42.55
2.	Slow	38	36.89	11	23.40
3.	Sometimes slow sometimes fast	7	6.80	8	17.02
4.	Fast	13	12.62	4	8.51
5.	Very fast	3	2.91	4	8.51
M.	Does the bus always stop at the bus stop?				
1.	Sometimes	46	44.66	30	63.83
2.	Always	44	42.72	14	29.79
N.	Are elderly, children and women taken care at the time of dis-embarking?				
1.	Sometimes	59	57.28	33	70.21
2.	Always	27	26.21	8	17.02
O.	Do passengers get hurt while embarking?				
1.	Usually	35	33.98	20	42.55
2.	Sometimes	51	49.51	20	42.55
P.	Do women face harassment in public transport?				
1.	Usually	45	43.69	24	51.06
2.	Sometimes	40	38.83	16	34.04
Q.	Are passengers disembarked half-way by the drivers?				
1.	Sometimes	58	56.31	31	65.96
2.	Usually	26	25.24	11	23.40
R.	Do drivers change route by their own free will?				
1.	Sometimes	74	71.84	35	74.47
2.	Never	22	21.36	8	17.02
S.	Is difficult to get conveyance on strike days?				
1.	Yes	95	92.23	40	85.11
T.	How you got to your job on strike days?				
1.	Do not go to job	48	46.60	25	53.19
2.	Rickshaw	23	22.33	11	23.40
3.	QINGQI	11	10.68	5	10.64
U.	Is it easy to find conveyance at night?				
1.	No	64	62.14	30	63.83
2.	Sometimes	16	15.53	9	19.15
V.	Is it difficult to find transport on CNG-off days?				

		Male		Female	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1.	Yes	87	84.47	43	91.49
W.	How do you go to job on CNG strike days?				
1.	Rickshaw	36	34.95	22	46.81
2.	Do not go to job	16	15.53	8	17.02
3.	Lift	34	33.01	7	14.89
X.	Attrition of attire during travel				
1.	Usually	80	77.67	36	76.60
2.	Sometimes	16	15.53	10	21.28
Y.	Are you satisfied with government measures for improvement of public transport?				
1.	No	63	61.17	34	72.34
Z.	Should the number of seats for women be increased?				
1.	Yes	91	88.35	41	87.23
AA.	Need for separate transport buses for women?				
1.	Yes	72	69.90	43	91.49
AB.	Is it safe for women to travel at night?				
1.	No	83	80.58	41	87.23
AC.	Do buses stop for a long time at inter-route bus stops?				
1.	Yes	69	66.99	34	72.34
AD.	Are CNG cylinders safely housed in the bus chassis?				
1.	No	79	76.70	40	85.11
AE.	Foot rest appropriate?				
1.	No	61	59.22	29	61.70
2.	Yes	33	32.04	16	34.04
AF.	Should fares be the same for all public transport?				
1.	Yes	45	43.69	24	51.06
2.	No	53	51.46	23	48.94
AG.	Do you like music in transport?				
1.	No	54	52.43	24	51.06
2.	Yes	47	45.63	23	48.94
AH.	Satisfaction with traffic police				
1.	No	76	73.79	34	72.34
2.	Yes	9	8.74	8	17.02
AI.	Did you ever face theft/robbery in public transport				

		Male		Female	
		Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1.	Never	32	31.07	23	48.94
2.	Once	28	27.18	15	31.91
3.	More than once	39	37.86	8	17.02
AJ. Can a good transport system facilitate securing a better job?					
1.	Yes	81	78.64	42	89.36
AK. Are QINGQIs better modes of conveyance?					
1.	Yes	59	57.28	31	65.96
2.	No	37	35.92	15	31.91
AL. Are motorbikes better modes of conveyance?					
1.	Yes	59	57.28	32	68.09
2.	No	40	38.83	11	23.40
AM. Do you think that the elderly and students should have a discount fare?					
1.	Yes	95	92.23	43	91.49
AN. What needs to be done to improve the public transport system?					
1.	Increase the number of buses	32	31.07	26	55.32
2.	Big buses should ply on the roads	33	32.04	13	27.66

Appendix 4: Stakeholders in the transport sector in Karachi

1. Government institutions

- The federal government of Pakistan: Initiates projects through the planning and development commission, in collaboration with the government of Sindh and the CDGK.
- The government of Sindh: Coordinates between its various transport-related departments and the federal government.
- CDGK: Its role varies depending on the local system in vogue at the time. Previously, it had a major role in the UTS as its designer and implementer.
- Transport and Communication Department (formerly the Traffic Engineering Bureau under CDGK), Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, Karachi: It researches, designs and implements engineering projects.
- Sindh Mass Transit Project (formerly the Karachi Mass Transit Cell of the CDGK)
- Karachi Urban Transport Society; A federal institution preparing the Karachi Transport Improvement Project. Pakistan Railways has 60 per cent of shares in the society, the Sindh government has 25 per cent and the KMC has 15 per cent.
- Regional Transport Authority; Regulates traffic as per Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1979; allots routes for public transport vehicles; looks into transport-related safety issues; runs training programmes for transporters/ drivers; looks into provision of public washrooms and waiting spaces at transport terminals.
- Deputy Inspector General (traffic) Police; Issues driving licences and manages traffic.
- Sindh Environmental Protection Agency; Monitors environmental conditions and develops plans and proposals to mitigate the adverse effects on the environment. It also operates a vehicular emission control programme.
- Karachi Public Transport Society: A government NGO that operates about 150 small buses in the city.

2. Transporter's associations

- Karachi Transport Ittehad (an organisation of which all modes of public transport, except for QINGQIs, are represented)
- President Muslim Minibus and Coach Owners' Association
- All Karachi QINGQIs and Rickshaws Association
- Karachi Taxi, Motor Rickshaw and Yellow Cab Association
- All Pakistan CNG Association
- Minibus Drivers' Association

3. The commuting public

- Registers its demands and concerns through the print and electronic media and through demonstrations.

Appendix 5: Transcripts of full interviews

A. Interviews with government officials

Interview: A-01

Muhammad Athar, Director Transport and Communication Department, KMC

Today we are in discussion with Mohammad Athar, who is the senior director of the Transport and Communication Department of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC). They have a brilliant system in place, they monitor the problems of transport in Karachi very closely and have introduced and are introducing new plans to solve the transport issues. We welcome you on behalf of the Urban Resource Centre (URC).

Question: The issue of transport in Karachi, a mega city with a population of 2 crore, is huge. According to you what are the main reasons behind the problem?

Answer: First of all I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to talk about all these issues. I have been associated with URC for some time now. URC is playing an amazing role in the transport matter. Now before I answer your question let's first discuss the transport infrastructure of Karachi. The road network of Karachi has spread over an area of 10,000 KM and comprises major roads, minor roads and access roads. Major roads make up barely 20 per cent of the total. The rest are access and local roads. These roads have corridors and there are 29, as notified by KMC. These corridors are maintained by KMC. I will also share the list of them with you. As you also know that signal free corridors are also in the planning stages, out of which five have already been designated. The first signal-free corridor is from Karsaz to Site area, the second is from Sharah-e-Minhas to Surjhani town, the third one is the university road, and the fourth one is the Shahra-e-Faisal corridor. They also have interchange

facilities. Currently there are 32 lac registered vehicles in Karachi, if you look at the trend over 10 years it has grown exponentially. If you translate this into numbers, almost 500 cars and motorbikes are entering Karachi every day! The motorbike industry has grown rapidly and is almost uncontrolled. We have factories in the interior part of the province too and with the collaboration of China, the industry has grown a lot. The same goes for the induction of cars. This is happening because we don't have a proper transport system in the city. People have found a solution to this problem themselves as they don't have any other alternative. They are bound to acquire their own transport. This is why those who can afford cars, buy cars while those who can afford motorbikes, buy motorbikes. If you look at the composition of the growth, 46 per cent consists of motorcycles, whereas registered cars make up 36 per cent. The remaining 14-15 per cent is made up of other vehicles. Public transport only accounts for 4.5 per cent of the growth. This 4.5 per cent serves 60 per cent of the population! That is exactly why overcrowding occurs. There exists a gap between the provision of service and needs of the public; this gap is not being filled, resulting in overcrowding on public transport. On the one hand, private vehicles are increasing in number, whereas on the other hand, public transport is decreasing. There are many reasons for this decrease. Firstly, new large buses are not being inducted. This is a primary requirement of a mega city. The reasons why they are not being inducted are their capital costs and their operating costs. Secondly, private transport is not affordable to everyone. Public transport has diminished. The Sindh Road Transport Corporation (SRTC) also catered for 1-2 routes only. But now they are not being run as they should be. The Karachi Transport Commission (KTC) was closed down in 1997. After that, minibuses and coaches were rapidly inducted in Karachi.

KTC was regulated by the government of Sindh. It was really practical and covered more than 100 routes. They had a vast network of university routes

as well. It shut down due to various reasons such as fare revenue leakage, improper maintenance of buses and mismanagement. From KTC's experience it was clear that public services cannot maintain/manage the transport service. So the private sector took over. Minibuses and coaches were inducted but their operating cost was too high. Also, the diesel price rose rapidly. Fares are regulated by government but if they were increased at the same proportion, they wouldn't have been affordable to the public. So the fares remained the same and were controlled, however because of that it has become difficult for the transporters to maintain the quality of their services. In 2001, when the city district government was formed, they introduced Urban Transport Services. I was part of that plan too. The entire scheme was approved by the Sindh cabinet. The 70 per cent loan mark up of that scheme was supposed to be subsidised by the government to the extent of 6 per cent. Above 6 per cent was to be paid by the operator and below 6 per cent was to be reimbursed by the government. Then work began on this scheme. 300–350 buses were inducted and finance came from the banks. The government did not continue its patronage. To date no subsidy has been given to the operators involved in that scheme. We had to file claims for the companies. A few companies are still running their buses. They are around 12 in number and being run on Shakra-e-Faisal. The government of Sindh constituted a committee and we filed claims for two companies. We verified their operations and completed the entire process and forwarded the claims to the finance department for a refund. But this was all in vain. When we launched this service the diesel prices were Rs 19 and now they have increased exponentially. The fares remain the same. The UTS buses exited from the system. In fact, they have exited from Karachi. We wrote letters to the Punjab government that these buses are part of the Karachi scheme and should not be running elsewhere. But our requests were of no use. This project failed badly. Everywhere in the world, public transport is being subsidised by the government. In fact, this is happening in Lahore as well! A rapid bus system is being subsidised by the government. Keeping this in mind, the federal government approved a project of 4,000 CNG buses for Karachi as well. Initially it was approved as a policy in 2007. It was decided that 2,000 buses were to be given to Karachi and the remaining 2,000 were to be given to other large cities in Pakistan. The debt ratio was 80:20 instead of 70:30. The remaining model was the same as UTS. They had a fix subsidy for this project that 6 lac will be given as a per capital cost to the operator. Then local banks were instructed to extend loans to the operators. The National Bank was approached first. They refused to provide loan services because of the past experience of UTS of non-payment of instalments in a timely manner. The matter was taken to the highest level but remain unresolved. Then in the

regime of Mayor Mustafa Kamal, he suggested that a pilot project should be initiated to fill the gap of transport to demonstrate that we can make it work. A model was developed that the buses will be procured by the government and outsourced to the private sector. Also, the operators will only be responsible for the operation of the buses so that they will have no relation to the fares and finances. For fares an e-ticketing system was to be introduced which a separate private company would handle. For CNG, we directly contacted CNG stations. We directly paid the CNG stations, the responsible staff used to verify the CNG filling in the vehicles and we would pay money accordingly. Our policy clearly stated that the fare revenue will not be sufficient to meet the operating expenses and the government had to subsidise to the tune of Rs 5 million per month. It was subsidised for two years and the service continued. We had e-ticketing systems, e-ticketing booths with closed doors and comfortable services, and the system continued. But there came a time where the city government was unable to deliver the funds then there was no other option but to reduce the operating cost of the buses. We then had to close the e-ticketing system and introduced conductors in the buses. This resulted in over-loading as we couldn't control the number of passengers. It went out of our control. The revenue also decreased. We had a checking system in place and we evaluated and concluded that there was a 10 per cent leakage in the revenue generation from the conductors' side. But despite this there was an off-set. We tried to minimise it as much as possible. Then when the time came to change the tyres of these buses after four years, repair the engines of a few, the contract of out-sourcing had also changed by that time. None of the private operators participated in the maintenance of the buses. We invited tender but no company came forward. This was in February 2013. Since then these buses are parked in one place. We tried hard to get funds to maintain these buses and resume the service but we have had no support. We have sent a proposal but they haven't responded.

Question: Out of the 73 buses, how many are in a working condition?

Answer: Our overall estimate for the maintenance of the buses is Rs 40 million. Some cost around 8 lac while some cost 5 lac, depending on the condition of the buses. One bus now costs 70 million. When we bought them, they used to cost Rs 4.4 million each.

Question: What is being done about it now?

Answer: First these buses need to be brought back. We are discussing whether to convert them to LPG because supply and pricing of CNG is also an issue. We wrote a letter to the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) asking for permission of at least one CNG station that would provide us with CNG even on a holiday. They responded that they have nothing

to do with this and we need to contact the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Resources. We wrote to them and we still haven't received a response. Even the Secretary of Transport wrote to OGRA and they got the same response. We cannot write directly to the federal government. We have to go through the provincial government. We mentioned two issues in the letter: 1) Supply of CNG 2) Repair of the buses.

Question: What is your take on the infrastructure of the city including flyovers, underpasses, etc. To what extent are they proving to be beneficial for the city?

Answer: If we had a mass transit system in Karachi, we would not have needed flyovers. 70 per cent of the transport which you see on roads is private. You only see one or two minibuses. So, under these conditions if flyovers had not been built, the city would be at a standstill. In the absence of a mass transit system, this was the only solution. If the flyovers hadn't have been built, we couldn't even begin to imagine the trouble we would be in.

Question: Where do we require such flyovers and intersections?

Answer: JICA Japan International Cooperation Agency carried out a comprehensive study in 2013. They developed a master transport plan, with a proposal for a mass transit transport system, including two railways and MRT lines, six rapid transit lines for buses, one Karachi Circular Railway (KCR) loop and a bus network system. They proposed flyovers in 53 different locations. They divided the construction of flyovers into phases. Also, they proposed 43 different road improvement and road building projects and bridge construction. Furthermore, they included 53 intersections along with an intercity bus system. The plan is targeted to be completed by 2030.

Question: You have been associated with transport for some time now and must've participated in different sessions including with other transporters. Do you think there could be plans and schemes in which we can include the existing transporters too?

Answer: The CNG bus network plan was constructed keeping the existing transports in the loop. They gave consent for the plan too. But since there were no funds this plan couldn't be completed.

Question: Did they back out because it would affect their current business?

Answer: No. It was never part of the plan that this project would go to any specific group of people and it was they who had to run this project. It was and is open for all. The only objection they had was from where they would get the loan. Also, another concern was how the payment of fares would work because we do not have control over the operating costs, neither do the

operators themselves. The diesel prices have increased so much and the financial plan is not stable.

Question: But the transporters are still running their vehicles?

Answer: Minibuses are working as double-decker buses. They used to be operated seat-by-seat and they also used to earn a profit. But now they are being overloaded to such a great extent. Even with qingchi rickshaws, we often see 12 people in one rickshaw.

Question: Do qingchi rickshaws have any policy?

Answer: Not as yet. They have not been included in the current transport plan. Action was taken against them but they are still running.

Question: What is your take on them? Are they able to solve the transport issue of the city?

Answer: Yes they are solving the transport issue of the city in the absence of public transport.

Question: Are they secure?

Answer: No they aren't.

Question: Should they be continued?

Answer: Yes but with a proper plan and design. Their design should be approved by the relevant transport department. They should be properly maintained and registered with the fitness department which determines if a vehicle is road worthy or not. But they should be running on small/link roads not main roads. Even rickshaws with six seats did not previously run parallel to the bus routes. Now these qingchis are running on highways, Shahra-e-faisal, the national highway and this goes beyond a violation. Even the enforcing agencies are not doing anything about it because they are at least providing a public service. The public has no other option, where would they go? A public transport only survives if there is demand for it otherwise who would want to overload their qingchi with 12 passengers at a time?

Question: The CNG buses which you talked about, what is going to be their fare?

Answer: It will be between Rs 20–25. Previously it was Rs 15–18.

Question: According to you what can be done about the current problems / situation?

Answer: First of all we need extensive support by the city government and policies to encourage the induction of buses in the city. Public transport policies have to be encouraged. This needs to be done by the federal government. Secondly, the 200 buses currently in planning by the government have to be bought as soon as possible. These buses will be run on inter-city routes. We require transport on urban roads.

Question: How can the problem of traffic jams in the city be solved?

Answer: Traffic jams are occurring because we do not have a proper public transport system which is why private cars have increased in number. The second issue is the misuse of road space. The roads should be only be used for the movement of traffic. Also, irregular parking is an issue. This has occurred because of the increase in the number of private cars. The rationale of demand and capacity has lost its meaning. Moreover, as a road user we have some responsibility as well. Until we realise and fulfill that responsibility, the system won't improve. Religious events should be held in open areas rather than on roads to avoid traffic jams. There should be a policy at a national level for this.

Interview: A-02 Arif Hanif, Deputy Inspector General, Traffic Police (31 January 2014)

On behalf of URC we are extremely grateful to you for having agreed to meet us and discuss the situation of traffic within the city, especially the causes of traffic jams and the steps being taken by the traffic police. We will also discuss the increase in the number of fatal accidents in the city.

Question: How many traffic police officials are there?

Answer: On the streets of Karachi and in administration, duties are being performed by 3,300 officials. These 3,300 officials work in three different shifts. They don't carry any weapons with them.

Question: How are the traffic police officials in the city affected by the air pollution? What are the common illnesses which are found?

Answer: You must have seen that now the traffic police officials wear masks these days. With the number of vehicles increasing within the city, our officials are easily affected by the smoke and pollution. Most of the illnesses which they suffer are flu, asthma, constant cough etc.

Question: In the event of a VIP duty, there must be a high demand of traffic police officials.

Answer: Yes definitely. But we still try to continue the flow of traffic in the city.

Question: What are the main reasons for traffic jams in the city?

Answer: This is mostly because the number of vehicles in the city is increasing, especially small cars. Ever since the banks have started giving loans for cars and motorbikes, people are solving their own issues of transport by buying cars or motorbikes according to their convenience. Also, the problem is parking which is getting worse day by day. At every signal you can see

loads of cars. Then there are extensions on the roads causing more traffic jams and whenever the government takes any action against these extensions, the shopkeepers protest. Parking is a problem as whenever a new building project is made they don't provide adequate parking facilities. Moreover, people park their cars in front of the shopping centres on the main roads. This causes further traffic jams and it is difficult to maintain the flow of the traffic in such cases.

Question: Are qingchi rickshaws a problem in the city?

Answer: Yes. Currently 60-70 qingchi rickshaws are operating on the main roads of the city. They were meant to operate only on link roads, but now they can be seen everywhere in the city. They have made their stops on the roundabouts of the cities. When we wanted to take an action against them, their owners got a stay order from the High Court. But until we remove them from the roads of the city, the problem won't be resolved.

Question: What roles have underpasses and flyovers played in controlling the traffic flow?

Answer: They have provided the public with temporary relief. If there were no underpasses or flyovers then the traffic situation would be much worse. Wherever corridors are constructed, the traffic flow is rapid.

Question: How does one get a licence? There are stories about corruption in the licence branches, how can this situation be resolved?

Answer: The licence branch is an entirely different department and we have no official relations with them for any administrative purposes. If there is a problem them, you'll have to contact them. I have to leave now. There is a situation at Numaish roundabout which I need to take care of.

Interview: A-03 Fazal Karim Khatri, Director General, Mass Transit, Karachi Metropolitan Corporation

We are going to talk about mass transit; what it is, what is its role, why and when was it established, and what is its function.

Mr. Khatri: If we talk about the history behind mass transit, then I'd like to tell you that it began in 1987 under the Karachi Development Authority (KDA), then in 1994 it was transferred to the National Mass Transit Authority. In 1995, it faced a problem and went under PMD; the salaries were controlled by KDA. In 1997, administrative control was handed over to the transport department and only our salaries were still on KDA's payroll. After that, in 2002, when KDA was dissolved, it again became a part of city district government. In 2011, it became a part of KMC. Then in July 2013, restructuring of the government departments was carried out and we

were told that now we are part of the transport and mass transit department (formerly called the transport department). This change has been made in schedule I only, schedule II is still pending. The situation is that if we look at it from the ownership perspective, keeping the public interest and the importance of mass transit in view, we are taking care of both systems, ie we are responsible for the transport system and at the same time answerable to KMC. This is because we are getting a salary from KMC so we have to respond to them as well. But it is still undecided where we stand.

Question: Why is mass transit required?

Answer: Initially, when the population of Karachi was 4 lacs, the system of mass transit used to exist. And now we have a population of 2 crores and not a single mass transit system exists in the city! This is a dilemma and our bad luck. You've seen the city conditions. Qingchi and rickshaws have taken over the transport system. Karachi is a mega city and we are moving towards operating only qingqis, it's a downward regression, instead we should be moving towards mass transit projects like sky trains or underground metro buses. We have further degraded from these.

The current situation is that the regular traffic in our city, motorcycles consist of 46 per cent of that traffic, whereas cars make up 36 per cent, and public transport is merely 4.5 per cent! And it may even have decreased. This 4.5 per cent carries the load of 42 per cent of the population! This is the seriousness of the problem. People have to travel on the roofs of buses, why? Because of the lack of a proper public transport system. Some time back, CNG buses were introduced and they served the purpose to an extent, but subsidies were eliminated and the project ended.

Question: In 1987 the mass transit system was introduced, now we are in 2014, the position of Karachi is the same, if not worse. We had a railway system too, and in 1999 it was discontinued. Do you think there is a solution to all this after mass transit is introduced?

Answer: If there isn't any mass transit, then we won't be able to solve these problems. Nobody is coming to the fore and owning this project. Until we restore this ownership I don't think we'll be able to solve this problem.

Question: What's the future of the mass transit system?

Answer: We think positively about the future – that the democratic vision and the federal government both support a mass transit system. The provincial government has also committed to this project. We can see their harmonisation to an extent towards this project, including our local government. That's why we believe that one or two of our projects can be initiated. For the yellow line's Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) corridor,

the advertisement is already out and we have received the invitation for that already and hopefully on 25th February 2014 we will receive the final date and then the evaluation will start, and within six months hopefully permission to build will be received. We have invited internationally, the international billing process has been adopted.

Question: What about the present transport system?

Answer: Consultation with the stakeholders is needed. We don't want a conflict or a controversy, we wish to harmonise the system. We all earn from this system and if we don't resolve it without controversy, this project may not be successful. We have planned that we'd take them with us and sit with them and give the service road to them so that they can earn a livelihood too and they are able to harmonise with the system.

Question: What are the existing plans for mass transit?

Answer: The master plan that currently exists recommends six BRT corridors, out of which three are priority corridors. One of them is the yellow line, which we have already initiated, the second is the red line, this would start from Model Colony, pass Safoora Chorangi from the University Road and end at Chowrangi which is at Quaid-e-Azam's Masoleum. This connection will touch the yellow line. The third one is going to be from Surjhani town, which is the most viable BRT corridor, and will pass from Nazimabad all the way up to Patel Para, Numaish and end at Jama Cloth. It is almost 21 km long and it is our priority corridor no. 2. Apart from this, we have plans for three other BRT corridors – they are orange, purple and aqua lines.

Question: What is the meaning of these colours?

Answer: They are only for identification purposes. I can provide you with the entire plan so that you can get an idea that where these lines operate. These are all routes. Green, red and yellow pass from Korangi area. We have two other Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) lines, this is the blue line (pointing out on the map) this starts from Sohrab Goth and goes as far as Jama Cloth. The second one is the brown line. The brown line runs from the Power House and connects to Shahra-e-Faisal ultimately, also very viable. All BRT corridors interconnect with the KCR. The extension of the KCR has also been proposed to connect it from the airport. This is our master plan which we are currently working on.

Question: Are bus terminals a part of this plan?

Answer: Bus terminals have a separate plan. They are very important that's why we are tackling the issue differently. We have numerous illegal bus terminals we are not taking care of those, we have a separate department which is responsible called the transport and communication department of KDA. We have identified two sites which are at the entrance to the city.

Question: Which are the two sites you have mentioned?

Answer: One is the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD) highway's bus terminal by the city district. The second one is the land identified on the super highway, near to the northern bypass, our plan also entertains that. We will start working on them soon and we'll soon receive the ad for it. We need a centralised bus terminal. One more area of land has been identified on the national highway, we may build a bus terminal there too.

Question: Do you see any risk in the process of the completion of these bus terminals?

Answer: Given the trend which we have seen in the past, yes I do see a risk. But hopefully, this project will take two years to complete.

Question: Are the BRT and MRT projects separate? Or have they been merged into one?

Answer: The BRT is a separate project and we still haven't even started MRT since it costs a lot and we don't have any funds at the moment. We'll first run a pilot of the yellow line to see if we get investors or not.

Question: What is the estimated cost of both these projects?

Answer: The estimated cost of the yellow line is around Rs 13 billion and the green line's cost is approximately Rs 14–15 billion. These are the priority corridors. The red line would cost around Rs 8–10.

Question: What kind of a future do you see for the mass transit system?

Answer: The city government initiated the Mass Transit Authority. When we have the authority, the draft which is with the secretary, will go to the chief minister and we will get it in the form of a bill, with all the functions clearly set out. Automatically we'd also become a part of that authority. We'd all come under a single umbrella.

Question: Is the government planning a separate plan for the mass transit system?

Answer: Yes, I think they are and the transport department have given an ad for the buses as well.

Question: How do you judge the status of KCR?

Answer: We have already worked a lot on KCR and have a recent plan with us too. Now, we had some pending issues which we have almost resolved, and hopefully we'll start working on it again. Even now the issue is of sovereign guarantees because the cost is around six billion US dollars and has now increased. The government of Pakistan is not in the position to support it and give sovereign guarantees. We have still worked a lot on it. The people will be given homes and resettled

in Goth and an amount of Rs 50,000 to move. They'll be moved into already constructed homes.

Question: But this clause is not mentioned here?

Answer: This was actually decided by the Karachi Urban Transport Corporation which looks after the KCR.

Question: What is going to be the fare for travelling on the mass transit system?

Answer: For the yellow line we are planning to have an affordable fare of around Rs 30–31. Nobody would pay more than that or the subsidy would increase, which the government cannot afford and the project may backfire again.

Question: How would you describe the impact of signal free corridors?

Answer: The problem is that they are not the solution to the actual problem. This is the mandate which the government received during its term, if they had taken mass transit option the amount of traffic in the city would not be there. These signal free corridors are good, but once you get out of them you get stuck in the bottlenecks, this issue still persists therefore I don't think that these are the solutions. No matter how many flyovers, you construct when you come down you again get stuck. This is not the solution. Mass transit is the only answer to this. Lahore has already come up with this. We should now too!

Interview: A-04 Ghazanfar Ali Qadri, Secretary Regional Transport Authority (RTA)

Introduction: Today is 12th February, 2014 and we are present with Muhataram Janaab Ghazanfar Ali Qadri who is a factory RTA. We will talk about the role that an RTA plays in the transport business. So on behalf of the Urban Resource Centre I welcome you. We are grateful that you took the time to speak with us and we will try our best to understand what exactly it is that you do for this city and we are also hopeful that through our efforts we are able to bring some improvement to this city.

Question: First tell us exactly what is an RTA?

Answer: Bismillah Rahman Raheem. First of all, I am also very thankful to you that you came and have shown an interest in the common man. All these functions that are related to the RTA and those of the government's public transportation, these are all for the welfare of the common man. Another thing is the initiative of new routes which have a separate portion for women... now I am telling you all this as it is all interlinked. The basic function of an RTA is to facilitate public transport and serve the public and regulate traffic according to Motor Vehicle Ordinance 1979. There are 3-4 things that need to be observed in this. One is maintenance

of a standard such that if we are putting a stand/stop somewhere, we should provide public washrooms, waiting rooms and public lobbies.

Question: You are saying that provision of a stand requires there to be restaurants, toilets, seating areas and places for the public to eat and drink ... is this what RTA basically looks after?

Answer: Yes, we provide training for this too and this is only for standing points. Then we take care of route allotments that is to say that we allot any routes – XYZ or ABC. If a route links Sohrabgoth to Kemari, RTA has to make sure that these routes don't overlap with any other routes. Or for example, if a vehicle has moved off its main route where there is no public that needs it, or to avoid the occurrence of say ten routes on one road as this creates congestion, our governor and the RTA commissioner take the initiative to streamline the routes. There are similar conditions to those in Saddar, so they want to regulate traffic by keeping incoming traffic in one direction and outgoing in another. And also there should be a public transport free zone where the public can be facilitated. The second thing about route allotment is that we need to set routes that are feasible and lawful ... 3-4 things come under consideration whilst deciding such things. We take the views of traffic policemen in this as well as KMC's traffic department, we take Non objection certificates (NOCs) from them and the third thing is that we take an objective view through print media. Through this we figure out the alignment and approval of routes. The third thing that comes into play is the regulation of vehicles. This is also done through route permits. Route permits involve three to four different departments. First is us, the Road Transport Authority along with the coordination of the traffic police, and third is the excise department that does the registration. Now if there is a new car on the road and a company has issued the device, he will bring his NOC and come and ask us that he wants to drive this car as a public transport vehicle. Then we give him the NOC and it is registered as a commercial vehicle. The second is that the vehicle has to go for traffic fitness for which it goes and issues a certificate according to its roadworthiness and then comes to us. Then there are inspections from time to time according to specifications, because it is not permissible if a car doesn't have rear view mirrors or the seats are missing, etc. So we also look after maintenance issues. And a new thing that has been introduced is the checking of CNG cylinders. This is very important because those innocent people who are travelling on these vehicles have their lives at stake, especially if the cylinder is not placed in a proper place. Sometimes it is kept behind or under the seat. If the windows are up and someone decides to smoke a cigarette in the vehicle it could cause a blast. So the recent development in the transport department as well as in RTA is that whosoever violates the rules regarding the placement

of CNG cylinders will be punished by taking away their route permits and a heavy fine will be charged. This would result in impounding the car and seizing the CNG cylinder and storing it with the traffic police department. So this is our third function, ie the proper inspection of vehicles.

The fourth function is the collection of revenue. We have to see to it that no car should be travelling without a route permit. If the government is not receiving its taxes, we have to see to it that they are paid. Every three years we re-issue a route permit. This is our highest priority at the moment.

Question: What is the approximate amount you recover in taxes?

Answer: This month's recovery is Rs 4,963,000.

Question: What is your yearly target?

Answer: Our yearly target is Rs.500 bn. Based on this bifurcation it's Rs.41 lakhs per month. So now we have almost touched Rs. 50 lakhs so our efforts are directed towards increasing government revenue ...that is collection of government revenue and proper placement and reimbursement of it. The main two functions I would say are issuing vehicle NOCs and managing routes.

Question: Can you estimate how many routes are operating on a monthly basis?

Answer: A few days back we took out a document which revealed that there are 239 minibus routes. Out of these 111 are non-operational and 129 are operational.

Question: What about coaches?

Answer: There are 60 routes in total out of which 49 are operational and 11 are non-operational.

Question: You said earlier that a fee is charged for the route permit... what is the fee?

Answer: The fee has been Rs.700 for 3 years. But there is a condition on this that if the vehicle is late in reissuing the permit, say late by a year or so, then an additional fee of Rs 2400 is charged. So reissuing is strictly enforced.

Question: So if the police stop your vehicles, they will ask for a route permit?

Answer: Yes and it is necessary to have a valid permit as it is a violation of traffic laws not to have one. The police charge a fine of Rs 2000 for violating this rule. The commissioner has recently set up a committee in which the Secretary RTA, Secretary PTA and concerned assistant commissioners and a member of the HDRP will all be responsible for checking the violation of CNG cylinders and route permits.

Question: Are these violations of the vehicle ordinance?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Actually, we have interviewed other people and women particularly were scared by the positioning of the cylinders behind the driver's seat.

Answer: Yes, and the thing is that they are supposed to keep it outside the car where the spare tyres are kept, not on the roof or under any seat. We have identified this proper placement of the cylinders and along with that we also have to see that the vehicle is maintaining a proper standard and following the given procedures for placements or whether they are risking the lives of the passengers.

Question: Have there been any cases where you removed the cylinders?

Answer: Yes, there have been 1000s; you will get a better idea from Adnan Sahib in the traffic police. They can give you the details of how many transporters are lying to them. We have also collected fines in lakhs for this violation.

Question: What are the requirements to get a route permit, say, if I am a driver?

Answer: First you have to fill out documents for the registration process, stating whose name the vehicle is in and a copy of their NIC is needed for that. Second part is the application and the third is as you said the Rs 700 colon that you have to deposit in the bank.

Question: Since you are involved in this department, what problems would you identify in the transport sector? Every day you see people travel, where they travel to, some literally hang and travel and you see how the city is full of traffic jams...what do you suggest as the solution to all this?

Answer: There is not just one issue. For instance, if I say traffic is an issue, it is interlinked with a lot of other issues. If there an event or if there is a rally or a strike, then traffic gets diverted from one route to the other. Consequently, heavy traffic gathers in one part of the city. If there is terrorist activity people run from that area to other areas and this includes the public transport. Now the problem is that public transport is following specific routes which get disturbed. The second problem is an increase in the number of vehicles. Day by day you can see how many banks open up to hire purchase and other schemes to buy cars on convenient loans etc. and due to this the common man who could not previously afford to buy a car was also able to purchase one.

Question: Are you talking about an increase in public transport or private transport? Because our private transport has definitely increased.

Answer: Increase in both public and private. If a road where one person was previously driving is now

occupied by four persons and their cars it will obviously exert pressure on the city's roads.

Question: Whenever there are big cities such as Bombay, Tehran, Bangkok, Tokyo, Delhi etc, there is always big transport such as big buses, a circular railway, and mass transit systems. These motorcycles etc are not really the solution to the problem we are facing...

Answer: Yes, you have stated it correctly that we should have big buses according to international standards along with proper regulations that will help us come out of the problems that the public is facing. Now day by day we see the exponential rise in diesel and petrol prices. Even those buses that we have converted to CNG are stuck because of the long lines in which they have to wait to refill their CNG tanks. Now the pressure we have is to convert the buses into carriers or trucks.

Question: A lot of them have already converted to CNG haven't they?

Answer: Absolutely a lot of them have converted but now based on 138 votes, the commissioner has banned such conversions. Moreover, based on these votes it was decided that the old vehicles, that is, those that are older than or are the 80 model, will be allowed to be converted.

So the problem that is occurring is that the increase in the price of fuel and difficulty in filling CNG is affecting the profit margins. Now it is all coming down to small vehicles. For example, a rickshaw costs about Rs. 2-3 lakhs.

Question: And is there no organisation that provides funds etc. to purchase vehicles?

Answer: There are none and no government subsidies or anything else. All these factors are discouraging transport, especially heavy vehicles. Thus there is a shift from heavy vehicles to small vehicles.

Question: How do you view this...as in what are the solutions or possibilities?

Answer: For this I think that organisations should come forward, awareness programmes should be launched, and banks should provide loans or schemes to facilitate the purchase of public transport vehicles. As far as CNG goes, for at least our new green bus project, there should be a particular terminal where these buses can fill up their CNG tanks, whether CNG is running or not. So if such significant steps are taken or there is a public-private partnership or such a mechanism is made...

Question: Why did the PTA fail? The one that started the metro bus system?

Answer: That was the UTS (Urban Transport Scheme) and that is still running. There is not just one issue; they

are all linked, for example, if there is any trouble the first thing is to burn a mini-bus not any other cars.

Question: Law and order is also a big problem that is interlinked?

Answer: Yes the law and order situation is also a big issue.

Question: The city's streets are an issue, the law and order situation is an issue and subsidies are a problem.

Answer: Moreover, the ease of availability of CNG is also an issue. So these are 3-4 things. Plus as I told you terrorist activities play their part, as well as strikes and protests and illegal encroachments. If we look at the encroachment problems it's like half the road is covered with encroachments and half has a bus parked on it. If drastic action is taken then this will also help clear congestion. Number 4 is that this needs to be properly regulated.

Question: It took me 5-7 minutes to reach the Abbotabad flyover from here. From there it took me 35 minutes to reach the No 10 flyover.

Answer: If you go anywhere in the world, firstly, there is the law and then there is the human behaviour. Over here, maybe you and I abide by the law but if no one is watching it is a given that the car behind you will keep honking if there is less rush or no one watching at a signal. This reflects the level of civic sense of our people. This civic sense needs to be highlighted. Our society is like a social network, it is a social fabric which is made by each individual. Even if 5-6 friends are sitting somewhere their behaviour, as social scientists have said, makes a mini society.

Question: Now there are these premises called the civic centre. Inside there is one floor for the mass transit system office, one for the transport and communication office, one for the RTA, one for roadworthiness and one for excise. So these are the five offices in the same building. So this raises two questions, firstly, how do they coordinate among themselves? And secondly, can this be a one-window operation?

Answer: With regards to your first question, the answer is yes. Our commissioner holds a meeting every fortnight or every month in which the representatives from each office are present. This includes the KMC director, myself, that is Secretary of the RTA and the traffic police department along with others. We sit down and discuss the collective progress as to what goals we have achieved and what the responsibility of each department is. So the coordination is very much there.

As to your second question, a one-window operation is not possible. This is because the revenue collection is a full process...until you have registered you can't get a route permit, and as long as you don't go through roadworthiness testing you can't go to the next step.

Say, for example, we do set up a centre for a one-window operation; this process still has three stages. First the invite for the NOC will come to us, then it will go to excise for registration and then come back to us. Now suppose that one part of the process gets held up, say the roadworthiness people don't approve the vehicle as roadworthy. In a one window operation, the individual will have already given the full payment for the whole process...now the problem will occur as to how we can refund this part of the money he has paid. So every process has its own method of analysis. The KMC, RTA and excise department are coordinating but to mix these processes you need a higher authority to control everything.

We are very thankful that you took out this time for us and we would like to thank your friends as well.

Answer: You are always welcome and you will always have our support. We do appreciate the fact that you are investing your energies into urban life and public issues. And *in shahallah* these tasks will have a fruitful outcome.

Interview: A-05 Tahir Ahmed Khan, Secretary Transport

Today we are in discussion with the Secretary of Transport, Mr. Tahir Ahmed Khan on the 16th of February 2014 at 1030 hours. The topics which we will be discussing with him are: The issues of traffic in Karachi, traffic jams, new schemes, the government's view on these and what steps are being taken currently for all these issues. We are really grateful to you and your team for taking the time to do this interview.

Respondent: We are grateful to you and URC as well since they have shown concern for the issue of transport in our city. Karachi comprises of a population of almost 2–2.5 crore, it is a metropolitan city and when we compare it to other metropolitan cities of the world, we can see that the population growth rate in Karachi is higher and the length of constructed roads is shorter than they should be as appropriate for the population. Moreover, public service vehicles are scarce for this size population. Also, rapid bus transport, which should be a part of a metropolitan city's basic transport system, is lacking in Karachi. Keeping all these things in mind, the government of Sindh and the Secretary of Transport have shown a great interest in this regard. With their collaboration, we've already launched a new rapid bus transport, based on international standards, called the yellow line. It starts from Korangi Industrial area and stretches over an area of 26km, covers Korangi road, Shakra-e-Faisal, Shakra-e-Qaideen and ends at Saddar. Furthermore, we have also put one more plan into action which is going to be for 100 buses, both within and outside Karachi. It is called Benazir Shaheed

100 buses and is a part of the international tender. It will link Karachi to the other divisional headquarters in Sukkur, Mirpurkhas and Larkana. Also, there is one more project to link Sharae-Faisal, Malir Cantt and Tower, which is currently in the pipeline. Moreover, to tackle the problem of traffic congestion and its related problems such as pollution, for that Sindh is the only province that has formulated CNG laws and debated them with the government, and they are already in the process of implementation. We have also worked on school buses, about which, nobody has given a thought before. We have planned to work on the rules/laws of school buses based on discussions with the stakeholders and have published them as a public notice in the newspaper and this too will soon be completed. Apart from this, we are also working on the regulation of qingchi rickshaws.

Question: Apart from what you have told us, can you please tell us about the situation of the circular railway in Karachi?

Answer: The circular railway is actually a project of the federal government of Pakistan through the Karachi Urban Transport Company. 60% of the share is of the federal government, whereas 40% is of Sindh Government of Pakistan. Sindh government's share is further divided into 25% of commission government and 15% of city government. The project plans to cover 43 kilometres with a circular railway and has been initiated by a loan of 2.6 billion dollars by the Japanese government. As soon as the Japanese government gives us the green signal, the project will start. The contract has 45 different conditions set out by the Japanese government which the federal government, Sindh government and the provincial government have to fulfill. Most of the conditions have been fulfilled already. Most important was to make all the machinery and equipment for the circular railway, which is to be imported, duty free. This has already been done by the federal government, our cabinet and the Sindh government has also approved it. So now we are just waiting for the Japanese government's consent. There are no restrictions or delays from the Pakistani government.

Question: What about the fare of these circular railways? We wouldn't want that we spend so much on it and it is unaffordable for the people of Karachi.

Answer: The fares would definitely be affordable. They are probably going to be around Rs 35. Fares are calculated per kilometre and would not be excessive. Also, the rent of the rapid bus transport would also go from the existing structure. If the operational cost is more than the ticket cost, then the government will pay the subsidy. The same goes for the circular railway. It will work on the subsidy of the city government, Sindh and provincial government.

Question: What are the steps being taken by the city government for the traffic situation in Karachi?

Answer: As the traffic increases, traffic jams are inevitable. Nothing can be done about that. The best solution is that, for a 2–2.5 crore population, a mass transit system should be introduced. If a mass transit system is there, automatically the capacity of the city to incorporate more and more vehicles will increase. Also, our plans for BRT and MRT in the upcoming 5-6 years will substantially improve the traffic conditions in Karachi.

Question: When do you think people will get some relief from these issues?

Answer: Hopefully as soon as we launch the BRT project, it will create a huge impact on the traffic situation. It'll be completed in the next 2-3 years, including the red, green and yellow lines. The yellow line is being implemented through an international tender. For the red and green lines, we are negotiating with the Asian Development Bank. These lines will complement the circular railway system and will definitely improve the flow of traffic. The ratio of public vehicles to the population of Karachi is really low. 4.5% of the vehicles are used for public services including rickshaws, buses and taxis. This 4.5% caters for 47% of the total population. Metropolitan cities cannot function like this. Even in India they have progressed to a better railway system. And there is not much difference between the population of Bombay and Karachi. If the population of a city is high in number and the infrastructure is weak, then plans like mass transit are necessary. By law, if the population of a city is more than or equal to 6 million, then a mass transit system has to be in place. With a population of 20 million, we still don't have a mass transit system! It will definitely end in chaos. It makes it difficult for the traffic police to control the traffic too especially during peak hours. The road width is too narrow to accommodate our traffic. There also should be parking plazas in the city.

Question: What happened to the UTS system which was introduced by the government a few years ago?

Answer: The commitment which was made by the government was not fulfilled. No compensation was paid. Also this system was developed on the basis of CNG supply. The availability of CNG then became unpredictable. Secondly, pricing was an issue since the cost of CNG increased regularly. The fleets of buses were divided into groups of 25 buses each. Initially, these were run on CNG at low prices, but as the price of CNG increased, it became difficult to run them. And the rates of CNG were regulated too. The CNG prices doubled and tripled over time. Because of which it was no longer feasible to operate the system. Even private sector organisations were unwilling to take it over.

Question: What is its current status?

Answer: Negotiations with the Sindh government are being carried out to operate it on any route on Shahra-e-Faisal. NGOs such as the URC are also helping us in this progress.

Question: What role can an NGO play in this regard?

Answer: Draft a proposal for the government of Sindh to allocate resources to such projects. We have many needs and we need resources. The population is high in number and resources are low. There is a huge resource gap. We need to fill this gap. People like you should come forward and highlight such issues.

Interviewer: Thank you so much for your time.

Interview: A-06

**Syed Iftikhar Hussain, District Officer,
Transport and Communication
Department, Karachi Municipal
Corporation, Karachi**

As you know, pollution in Karachi has exceeded its usual limit. Keeping that in view, everybody decided to come up with a solution for this. The government of Pakistan decided to take an initiative and introduced CNG over petrol and diesel. A proposal to take care of the environment was prepared by the city government and the project director; Syed Muhammad Ather designed the project and presented it to the mayor for approval. Initially it was approved for 50 buses. This project was designed, proposed and approved in 2009 and 50 buses were funded by the city government. Out of these 50 buses, 25 were Daewoo buses and 25 were Hino and were following two routes: 1) Surjhani to Tower 2) Surjhani to Korangi. When this project was introduced, the mayor replicated it as it is run in other countries, for example a ticketing system was introduced, a bus operator was hired, and maintenance was the responsibility of the city government. The bus drivers were hired on contracts and recovery of finances was not the issue to end the overtaking and racing each other, usually done by bus drivers. Booths and machines were constructed to facilitate the public, men were hired for safety, a local private company was given the contract to take care of all these things, a ticket system was introduced and a proper set-up was built. This project started in June 2009 and the incumbent mayor's tenure was about to end and any losses were taken care of by the city government. As long as the mayor was there, this situation was under control but when he left, this system was discontinued. This led to problems in the maintenance of the system and in the meantime, the contracts of the operators who were hired for the period of two years ended. KMC informed us that we should complete the subsidy and renew the contracts ourselves. Based on that, we had to end all the contracts since the government was paying for

it, including the salaries of the men which were hired and the payment to the companies. We then changed our plan so that the operators had to handle the ticket system and earn their fares themselves and also take care of the maintenance and CNG. The department would not compensate for anything. The contracts were also for a shorter duration but it was not viable. At that time the price of CNG was low too, but gradually it was increased. The contractors did not find the work viable anymore and left in between contracts. We then had to recover all the funds of the existing contracts and pay for the maintenance of the buses. The buses were then not being used for some while, it was decided then they will be operated through the department itself. For some time the department was running the system and it worked fine. We were able to run it without any glitches and recovered the finances too. Instead of going into loss, we were able to balance the books. But that too lasted only for 3-5 months. Then again we started the contract system so that the operators operate the system, pay for the maintenance themselves and also hand over some of the amount to KMC as well which was agreed as Rs 10 per day. During this process, continuation of the gas supply was also halted, the timings of gas supply were changed, and the prices rose too high, causing a dent in the viability of the contract and the operators were unable to pay any revenue to KMC and again the contracts were ended and the system was handed over. After this, many tenders were proposed for different operators but nobody was ready to take over this system and ever since the buses remain parked at the bus terminals. Many meetings and discussions were held between the accounts and the finance department and it was proposed to KMC that they should take over the system, but they also refused and ultimately it came under the department. But since the buses were being used and not being maintained, the tyres of a few have busted and we need money to get them repaired to make them viable again and put to use. This matter is pending with the finance department to date.

Question: Were the buses imported initially?

Answer: No, the buses were not imported but were taken directly from the local company and Daewoo.

Question: Who invested in this system? And how much money was invested?

Answer: City District Government Karachi invested in the system and one bus costs around Rs 4.4 million.

Question: What about the booths? Were they paid for by a private company?

Answer: Those who built them used it as advertisement for their work and recovered the amount invested from that revenue.

Question: Currently how many buses are parked at the terminals?

Answer: In 2010, 25 more buses were inducted and routed from Orangi to Malir. Those buses were part of the same project and currently remain parked and unused.

Question: You shared that the project catered routes from Surjani to Tower, Surjani to Korangi and Orangi to Malir, did these routes cause any problems for the project?

Answer: Firstly, the maintenance of the buses, Secondly, CNG. and thirdly was that when we lost the operators, buses were being overloaded and drivers were difficult to get a hold of and overtaking resumed. The buses were not being controlled and regulated properly, we lost track of time usually and mainly Daewoo were the first to go off-road. Because of that the gap in the time schedule widened and continuity of the schedule was not being met, causing problems for the passengers too. People then looked for other ways to commute. Initially, everybody used to wait for these buses and many used to prefer travelling via these buses instead of their own cars but soon policies changed and these buses degraded to the level of all other buses and the situation became worse.

Question: Are the buses parked at the terminals in this condition so that they can be re-introduced onto the roads? Or does investment need to be done prior to this process?

Answer: The buses have been parked at the terminals for three to four months. We did ask for money early on to get the buses, in particular the tyres, repaired. The batteries are flat as it has been a year since these buses have been used, but some of the tyres are still in good condition. But some work eg maintenance of clutches and brakes and tuning still needs to be done.

Question: When the company and the government ended the contract, did it affect the employment rate?

Answer: Employment was not an issue in this project as the operators used their own resources during their tenure and when we took over, we paid the staff daily wages.

Question: What about the booths which were constructed?

Answer: Those are still there on the sites and are now the property of CDGK. They aren't being taken care of but are still there and some were removed due to security issues. Some are lying around at the terminals.

Question: If we go back in time a little, UTS buses were introduced and were also discontinued. Why aren't big buses continued for a longer period of time in Karachi?

Answer: The commitment of transport is done by the government. They don't want big buses to run on our roads, if you give benefits, have duty-free on buses and give some sort of attraction / reward, then only someone will bring such buses. Currently one bus costs 80 lacs, now who would spend so much, also there is no security in our city, previously our two buses were torched, are now useless because of all this. One was torched at Jahangir road and the other in Orangi town. In Karachi, green buses were also very notable but the city conditions are unpredictable.

Question: Have you tried collaborating with the transport committee?

Answer: They also refused to take over it. There is not viability in it. Transport is a service to the public; it is the responsibility of the government to provide service to the public. But the government doesn't consider it as a service, which is our biggest issue. Since it doesn't regard it as a service, it formulates policy accordingly. Everywhere else in the world, governments provide such facilities with subsidised rates as not everyone can afford it. This is not a profitable project. But here nobody considers it as a service.

Question: This means that currently there is no policy?

Answer: I can't recall any policy at the moment. There is not much emphasis on policy.

Question: What, according to you, is the solution to this entire transport problem?

Answer: The best solution is a circular railway. It can cater for 1,000 people at one time and will reduce pollution, the number of accidents and congestion. Everywhere in the world, circular railways, whether underground or above, are being operated successfully. In Bombay, India, millions of people travel for their jobs, they have a wonderful system. Nobody has realised how important a looping system could be in our city and there would be no reason for people not to travel on this system. It is also a cheaper way to travel.

Question: Is there anything being done on the circular railway?

Answer: JICA showed an interest in it and even requested a loan from the government of Sindh. We read in the newspaper that negotiations are being carried out but then there was silence and we don't know what is being done about it.

Question: What can be done to introduce bigger buses in Karachi? Can we make the routes safer?

Answer: There are no safe routes in Karachi. The main requirement for this is financial support. If we don't have that, you know about the high prices of diesel. If we charge rent according to the price of the diesel then nobody would travel on these buses and when it comes to subsidy, the same question arises about who would

pay for it. The government is paying subsidies for health, education, sewerage system, and no one is making a profit out of it, this is part of the service. Until the government accepts transport as a part of the service, nothing can be done about it. The transport situation in Karachi is becoming worse with time instead of improving. The few big buses, despite their conditions, were on the road, but now they have ended too. There is no effective law and no implementation of it. Neither there is any continuity in our policy. When the mayor left, more could've been done on this system as we were informed that we have an approval of 200 more buses, but it has been abandoned. He had to appear in court too because even though everything was done transparently, the authorities believed that corruption had been done. Inquiries are still being carried out!

Question: Are there any other terminals, other than in Surjani?

Answer: We have terminals in Orangi too where the buses are currently parked. We have other terminals such as 7A (Surjani), which is also deserted.

Interviewer: Thank you so much for your time.

Interview: A-07

**Mr. Shams-ud-Din Abro, Director,
Karachi Public Transport Society
(Dated: 17 October 2014)**

Public transport is available all over the world, both in the government and public sector. It is running in England, Saudi Arabia and India. The problem in Pakistan is that it is running at a loss, but it is still running. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is also running at a loss and a subsidy is provided to the public sector. If PIA is nationalised, air fares will be so high that people won't be able to afford them. If it is privatised, the present facilities provided to the passengers will also be not available. Likewise KTC and SRTC were not partners but as soon as Pakistan came in to being, these two started running for public service. KTC's head office was in Tibet Plaza. Later on the office of the RTI was also accommodated there. Karachi city's population is increasing in leaps and bounds. Settlements like Khuda Ki Basti and New Karachi are examples. If transport is provided in the public sector, it will be as a business even if the government also provides transport to public and facilities to the poor; so the matter has stopped here.

And if the transport sector is privatised it will create more problems such as the qingui which is neither reliable nor durable. This is a rickshaw with the 70 CC engine of a motor bike which carries 10 to 12 persons. This is not a permanent solution – a permanent solution is the mass transit programme.

In London, the largest system of mass transit is working very well. If there is additional government provision, it will be much better. Another place is Sao Paulo in Brazil where our officers also paid a visit arranged by the World Bank.

London, Brazil and Argentina are good examples of this system.

In 1999, SRTC's service stopped and in 1997 we also stopped the KTC. Prior to this Mr Bhutto suggested that KTC should not be separated; this was also a public transport system and the government would be responsible for its running. The buses which are plying in the cities are running at a loss, therefore the federal government said they would subsidise them. The cities earmarked for this purpose were Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. These buses were to ply under the federal government and Brigadier Qasim was made the head of this programme. He made 9 depots on 25 acres each. The floors were not cemented and in case of rain, it was very difficult to pull buses out of the depot – a lot of time was wasted. Therefore, cement flooring was laid. Later on General Saeed Qadir supported Brigadier Qasim in this connection and insisted that facilities should be provided to the public. The reason of closure of KTC is less fare, plus corruption. Moreover the technical staff did not have the required skills. For example when fixing a gear, the bearing broke. Many losses were borne because of these technical faults. The drivers and conductor made mistakes and these can be corrected but the ones which occurred due to technical negligence cannot be corrected. The service should have not been stopped.

Since 1997, seventeen years have passed and this property of billions of rupees is lying useless – some portions are being grabbed. An example is Korangi's depot. There are 8/9 more depots where the cemented floors are never used. In Peerabad and Orangi Towns the police chowkies have been established. No institution can work if it is not properly maintained, etc.

The management of Daewoo is ready to take over it but the fare will be beyond the capacity of the public. This is some 15/20 years before the prime minister had a vision of running trolley buses but it was not put into practice, the reason being the exorbitant fare of Rs. 50/- per passenger.

People have now switched over to motor cycles. People need transport – the well-off lease cars, others resort to motorcycles and rickshaws. Then the qingui arrived – and our people are very innovative – they converted a rickshaw from a two-seater to a 9-seater.

A maximum of four persons can travel in a car, whereas, in a bus 100 persons can travel. As such there have been an excessive number of cars, rickshaws and qinguis.

In 1997, the government invited the public sector with a promise of providing depots, traffic police and other facilities to fill the gap. This was the basis of the creation of the Karachi Public Transport Society which was registered later on.

A similar system is working at Faisalabad also under the auspices of Commissioner Mr Masood Noorani who later became the interior minister also we also tried to work on the same lines but the people were afraid of law and order situations. They were hesitant to invest their money in this regard.

Then Mr Javed Chaudhary purchased 200 buses and started a service called "metro bus". We invited him proposing that the fare be reasonable. At that time the fare was Rs 5 whereas that of the metro bus was Rs 7/-. Mr Zia ul Islam was the secretary at that time. The proposal included the following terms and conditions:

Buses will ply on a route and at each stop, will be available every 5 minutes and passengers will sit on seat by seat arrangement. A conductor will be there – buses will not be allowed to race with other buses to access more passengers. A retired army person would serve as a checker. There will be no races with other buses. These buses started on nine routes but the bad luck started because these buses plied on Clifton and airport routes where bad elements of society started robbing the passengers.

Then we started the metro car service with 150 cars which are running quite successfully "KPTS" is a society where there are 27 members – 18 members are from government including DIG, Traffic, City Dist. government and personal secretary etc.

Among the nine members from the public are responsible persons like Mr Arif Hasan and Brig Qasim. Some members are from CPLC. If there are any problems regarding fares or changes of routes, they are discussed by the governing body – no single person can decide the matter arbitrarily.

If it pertains to fare, then the transporter's benefit is also considered. The public sector member tends to support the transporter because he is the prime mover and most dependable person. If other institutions are running on such a basis it is expected that there will not be any dispute. There should be a monthly meeting and an executive committee should handle all the matters.

There was a stroke of bad luck. Mr Javed Chaudhary died, he had no son – his wife was the sole inheritor. The subordinates lost the entire investment through mismanagement. His wife ultimately sold the business and the buses which were taken to different cities and

provinces. Some 50/60 buses were taken out. Mr. Adil Siddiquie objected to this claiming that these buses were registered with the society. He said that either the society should write to the government that either their tax etc is not paid or there should be a case of change of route etc. This would retain the buses in Karachi and thereby facilitate the public.

At present some 150 buses are registered with the KPTS but only 100 are plied on different routes.

The number of routes has also been curtailed. In the beginning, four routes were provided to the university. Other routes were:

- 9-B Samama to Glistan Johar via Stadium (80 buses plied on this route)
- Shara-e-Faisal to Malir another to Malir Cannt.
- 15-A Malir Cannt to Tower
- Shuttle Malir Cannt: to Quaidabad

"OCS" was also the property of Javed Chowdhary. This service met the same fate. People bought the buses from his wife at a throw-away price of Rs. 3 lac (Rs. 300,000) and later on sold them for Rs. 10 (Rs. One million) or Rs. 12 lac. (Rs. 1.2 million)

These new owners minted money without taking care of the buses; racing and overloading were the salient features of these buses. Unless we take some strict measures the number of buses will decrease further. People are already traveling on the roofs of the buses.

Interviewer: How many cabs are there?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: The number is about 160. Now we anticipate that the number may also diminish. They planned for the cabs to go out to the airport and return at the same fare. They have an office near Boat Basin and have provided 400 cars thinking that they would not require any route permits and the charges are also different. In this way some 8 to 10 companies have parted their ways with us.

You will be surprised to know that the rent from Karachi to Ranipur was Rs.12,000/- (Rs. Twelve Thousand) on CNG.

The minister has asked the traffic controller that the problem of all such cars (rent a car), school vans and vans going to Hyderabad / Larkana) should be discussed in the meeting of the governing body of the KPTS. The fares and roadworthiness should be checked. Gas cylinders should also be checked because these are generally not in good condition and burst tyres cause damage to cars and passengers

The governing body has passed the bill but it has not yet been implemented by the government. We have also in mind to present the issue of the fare of Dawoee owners. If the fare is for Rs. 50/- it will be decided in the

governing body as Brigadier Qasim had been watching these matters for almost eight years. He is still an expert in these matters. He will consider all the pros and cons.

If the fare is increased people will talk of money grabbing and if the fare is decreased then the transporters will make a hue and cry.

Therefore each and every aspect is looked at very carefully. It will be appropriate that the matter be discussed in the governing body and whatever plan is made and decided will be acceptable to the transporters.

We receive some money as a “security deposit”. If they stop running their cars without any valid reason, we will forfeit the deposit.

We have now become quite helpless because no new cars or buses have been registered with us and there are no new cars are coming into the city. The number of mini buses was 20,000, which has gone down to only 5,000.

Qingui and other means of transport are not a solution to this problem. Qingui’s fare from Surjani to Tower is Rs. 50/-. For short distances, Qingui is fine, but for the people who cover long distances, this type of transport is not feasible. If big buses are available the passengers will be able to cover long distances at a low fare. If we do not provide a service to the people, the problem will be highlighted by the media which is very active these days. We have the solution for all these problems. We have people like Brigadier Qasim and Mr Irshad Bukhari who will never damage the interest of the transporters.

The former Secretary of RT, Mr Shamim, was a true gentleman. He would never listen to any ill-wishing suggestions. There should be a group of four to five capable and expert persons. Two or three people cannot handle this matter. Whatever decision is to be taken, it should be through a committee, not by individuals. This would be a sort of “inspection team” which would take care of various matters like the uniform of the driver and conductor (no decorations) and the seats which should be comfortable. The doors should be automatic so that the passengers may board or alight the bus easily.

Now a bus is bought by two or three persons together and each tries to impose his likes or style which creates problems. We had started a school called “Karachi School of Driving”. Later on I completed a course entitled “Mass transit in London”. It did not only cover driving but other things such as the driver, conductor and distance manager.

The duration of the courses was different. Some courses were for one month, some for three months and others for a week. I gathered some useful material. The World Bank has provided material such as cassettes

etc. But here, sheer bad luck, the “Karachi School of Driving” is closed. I tried my best to revive it but vested interest came in my way.

Corruption is our worst enemy. It may be KTC, SRTC and KPTS or any such institution, which will be destroyed by this uncontrollable enemy.

Interviewer: In 1997, one institution was working, buses were also available so why was it closed? How many buses were there in KTC?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: When we came there were 700/800 buses in KTC. There were 51 routes and only 50/60 buses were plying. KTC was closed in March 1997. In 1995 SRTC was closed. The solution is that the government should reopen it. Experts should be hired to manage it. Depots should be taken back. The high court has given the verdict that the depots cannot be sold. These depots were meant for the buses – any other kind of factory or residence would not be erected on them. It is a crime according to the verdict since our future generations will require more buses and means of transport – when there is no land / place for the vehicles, what would they do?

Interviewer: Were the buses of SRTC only for Karachi or were they plied outside of Karachi also?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: There was an institution with the name of the “West Pakistan Transport Corporation”. When one unit was done away with, SRTC was there.

In 1977, SRTC was for the interior of Sindh and its buses used to come to Karachi from other cities. Then KTC was formed so that the buses could go out of Karachi. It was assumed that the federal government would develop it and it would flourish – just as Brigadier Qasim had done in the past. As soon as he took over the charge he stated that it was a challenge

He instantly prepared nine depots, a central workshop, training schools and stores where all necessary material was available. He used to visit these places every month. Depots were under scrutiny as if these were under the control of the army then an officer (having affinity with MQM; later on he was assassinated) came and took control of the situation. During his tenure the income of the KTC increased so much that there was no need for the subsidy from the government, I am not a spokesman of any political party yet it is true that an institution flourishes only when it is kept under control. If some commendable work is done by a person, he should be given the credit for his good work. Mr Azar Siddiqui also did a good job and Mr Manzoor Wasan, who was minister for transport at that time, also did a fair job. The minister for transport who came after Mr Wasan did not take any interest and the KTC was on the brink of destruction. Depots were changed from one place to the other and the material which was given by the World Bank was a feast for the thieves.

Benazir Bhutto's tenure also met the same fate. 30 crore were taken and the amount was not traceable. The officer was shifted from one place to the other so that no documentary evidence was left. To keep the matter untraceable the RTI was also destroyed. The real work demands that government should start it by itself. Legally, SRTC is not closed. It could be restarted which would procure employment and students would also benefit.

Interviewer: What steps did you take to improve the situation?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: I sent the proposal to the secretary of transport and a copy to the chief minister. I belong to Larkana and I have been serving here since 1972. During this time a person with the name of Akhtar Jadoon, who was transport minister was in place for a short period but he sold almost every thing and went back. Later on he became director. It is highly surprising how he reached the top slot from grade 18.

The furniture of the office in a very bad condition and when he left the office he took the car with him worth Rs 15 lac. He did all these things because he had strong connection with the government of that time.

Interviewer: What is your opinion of the UTS service which was started in the days of Mr Naimatullah?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: During the time of Mr. Naimatullah, UTS was started as the green bus. It plied from Safoorah to Keemari and Tower to Clifton. The buses could run on both CNG and diesel, but CNG was not started so it was run on diesel only. It plied for only 5/6 months. The green bus is still there but it is different. One or two green buses are still parked, out of order, as a token of that time.

The 4 K Bus stop also had a KTS terminal. There was a dispute between the two parties. Then UTS was started with a subsidy from the government and also a loan from the banks. They spent a lot of money and had to suspend the service because they were unable to pay back the loan.

Interviewer: How many buses did they have?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: There were 200 buses plying on 13 routes. About 8/10 buses are still plying. It is a separate matter. They have taken a depot at Landhi but have not paid its rent. Nothing is left.

There has been a deal between the city government and the UTS that whatever losses occur will be borne by the city government. Now the losses are increasing and the government has refused to make up the difference as they have no reason to do so. Then the city government bought 75 buses but these plied only for 6 months. They received half of the CNG from the city government and half from Daewoo. They had technical expertise. 80 buses are parked up out of order, some have no engine,

some have no brakes, some have no radiators. Now they have received Rs. 34 crore for repair. If they fit genuine parts, these buses will be okay but if not, the same fate will be met.

Interviewer: What you have to say about mass transit?

Mr. Shamsuddin Abro: The answer is with the secretary of transport. It has not yet come into being. They have pointed out the blue and green lines which will have a BRT system, as in Lahore. Its fare will be different and people are ready to go to the court because of illegal encroachment. There must be some system to remove the encroachment and provide neat and clean space for the buses.

Some measures have been taken. The road from Dawood Chowrangi to Mill area is quite broad. There is no such road anywhere in Karachi. One can reach Qayoomabad easily and from there to Regal Cinema. From there one can go up to the Tower.

The second route is that of north Nazimabad. It is in very good condition up to the Board Office but its condition is bad near Lasbela. The area of Golimar, where there is a big market of household goods, is a question mark. It is not sure whether the public allows these people to work there or not.

If some arrangement, like that of underground subway, is agreed, one is not sure whether the public will get a staying order or not.

The solution to these problems is the plying of the big buses which may be brought by the SRTC.

SRTC should be revived with a team of persons having technical knowledge. There should be a board of governors which should keep a watch over it. A monthly check and biannual audit should be provided through the members of the board of governors because subsidies given to the public sector are being used for personal interest.

The green buses, which are plying from Gulshan-e-Hadeed to Tower were run by the government. But recently these have been handed over to the private sector. A lot of money has been given by the city government for this purpose. Now the private sector will extract the last drop of blood from these buses. Whatever parts are in good condition, they will remove them and the undrivable buses will be sold like garbage. I am speaking of this with great confidence. The fare should be so that cost of running and maintenance is covered. People are prepared to make money from the buses which are plying between Hyderabad and other cities like Larkana, Dadu, Jacobabad, Sukkar and Kashmir etc.

There is no route permit for these buses. Regular bus stops have been made for these buses. Buses do not come from Punjab because of the long distance.

Several 10/15 seated buses are available near Capri Cinema. Instead of these vans, big buses should be provided. The entire system should be monitored. The owners charge the fare at the cost of diesel but run the buses on CNG. They know that nobody is going to check. There should be a body that represents the private sector whenever we have a meeting. The private sector member complains with the DIG that injustice is being done to them. Likewise the secretary of the RTI is also misinformed and the matter runs between allegation and counter-allegation.

This body will be a controlling authority and if it continues checking, corruption will decrease.

If a transporter makes a wrong statement, he is stopped and told that he is flouting the system, then his route permit may be cancelled.

When 2-B and 4-B were plying, the public sector, members used to come occasionally – they were not permanent members. Mr Irshad Bukhari and Captain Moeed (representative of the chamber of commerce) checked matters on the spot and the governing body brought such people to task. The report was presented before the governing body and permits were cancelled.

People knew that in case of any malpractice, their route permit would be cancelled. Fearing this, they did desist, to some extent, from openly corrupt practices.

I will tell you some facts about KPTS backed up with evidence, which if published, will reach the public and should make a difference.

I recognised one very senior officer, Mr Musarrat Hussain. He asked me how I recognised him and I told him that he had visited our school once. He told us that in 1970 a letter from here was written to Mr Bhutto saying that SRTC should be stopped. At this Mr. Bhutto became angry saying that he is trying to provide a service to the masses and also increasing employment, and yet he is being asked to shelve this scheme. He said it was his job to provide buses and that he would increase the number of depots.

Then he sent for Bedford buses from National Motors.

There was one bus BNF which used to ply from Korangi. He ordered that there should be a depot in every district and at least 50 buses in each district. Mr Bashir Ahmed, who was IG, at that time, was made the chairman as directed to improve the entire situation. Mr Bhutto opined that the lower classes and labourers would travel in these buses, the fare of which was 50 paise but the buses should be big enough to carry 100 persons or more. Nowhere in the world have big buses been shelved. These should be plied on a one way system because this system is the world's number one system.

He further instructed that shops of spare parts should be opened around the depot and hotels should also be

there so that traveller may not face any difficulty and the drivers may easily buy the spare parts.

So this is the whole situation.

Interviewer: Sir, thank you very much.

B. Interviews with transporters

Interview: B-01

Syed Irshad Bukhari, President, Karachi Transport Union

Zahid Farooq: Today we are in discussion with Mr Irshad Bukhari, who is the president of the Karachi Transport Alliance/Union. This organisation is working for the issues of the transporters who are currently working in the transport sector of Karachi. For several years Mr Irshad Bukhari has been associated with this sector. In today's interview we have Zahid Farooq, Rizwan-ul-Haq and Mansoor Raza with us. The Urban Resource Centre (URC) Karachi and Arif Hassan are researching the problems of the transport sector in Karachi. We have been trying to find a solution to this problem for a long time now, but the situation doesn't seem to be getting better. Both the buses and the travellers' needs are not being met, nor are the problems of the transporters being resolved. Today we are going to talk about the issues of the transporters.

Irshad Bukhari: Mr. Zahid Farooq, I am grateful to the URC who have been working with us over the past 20-25 years. Mr Arif Hassan has given us ample support and it is because of his patronage that our organisation is undeterred, along with the support of the chief secretary and the secretary of transport of the government.

Question (Zahid Farooq): How long have you been associated with the transport sector?

Answer: Almost 15 years. Since 1962 – the years just passed by – I have been a member of the alliance/union for the past 40 years. Then in 1978, I became the vice secretary of transport, in 1981 I was appointed as the general secretary of transport, then in 1988 we formed the Case Alliance Transport Action Committee and I was the chairman of that committee and after a year Karachi Transport Alliance/Union came into being where I am currently working.

Question: You have been working in the sector for some time now, what are the major issues that the transporters have to face?

Answer: There are many problems! 50 years ago there were very few buses – only 30-40. Vehicles which had urban use were utilised more and in the event of strikes they used to torch our vehicles even more than now. Vehicles costing 20-50 lacs were destroyed with a mere matchstick. The government has not provided provide us with anything – except in Benazir Bhutto's regime; in return for a burnt 20 lac vehicle, we received only 2 lacs. We are offered no compensation from the government. A new vehicle costs 20 lacs. Secondly, we are not able to get insurance for them. Thirdly, the fares are less in other areas such as in the areas of Punjab where it is Rs 28 per 20 kilometres; here we charge Rs 14 per 20 kilometres. Moreover, people now travel in their personal cars because there is no other viable transportation. The problem is that our tyres are expensive. So is the engine. Also, the diesel costs a lot and our good drivers have left. We have a lot of problems.

Question: Do the roads need to be fixed as well?

Answer: Yes! The roads need to be fixed as well; they are in a really bad condition and travelling becomes difficult; the tyres get damaged which causes more problems. Moreover, people tend not to like transporters.

Question: If you want to buy buses, how will you buy them? Do you pay for them out of your own pocket?

Answer: It is difficult to buy a vehicle costing 50-80 lacs but we give advance payments and buy our vehicles. We don't buy inter-Karachi buses, it is almost impossible to even think about it. First, the diesel prices went up so we increased the rent of the buses run on diesel; we then converted our buses to CNG, then CNG prices went up. If we don't solve all these problems, we can't run the transport system in Karachi.

Question: In your opinion how much rent should we charge, keeping the current scenario in mind?

Answer: Naimatullah Khan introduced UTS buses in his time; they charged less rent and they failed. Then Mustafa Kamal introduced 50 green buses, then 25 more vehicles and now 75 vehicles are parked idly. They have requested us to take those vehicles but the rent of those vehicles is Rs 10 to 15 less than what we charge. If we are investing 2 lacs in a vehicle, we have to pay that amount in instalments. If we are buying a Mazda for 10 lacs, then we need to pay 20 lacs in a year.

Question: What was the transport policy during different governments?

Answer: Those who come to power have no interest in the transport policy. If you look at the policies of the Punjab government, they provide their transporters with every kind of subsidy. But the chief minister in power has no interest in this. So now we have qingqi rickshaws.

Question: What objection do you have to the qingqi rickshaws?

Answer: They are ruining our business!

Question: Who funds or gives loans to buy new vehicles?

Answer: Banks and transport companies do not provide us with loans. We told these companies that if they provide credit for the purchasing, we'll be able to introduce more and more buses onto the roads of Karachi.

Question: Do you have any suggestions of how to improve this?

Answer: The government body should provide us with loans and the transporters' community should be given loans so that the transport sector can prosper in the city.

Question: What do you think is the reason behind traffic jams in the city?

Answer: There are two to three reasons why a traffic jam occurs. People have now starting buying cars on lease and motorcycles on instalments, so the number of cars has increased leading to traffic jams. Qingqi rickshaws also add to the jams.

Question: Have flyovers and underpasses affected our city and how?

Answer: Yes! These underpasses and flyovers were constructed by Mustafa Kamal, the former mayor of Karachi. We welcome such advancements. All the development work that happens in Karachi is valued as it improves the state of transport in the city. Thanks to the flyovers, the distance which used to take an hour to cover, now only takes 30 minutes.

Question: What is your take on the signal free corridor development?

Answer: They have proved to be very beneficial – from Metroville to the last stop you will not have to face any delays or hold-ups.

Question: What is the role of the city traffic police?

Answer: When we give the traffic police money, they take it and those vehicles on the street whose engine isn't working or the body needs work are overlooked by them. If vehicles are stopped by the traffic police, the drivers give them Rs 50 to 100 to avoid any penalties.

Question: What is the monthly deal with the traffic police?

Answer: One vehicle costs Rs 1,500-2,000 monthly in bribes to the police. You must have heard the story about the motorway. The police stopped the minister's car and charged a challan from him too. Traffic police earn between Rs 15,000-20,000 monthly, In Punjab, the motorway police earn up to Rs 40,000-50,000.

Here the traffic police have inadequate accommodation – officials' quarters consist of two rooms only which makes living conditions difficult.

Question: When the city conditions get worse, why are public transport vehicles targeted whereas banks or houses are not torched?

Answer: Keeping God as my witness, I do not belong to any specific group, but there is ethnic conflict. Most of the drivers are Pathans/Pashtoons. Two years ago, 40 of our Pathan/Pashtoon drivers were killed.

Question: Which areas do you refrain from sending your drivers to when there is violence in the city?

Answer: Liaquatabad, Lyaari and all those other areas which are highly sensitive. You must know by now that Muhajirs and Pathans/Pashtoons are confined to the areas where there is a Muhajir majority and Pathans/Pashtoons majority, respectively. It now means that if the vehicle belongs to a Pathan/Pashtoon, he can't go in the Muhajir's area. City conditions are such that people are dragged out of the cars and killed. It is our bad luck and what could be worse than this. When I came to Karachi city there were no Muhajirs or Pathans/Pashtoons and all were brothers. [As in the politics of ethnicity were not there. All the ethnicities lived like brothers].

Question: Are you satisfied with the road transport?

Answer: How do we focus on the road transport? We already have too few buses. We had 100 operational vehicles before and now we only have 20.

Question: What do you want to change? What change do you wish to see?

Answer: Most of our vehicles head towards Saddar. Many shopping malls have emerged now and the population has also increased. If we resettle then we can bring about a substantial change.

Question: Are you satisfied with the facilities at the bus terminals?

Answer: Bus terminals should be located at multiple sites. They are only present at two sites so far and can't be used as yet.

Question: Why do these drivers not care about the law?

Answer: Because Irshaad Bukhari, who is the owner of the transport, has their back. We take care of their fines, bail them out of prisons, and arrange for lawyers in the court for them. What else can we do other than take their guarantees, as it is our responsibility to take care of them.

Question: Why has the ticket system been dissolved?

Answer: The ticket system should be there but it was dissolved because no profits were made. The transport sector was in a crisis, we were not able to save much

money, and now we save the money which was previously used to buy tickets to sell.

Question: Currently, how many buses do the transporters have?

Answer: We have 1,500 buses. 1,150 are minibuses and we have coaches, out of which 6,000 are coaches and 5,500 are minibuses.

Additional interview with Irshad Hussain Bukhari on 12 March 2014:

Question: What is the structure of the Karachi Transport Association?

Answer: The structure of Karachi Transport Association is: president, senior vice president, four vice presidents, general secretary, deputy general secretary, joint secretary, publicity secretary and treasurer.

Question: What are the problems and difficulties being faced by Karachi Transport Association?

Answer: They are numerous problems and it would not be wrong to say that these problems have limited the activities of the organisation. Firstly, nobody is ready to have a discussion with us at the government level. Everybody notices the problems with the transport system but no one is ready to solve them. We are not involved in any planning and our opinions are not taken into account. We have put forward so many requests to the former Transport Minister Akhter Jadoon, asking him to hold a meeting but he never did. He didn't take any steps to improve the transport system in his tenure, in fact he was known for corruption. I must say that operating buses in Karachi is a skill. Ayub Khan had introduced KUTC buses in his tenure which operated for some time and were then shut down. Then KTC buses came, then UTC and then CNG buses but nobody could manage them. They have still been operating somehow over the past 35 years. The experienced transporters are not calling for any help or contributions [no request for subsidies, they just want the fares raised so that they can function with a reasonable profit which is not available today].

Our biggest problem is the fare. No increments have been made in bus fares over the past three years, whereas inflation is rising. Diesel, spare parts and maintenance prices are constantly increasing but bus fares are not increasing.

Question: Who is in charge of increasing the fares? How does this increment take place?

Answer: To increase the fare a request has to be given to the secretary of transport. This request is then forwarded to the chief secretary then it goes to the secretary of RTA, then we receive a notification. There are many issues which we are facing regarding our bus and coach fares, whereas qingqi and rickshaw owners

increase fares as they wish. These days, rickshaws and qingqis take Rs 40-50 for a ride from Surjani town to Tower whereas our fare is still Rs 20 which is not enough. The fare should be Rs 25 or 30. If we only even think about increasing the fare, chaos breaks out in the city, but nobody looks at our problems and how we are taking care of the expenses. We receive less fare, our buses are torched, and we are labelled as mafia, it is a weird system.

Question: In your opinion, what kind of a role could the Karachi Transport Association play in the mass transit system?

Answer: When Zaheer-ul-Islam was part of the mass transit project, he would involve us as well but after he left, nobody bothered to call us or involve us. We really want a mega city like Karachi to have a mass transit system just like other foreign cities and we are ready to play our role as well if they consider us important enough. We want a better transport system too. We want to give the people of the city who, despite paying the fare have to travel on the roofs, better travelling facilities, but we cannot do this on our own and require the government's cooperation.

Question: What kind of cooperation do you require from the government?

Answer: The government should provide us with loans so that we can buy new buses. Individual loans are hard to get. We would tell the government to give the loan to the Karachi Transport Association and we would further distribute it and will take the payments from the transporters and give back to the government. The government only has to show trust in us and we guarantee that the loan payment would be given back with a proper mark-up. One restriction should be put on this system – that no one should take their buses out of the city or sell them to someone outside the city. In the past, many people have done this, resulting in a scarcity of buses within the city. If government talks to us, we will ensure that we would give back the money, faithfully.

Question: There was a time when we could see numerous buses in the city, where have these buses gone now?

Answer: Because of the constant city crisis, many people have moved their vehicles out of the city. Some now operate them on inter-city routes, while some have sold them. According to Mahmood Afridi, many people have sold their buses in Dubai and have started their own business now. They are selling our capital in Dubai and running a business there. Five trailers, owned by Mahmood, operate from Dubai to Saudi Arabia. Many people have wrapped up their business here and have moved to South Africa, Dubai and Saudi Arabia for business purposes. It is highly disappointing that people, who should be running a business here, are running it outside the country and investing our

capital in other countries. But they've been forced to do so because of our city conditions. Prosperity is not possible without peace. We are constantly in the state of decline. Previously, in this same city, Ford buses used to run, then Mazda buses were introduced and now it has come to rickshaws and qingqis. We don't know what kind of a transport system would be introduced in the future.

Question: Have you contacted any Insurance companies?

Answer: We did discuss with an insurance company in 1993 that the buses should be insured, but the company deceived us. After that, nobody showed an interest in insuring public transport vehicles. Our vehicles are not insured and nobody is ready to insure them either. There exists a third party insurance which is only there in name and is just a way of making money.

Interview: B-02

Shabir H. Sulemanjee, Chairman CNG Association

Zahid Farooq: I welcome you, Sir Shabir Suleman, Chairman of the CNG Association, on behalf of the Urban Resource Centre. Today we are going to talk about the issue of CNG in Sindh, especially in Karachi, about the problems that the CNG Association has, and how and who can help us in resolving these problems. CNG is playing a very vital role in all the activities and businesses currently working in this city. Thank you for your time.

Question: How many CNG stations are there in Sindh? How many CNG stations and vehicles are there in Karachi and how many problems are there?

Answer: Thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to talk about CNG. There are a total of 3,300 CNG stations in the whole of Pakistan. Sindh has 600 CNG stations. When this plan was initiated in the 1990 by the government of Pakistan, there were two reasons behind it; Foreign exchange – one of our top imports is oil and CNG helps to reduce the energy bill (since CNG is locally available) and pollution. In addition we create jobs. Pakistan is currently at the lead of all the countries that use CNG, ahead of Italy.

Question: Any specific reason for it?

Answer: The government has come up with such policies that for our gas resources, which are 25–30 years old, we build CNG stations. They give you a license and most importantly, the import bill has been reduced. The government has introduced a state policy based on this. You have seen here that every government has introduced their own policies. When the CNG stations were built, the number of vehicles which were converted to CNG were approximately 40-

45 lacs. Private cars, rickshaws, taxis, Mazda buses in Pakistan have been converted to CNG, particularly in 2005, when the order issued by the supreme court was that vehicles running on diesel were to convert to CNG so that environmental pollution could be reduced. In this regard, the transport sector working in Sindh, Punjab and the whole of Pakistan, spent billions of rupees to get CNG kits in the buses. One CNG kit costs around Rs 1–2 lac.

Question: Where did the shortage start from?

Answer: Domestic users, fertilizers, cement, power generation, industrial power, and power captive are seven different sectors that consume CNG. The total amount of CNG used by these sectors is 4,000 mmcfpd (millimetre cubic feeds per day) which is our current shortage. The demand is about 5,500 – 6,000 mmcfpd, today the shortage in this is 1,500 in Punjab, whereas the shortage of CNG in Sindh is 100–200. From the total production or extraction of gas, 72% comes from Sindh, out of which, 27% is produced. 17% of the gas comes from Balochistan and 11% comes from Khyber Pakhtoon Khawan and we supply gas to Punjab. Balochistan produces 10–15% of the gas. In Punjab, 6% of the gas is produced. Since it's a huge province, the consumption of gas is more and the demand for gas in winter increases in the domestic sector. The geyser is used more in winter along with other things. In winter, the demand for gas increases by up to 300%. This causes a shortage or crisis. Now how does the shortage occur? The raw material for CNG is gas only and we don't have any other raw material for it. The total amount which we use in Sindh accounts for 2% of the production; Pakistan uses up to 60% of CNG. But the media is misguiding the public that the entire CNG is being used by the CNG transport sector only. This is completely untrue. The real facts reveal the opposite to this. Sindh uses 2% of the gas while the whole of Pakistan uses 7% in the CNG sector. The loss occurred when back in 2008 – 2009 and 2010 the oil prices rose resulting in an increase in the price of petrol and diesel. Now gas is used by domestic users for cooking, but the people who live in big areas such as Clifton and Defence run their generators on diesel when the electricity goes out. They have now converted the generator kits, which used to run on diesel, to gas. Now if you go to the market, you'll find generators ranging from 5KB to 20KB.

4,000 mmcfpd of gas is being produced in Pakistan. Many generators which run on gas have been imported and the government should put a ban on them. They are solely being used by domestic users. The shortage which we are facing today is because people want gas to cook food; if they can't tolerate load-shedding then they should produce their own electricity and if they want to use the generator use the one which runs on diesel. Due to the low price of gas in the

domestic sector, the income is almost nil. It should not be misused. The shortage is such that the percentage increases and diesel is pricier than petrol. Diesel has become expensive and now costs Rs 117 per litre. Load-shedding used to occur in industries, now if you look at the Site area of Korangi, you will find gas generators everywhere. When the electricity goes out, they use these generators despite having generators which run on diesel too! It is because the gas costs less; diesel is Rs 40 per unit and electricity costs Rs 17 per unit, gas costs Rs 6 to Rs 7 per unit that's why its use has rapidly increased. The second reason is captive power. It is very dangerous. The thing is that whoever now has an electrical connection, also has a generator which runs on diesel. When the electricity goes out, in Site area and Korangi KESC Karachi Electric Supply Corporation only does load-shedding for an hour, despite the fact that they run their factories on gas. It is not benefitting anyone apart from those who are earning a profit out of it, and this is causing a crisis. The common man is not getting any gas, people are unable to cook food in their homes. Thirdly, the CNG which we buy costs Rs 650 per unit of gas, whereas, other sectors pay Rs 200 or Rs 400 per unit. Most tariffs are for CNG prices, and despite that CNG load-shedding occurs. First justify the tariff and the gas being provided to others should be at the same price as the CNG so that it can be used in a permissible way. In the industrial areas gas is being used instead of electricity because it costs less. When they get gas and electricity at the same prices per unit, then they will use according to their consumption. Fourthly, there is the unaccounted for gas (UFG), the gas which is being stolen, so it does not go through the gas meter. There is an international standard followed all over the world that UFG gas should not exceed 4–6%. This is also mentioned in the bylaws of OGRA (Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority). Unfortunately, it has increased over the time from 4% to 4.5%, then 12%, and has now gone up to 13%. We prepared a report on CNG and there was a report which was prepared by the MD of Sui Gas who stated that the billing is 99%, whereas, when you step out of Karachi towards Larkana or Hyderabad, the UFG there is 10–12%. 10–12% would mean what? 4,000 mmcfpd gas is being produced in the country. The crisis in Sindh is 10%, which means 400 mmcfpd, and a crisis of 100 mmcfpd exists in Karachi. All the things which I have shared with you, if we control them, then the crisis in Sindh can be resolved. This is only because of an agenda which, due to gas in the CNG sector, affects the transport sector, whereas all the other seven sectors receive gas, when they have an alternative energy system in place, yet CNG pump owners don't even have an alternative energy system. Instead, they are shutting us down and ruining the transport system because there is no option to use diesel in transport. Once vehicles have been converted to CNG, they cannot be reverted back to diesel or petrol. When the

CNG stations are closed, vehicles are not taken out on the roads and remain parked on the bus stands. The public becomes worried and the transportation system of the entire city is affected. You know that how important a transportation system is in the city. Since diesel costs Rs 117, petrol costs RS 107 and CNG costs less, everybody wants to take advantage. If you count everyone who either travels by bus or by car, that means that around 3-4 crore people are associated with CNG. If you shut down CNG then everybody is affected by it. It also disrupts the ambulance service of the hospitals along with the vehicles which drop the students off at schools. It disrupts the entire city system. The use of CNG in the whole of Pakistan equates 2.3 billion litres of petrol! If you think about it, if CNG shuts down permanently what will happen? In order to import 2 billion litres we need at least 5 million or a billion dollars! If Pakistan spends 5 million dollars on importing petrol then the deficit will increase as import will be more and export less, and the demand for the dollar will also increase. Unemployment will also rise and the economy will be weakened. The law and order situation will worsen and poverty will further increase. I have just shared with you about the foreign exchange. We pay almost 32 billion of taxes and our government literally begs the economic experts/super powers for loans. Every child who is born in Pakistan has a debt of 500-600 dollars on him. If this country defaults, then every person will have to pay 600 dollars so instead of shutting this sector down, we should find solutions.

There should be long-term planning. We should have fundamental rights in Sindh. According to Article 158 whichever province produces gas they are entitled to it first. So if Sindh produces 72% of the gas and uses only 2%, then why does load-shedding occur in Sindh? First fulfill the gas needs of Sindh then move to other provinces, this is the only solution to this problem. First provide gas here! Khyber Pakhtoon Khuwan is able to extract 10 per cent gas, which is 300-400 mcmcpd of gas. None of the industries have to face load-shedding problems there, but CNG stations do. Domestic users receive gas throughout the week, and whatever gas Khyber Pakhtoon Khuwan produces, it gives it to its own province first.

Even in Balochistan, whatever gas they produce their first supply is within their province and the amount which is left they then supply to the other provinces. Our province Sindh, which is like a gas basket, produces 72 per cent gas, and if we are still facing a shortfall then, according to the Law, 100-200 of the gas should be made as a part of SSGC Network and the remaining should be supplied to Punjab, this is the first solution to it. Another solution is that the gas which is supplied to the industries is cheaper. It should be costly, so that the CNG prices should be levelled with the other sectors and gas is used in its true means. Even in the decision made by the Supreme Court on the 17th of December

2013, given by former Chief Justice Chaudhry Iftikhar Ali, on page 36, it states that power captive should receive gas at the prices of electricity. Gas should be given to those industries which use boilers or which need gas for their processes. But just because you wish to make one factory, a rickshaw maker or a transport company who wants to increase their number of buses, stronger, you shouldn't weaken the rest of the nation. It is not a solution to keep increasing the prices and not controlling theft. Thirdly, if we want to reduce load-shedding then everyone should work together and not penalise the CNG sector. Captive, CNG, and industry, if all these three sectors decide on one day to close CNG, then it is my guarantee that the domestic users would not have to face any difficulties. CNG is shut down for 3-4 days here resulting in increased traffic on the roads. We don't get to meet the minister or the prime minister because we are limited to the roads only. The people in the other sectors are crocodiles, they sit with the ministers so they listen to them immediately. We'll be old by the time they'll listen to us. This system is not good, but we are trying to call a strike in the transport sector. We are trying our best that we make ourselves heard in front of the leaders with the help of the judiciary so that we can get justice.

Question: How is a CNG station set up, what is its cost and how many people does it give employment to?

Answer: To set up a CNG station, it costs a capital of Rs 7-8 crore which includes the land, compressor unit, dispenser, green tower and other material and an effort of 1.5 years goes into setting it up. It also includes NOC and a fee which we pay to the government. This is our investment and the other investment comes from the public. The public is exploited too. Converting small vehicles to CNG costs around Rs 30-40 thousand and for buses it costs around 02 lacs. Likewise the public has invested billions and trillions of money. Vehicles belonging to the people have been converted to CNG. As far as the owners are concerned, their investment for this conversion is Rs 185 billion. If we combine both of the investments, it is a huge amount!

Where employment is concerned, the CNG sector employs over 4 lac people. If the CNG stations are shut down, then many families will have no food to survive on. By using CNG a person can save up to Rs 10,000-15,000 monthly. But if there is no CNG then it increases the expense to Rs 10,000-15,000 for a person. In an ordinary man's income, if we add an extra expense of Rs 10,000-12,000, just imagine how high the poverty rate will be then!

Question: How do you see transport and CNG working together?

Answer: Just as I shared earlier, CNG and transport are like the wheels on the same vehicle. Before vehicles were converted to CNG, the vehicles run on diesel or

petrol, and because of the immense amount of smoke people used to return to their homes with tanned skins. Since the transport sector has shifted to CNG, environmental pollution has also reduced. Now people have to queue for 4-5 hours on the roads to get CNG filled in their vehicles and when their turn comes, the pressure of the gas has already reduced, which is a sheer injustice. If there is no transport sector, there won't be any CNG sector either. The rent has not been increased due to the CNG sector. The rents were increased in 2011 whereas, diesel prices have gone up. If the vehicle was being run on diesel then imagine how high the rent would have been, it would have been difficult for anyone to travel.

Question: How many CNG stations do you own in Karachi?

Answer: I own four CNG stations in Karachi.

Question: What steps has the government taken for the CNG sector?

Answer: The steps taken by the government were truly unfair, especially those of the former government. This government is still somewhat positive. The federal minister of petroleum, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi says that the investment made by the public should not be eliminated. The lobby mafia which exists has such an outreach and such strong roots which is why we are not being heard and only the CNG sector is being affected by it. After distributing the gas everywhere, the CNG sector only gets what is left of it.

Question: What is the difference between LPG and CNG?

Answer: CNG is a natural gas. LPG is a mixture of carbon and gas. LPG, just like petrol, is in liquid form. LPG is not our produce, whereas CNG is. LPG is very expensive and its supply decreases in winter because those who can't find gas in their area use LPG. LPG is also used in industrial areas. LPG costs Rs 170-180 and is more expensive than petrol, so who will buy it? CNG is cheaper so people buy CNG.

Interview: B-03

Mehmood Afridi (President) and Tawab Khan (Vice President), Muslim Mini Bus Coach Owner Association

Interviewer: We are gathering information regarding the transport situation in Karachi. This is for research purposes and will be published in an international magazine. We've seen Bombay and Delhi; they are mega-cities too. There is no country/city in the world which solely runs on qingchis and rickshaws. How will people travel if you don't provide them with proper transport? We want transport to be considered an industry and issues should be looked into. People

pinpoint the transport issues but we wish to see what problems the transporters are facing. So we are going to discuss that today.

URC is grateful to you for your time today. URC is doing a research on the transport system of the city. We will ask you some questions pertaining to that research. We also want to discuss the problems which you are facing.

Question: How many coaches and Mazdas are currently running in the city?

Answer: Approximately 14,000. The number has reduced from 22,000 and is still reducing. They are transformed into mini trucks and coaches and are then moved out of Karachi to Hyderabad and other cities.

Question: Are they utilised as Mazdas and mini-buses or are converted into mini trucks?

Answer: Both. The biggest benefit is that the fare over there is pretty good. The biggest problem that we face in Karachi regarding transport is the torching of all these buses. I refused to believe that there is any city in the world facing this problem to such a great extent as we are. The existing transporters should protest against this.

Question: Does the government give any compensation for these cars?

Answer: Yes but after tedious efforts and hesitation. For a vehicle which costs us 15-18 lakhs, the government only gives a maximum of 2 lakhs for it.

Question: Are these buses insured?

Answer: No insurance company covers a mini bus or a bus running in Karachi.

Question: When a vehicle is torched, do you give the member who runs that vehicle, any compensation? How does that work?

Answer: Yes. We have two different kinds of members: From the union and from the committee which we have constituted. Our rule is that the payment has to be done per day, but the operators usually give them per month.

Question: What is the per day charge?

Answer: Rs 30 /day.

Question: How much does your association give to them as compensation?

Answer: We don't have any resources to give such compensation. We give them from what the government gives us.

Question: If anyone is hit by one of your vehicles, who takes care of it?

Answer: The vehicle owner himself. They try to settle it on their own.

Question: How do you pay for the vehicles?

Answer: The payment is done in three different ways. One the person who can afford to pay by himself. Or you can buy in instalments. I can then also sell it to someone else too.

Question: How does the payment process work? Through the bank?

Answer: That can be done but banks usually finances new vehicles which are not inducted anymore. But not everyone can go through the banks.

Question: If somebody is buying these vehicles in instalments, who do they pay it to? Who takes the down payment?

Answer: If I manufacture vehicles and you buy it from me then you would pay me the down payment. It is usually Rs 10,000 per month.

Question: Does the manufacturer/bank issue a funding letter to the buyer? What if he is selling a 5 lakh vehicle for 10 lakh?

Answer: Depends on the bank you are dealing with. Every bank has different interest rates too for the loans they give. Obviously the manufacturer won't sell the vehicle at the manufacturing price.

Question: What is the lowest and highest price for a vehicle?

Answer: Even a vehicle which is not in a good condition would cost 5-6 lac and maximum 15 lac.

Question: What are the problems which you have to face while buying/operating a vehicle?

Answer: Road permits and roadworthiness are not an issue for us. After 2002, the company which was manufacturing and supplying these Mazdas stopped operating. We cannot afford the new one; they are too expensive for us.

Question: Does a road permit cost anything?

Answer: No.

Question: Who issues the road permit?

Answer: The secretary of RTA.

Question: And what about the fitness certificate?

Answer: The motor vehicle department.

Question: How much does it cost for one vehicle running on one route?

Answer: Rs 100-200. The total expense for the permit is between Rs 1,000-2,000.

Question: Do you encounter any problems with the traffic police?

Answer: I think they are really good. Our vehicles are running in the city without any glitches.

Question: What about your department head?

Answer: Well, whichever laws and rules there are regarding traffic etc., all apply to us. Even our fares are approved by the government.

Question: But we don't get tickets in the buses anymore, how do we make sure that the rules are being followed?

Answer: Nowadays nobody gives tickets.

Question: When did the ticketing system stop?

Answer: Sometime after 1992-1993.

Question: Did this benefit anyone?

Answer: It's our loss actually. When the ticketing system was there, there was a limit which we could give to the contractors. Now we can't.

Question: How much money in a month do the Mazdas and coaches currently running on the streets give to the traffic police?

Answer: It is between the driver and the traffic police himself. But it isn't that much. It's usually between Rs 2,000-3,000. It is according to the route not according to the vehicle.

Question: What is the role of a vehicle inspector?

Answer: He checks the vehicle. In the case of an accident he takes the witness' account. But in most cases we get the blame for hitting the person.

Question: What are the fitness charges?

Answer: Between Rs 1,000 – 2,000.

Question: For how long have you been associated with this field? How do you think the transport system can be improved?

Answer: The first and foremost thing is security. Then the matters of the fares have to be resolved. Fares should be according to the cost of the vehicle. The transport industry needs to be recognised as an industry by our government. We pay the highest taxes.

Question: What should be the fare according to you?

Answer: For the current vehicles which we have, at least Rs 50 per passenger. If someone is paying 10 lacs for a vehicle and if he dies, under a strike condition it is torched down within minutes.

Question: What is your take on signal free corridors?

Answer: It is a progression. The problem is that in our country/city policies are formulated but not implemented. We don't have CNG, we don't have petrol, we don't have diesel but vehicles from all over the world are being inducted in the city and are being registered on CNG. We don't have petrol but if you at Sohrab Goth trucks loaded with numerous motorcycles

can be seen. If a man has guests coming over to his place, he'll arrange for things accordingly for 20 guests or 5 guests. I discussed these issues with the secretary of transport especially about qingchis, he informed that they are formulating a policy for it but what is the point of registering them if these vehicles are loading 9 passengers on 3 seats? He wasn't then sure if the qingchis are being registered or not. You are in a certain position in an institution and you aren't well informed. Such issues do exist.

Question: Who should be taking care of the transport issues?

Answer: We've written complaint/request letters to everyone in the government and the chief minister must have a drawer full of our letters by now.

Question: What is your take on the circular railway?

Answer: We will agree anything which would benefit this city. But it should not merely be limited to paperwork because these plans are expensive and take up resources.

Now we are in discussion with Syed Mahmood Afridi who is the President of Karachi Muslim Mini Bus Coach Owner Association.

Question: How long have you been associated with this organisation?

Answer: Since 1966 when four-wheelers and small vehicles used to be seen on the roads of Karachi.

Question: How many people/members are there in your association?

Answer: We have at least 8,000-9,000 members. We have a cabinet too.

Question: What is the structure of that cabinet?

Answer: First is the president, then the vice president, then a chairman, general secretary, finance minister. Then we also have a cabinet in the district. It follows the same structure.

Question: What is the role of the district cabinet?

Answer: To solve the problems of that district for e.g. if a problem has occurred in the Malir district, we do not have to travel all the way to Malir for that, the Malir district can take care of it. If they are unable to resolve it, then we have to go.

Question: How many organisations/institutions do you have to be in touch with e.g. traffic police, transport committee etc.?

Answer: RTA secretary, commissioner of Karachi, traffic police etc. We deal with many institutions.

Question: What is the usual attitude of government institutions towards your association? What do they take you as, problem creators or problem solvers?

Answer: Well I think they may have some complaints against us too. I am the president here and the general secretary of the Karachi Transport Union. I am thankful to God that I have earned a lot of respect over the years. I think one of the main transport issues is the fare. Every association charges the fare according to their wishes and not according to the policy.

Question: What kinds of complaints do the travellers/users of transport usually have?

Answer: They must have complaints from us maybe because some of our vehicles/buses are not in good condition. Until we fix them, they will of course complain. They are completely unaware that even transporters have certain complaints. Transporters are now just getting by because it's their job.

Question: How much pay does a driver get?

Answer: The ticketing system was perfect for us. It was easier to keep a check on the earnings of the drivers as well. We could also then calculate that how much we've saved. Now there is no accountability. Both the conductors and the driver are involved in this because at certain times the drivers won't drive our bus if they is not accompanied by a conductor of his own choice.

Question: How much money do they give back at least?

Answer: Depends on the route and isn't fixed – it can be Rs 800, 900 1,000 etc.

Question: What does the operator do for his driver?

Answer: It's us who do everything for them from challan to bail to food to the cigarette they smoke.

Question: What is the solution to all this?

Answer: The government should support the transport department making sure that Karachi and the public of Karachi are benefitting from the steps which we'd take. Secondly, the city conditions should be taken into account and improved.

Question: Are you satisfied with the roads and the bus stops in the city?

Answer: The city is nothing compared to the rural areas, you should visit them. Baldia town, Rasheedabad, Banaras, Qasba colony Mango Pir etc. have terrible roads. Some tribal areas might be in better conditions than these areas.

Question: Are there broken roads?

Answer: The roads don't even exist there, let alone be broken. They damage our vehicles.

Question: What do you think is the solution to the traffic jam in the city?

Answer: The traffic police are not doing their job. They are more concerned about their earnings (through

bribes). We don't have a proper parking system. We had such a good time in Karachi in the old days. The police and rangers do not follow the rules themselves so traffic jams are inevitable.

Thank you so much for your time!

Interview: B-04 Akber Khan (Finance Secretary) and Syed Khattri (President), All Karachi QINGQI Welfare Association

Akbar Khan:

Today we are here with Mr Akber Khan, who is the finance secretary of the Qingchi Rickshaw Association, Karachi. We are going to talk about how qingchi rickshaws help the people of Karachi in commuting when they are already facing so many transport issues. Also, to what extent are qingchi rickshaws fulfilling their roles and responsibilities?

Question: For how long have you been associated with this association? Also, please tell us how qingchis came into being?

Answer: Qingchi is a Chinese motorcycle company, it's a brand. It was initiated in Punjab and then moved to Sindh and has been a part of our transport system for 20 years now. In Karachi, they were introduced in 2002. I was the one who introduced them in Karachi. The route which was first experimented for qingchis was from Askari Park (Old Sabzi Mandi) then to Liaquatabad. And now because people have appreciated them so much that in the past 13 years, ever since their inception, over 40,000 qingchis are on the Karachi roads. Now we have CNG, which has been introduced due to qingchis, so we have both motorcycle and rickshaw qingchis.

Question: How many people can qingchis accommodate at a time?

Answer: According to the notification issues by the government, 4+1 people but it can accommodate 6 people easily, 3 on each side.

Question: How many people do you have in your association?

Answer: 7.

Question: What about the qingchi drivers?

Answer: Numerous. We have their information along with their photographs.

Question: Do you call them for meetings?

Answer: Yes, frequently, especially if someone encounters problems. Both parties are invited and the problem is resolved.

Question: How much does one qingchi cost?

Answer: A new qingchi of 100 cc which the government has approved costs Rs 115,000. Chinese ones cost around Rs 90,000.

Question: What about the rickshaw?

Answer: Around 2 lacs for the ones with 6 seats.

Question: Apart from this, what other expenses are there?

Answer: Mechanic fee, starter's fee, contractors and jets. Contractors take Rs 500. If someone is experienced, they even charge Rs 600.

Question: What role does a contractor play?

Answer: He manages the registration of all the qingchis, makes sure that they have number plates and if we wouldn't have contractors, drivers would argue amongst themselves about their tasks. Contractors organise their turns and tasks.

Question: How do you pay these contractors?

Answer: We pay them through the rent which we get from the rickshaw stands.

Question: And how much is this rent?

Answer: Rs 120. But it varies between Rs 110 and Rs 150. This for the qingchi rickshaws. I had initially introduced these qingchi rickshaws in the city and there was no trend of rickshaw stops/stands. So I tried to establish the system. But just introducing them wasn't enough. I needed drivers, mechanics. I had to put in a lot of effort to make this work. I hired drivers on a fixed rent/pay including food. I continued this for 6 months even when nobody was using the qingchis, I had to pay the drivers their rent/pay. Initially, people also had trouble with getting on and off the qingchis. But now people know how to travel on them.

Question: What is the lowest and the highest rent of these qingchis?

Answer: For qingchis it is between Rs10–15. We raised it to Rs 15 recently due to inflation. I received a call from someone saying that he was paying Rs 10 and now we have increased it, whereas the petrol prices have decreased/will decrease! I replied that if the prices were set according to petrol and diesel prices, they would've gone up 3 years ago. And the petrol prices rise every 15 days but our rent is the same. But now there are requirements like oil, tires, maintenance of the qingchis as well, so we have raised the rent.

Question: How much salary do you give to the drivers?

Answer: They only pay the rent of the qingchi, the rest of whatever they earn, they get to keep it.

Question: How much does it come out to be?

Answer: Rs 200.

Question: And contractors?

Answer: I pay the mechanics, the contractors, and the starters from those Rs 200.

Question: What about the challans?

Answer: All the police challans are also included in those Rs 200.

Question: So what is the estimated expense for one qingchi?

Answer: Around Rs 3,000–4,000. Can also go up to Rs 5,000.

Question: Who pays for it?

Answer: The owner of the stands. In this case, Me.

Question: You are paying for everything; you pay the drivers, the mechanics, the starters, and the contractors?

Answer: The driver only pays for the stand rent, which includes the challan.

Question: Is the qingchi system affected by any of the political parties?

Answer: Not as such. We don't even have to pay anything to them, there are just rumours. You can ask the drivers too.

Question: Do you buy these qingchis on instalments/loans?

Answer: At times, we deal with people in Gulistan-e-Johar. The usual rate is Rs 30,000–40,000 if we buy them in instalments. They take Rs 30–40,000 in advance and hand over the vehicle to you.

Question: When hiring the drivers, do you take their age into account as well?

Answer: We do. We have also caught kids who took the rickshaws from their uncles/fathers and drive them themselves. They say that their uncle/father's unwell and they had to work on their behalf. We have asked them not to do this.

Question: How are the routes designed and how do you get permits for them?

Answer: The issuing of permits requires a lot of effort. We are still in discussion with the government regarding our road permits. At the moment we have designed routes in such a way that we target places like markets, hospitals where more people use our service. They can get dropped off at the nearest place from where they can get a bus.

Question: Can you tell us about the matter which we had heard about regarding qingchi rickshaws and motorcycles?

Answer: The government claimed that we are using stolen motorcycles and rickshaws.

Question: Did you or are you negotiating with the government for the regulation of this system?

Answer: We want to have proper regulations and laws for our system. So that the revenue we generate can be put to proper use.

Question: So you want motorcycle qingchis to be used to generate revenue?

Answer: Yes, why not. You could see that they are playing a role in the transport system of Karachi and CNG.

Question: What kind of a role, according to you, can the qingchi rickshaws and motorcycles play in providing service to a population of a mega city?

Answer: I think the situation which we are in is only due to the lack of proper law and regulation in our city. If we'll have law, we can regulate this system easily. Since we don't have anyone to look after this system currently, the situation is going from bad to worse.

Interviewer: As we have informed you previously, we are part of a non-governmental organisation called the Urban Resource Centre, and we are not connected to the government in any way. We just wish to see that what exactly is happening within the city.

Syed Khattri:

Now we are in discussion with the president of the association

Respondent: My name is Syed Khatri and I am the president of the All Karachi Qingchi Association. We founded this association in 2010 with the aim of regulating the system of qingchis in Karachi. We've been fighting for regulation, permits, and registration since 2010 and it is now 2014 but we're still where we started. Promises were made but it is now February 2014 and we haven't received a legal status as yet. We wanted to form a system as you can see that now the public has to face a lot of issues, but the system which we had developed initially for qingchi, is in form to date and inshallah we'd be able to keep it this way. We hope that the government regulates this system at its earliest, but it doesn't seem much interested in it. In October 2013, an order was passed by ADIG to shut down qingchis, whereas we had met them only 2 days previously. They didn't listen to our arguments and asked us to abide by the order. We are ready to discuss every matter with them. We are just saying to the government that if they have any issues with us, we are here and willing to discuss them. It is supposed to be a give and take system. We request a law and a legal status so that we can also form and maintain a proper system. People who deal with and have the knowledge

about the transport issues, such as you people, know very well that in Karachi transport is one of the biggest issues and people who use public transport need it badly. The government should take care of it. Instead we are doing it. Even the commissioner agreed with us that yes transport really IS an issue. We have even written a letter to them that we wish to have a meeting/discussion with them.

Question: Do you follow a system for monitoring your members, your vehicles and complaints by the public?

Answer: We have a proper system in place. Mr Bakshi takes care of it. If somebody registers a complaint, it goes via Mr Bakshi to the operator.

Question: How many routes are currently being operated in the city?

Answer: More than 100. But they are also being run in other areas such as no-go areas, super highway, Gulshan-e-Aziz, but they are not registered with us. The ones being operated on the national highway do not come under us.

Question: What is the process of getting registered and operating a route, with your association?

Answer: For route operating, firstly you require a plan for which you need to submit a request to our office. We then have a separate union committee, which makes sure that the new request for the route is not overlapping with an already existing route for a qingchi or CNG rickshaw. If not, then the committee formulates a route for you which is then approved by the government.

Then we issue an NOC and based on that the operators then operate the routes.

Question: Do they have to submit a fee as well?

Answer: First the registration committee will visit that route and then issue the NOC accordingly. After the NOC is issued, a one-time payment is required which is Rs 5,000.

Question: Keeping the scenario of qingchis in view, what do you think are the major transport issues which we are facing?

Answer: Karachi, even though it is a mega city, lacks a proper system of categorisation of heavy traffic, small vehicles etc. We, the public, are also to be blamed for it as we don't follow the rules e.g. now that U-turns locations have been clearly located, people still violate them. They blame qingchis for it as well.

Question: Weren't qingchis allowed on smaller routes only in the beginning?

Answer: If we had a proper law, we would have properly followed it. Once the law is provided to us, we will abide by it for sure.

Question: Have you prepared any kind of presentation for when you get the chance to have a meeting with the authorities?

Answer: Yes we have. Also, we have already submitted every detail including pictures, documents to the authorities. We did this in 2010 only but still we haven't received a response. We have also proposed that we get a separate lane on the main roads. If somebody from our members bypasses it, they have the right to confiscate that vehicle.

Question: What other ways monitoring can you suggest?

Answer: First we get the permit, and then we take care of all the vehicles. To make sure that everybody follows that law, we would implement it strictly. We initiated this system to get the status of mini-public transport and we put this request in front of the government too. The motor ordinance which was passed recently does state we have the permission to carry 1+4 in qingchis i.e. 1 driver and 4 passengers. But they complain that instead of 4, we accommodate 6 passengers. But we don't have a proper law to follow. Even a Mazda with 25 seats, how many people actually sit on them? You see people hanging from the doors, sitting on the roof and we accommodate 2 extra people and they complain about us.

Interviewer: We have interviewed several people regarding your service, and people really appreciate it.

Respondent: Yes! Even the commissioner has given us his appreciation.

Question: Have you corresponded with the secretary of transport on this matter?

Answer: We are sorry, but all former secretaries were on really good terms with us. But the current secretary only circumvents our issues.

Question: According to you, what is the solution to all this?

Answer: People think that the public transport ie buses, trains will shut down in Karachi because of the qingchis, and this is not the case. We would never want to shut down the big transport. The big transport system is closing down because of the decreased CNG supply. Don't treat us unfairly. If we are making mistakes, sit with us and tell us. We can discuss it. Regulate us. A circular railway system should be introduced as well. Don't harm/damage the green buses.

And if you look at the past records, qingchis have not had, so far, any huge accidents. Until all these efforts are appreciated and welcomed, the situation won't change.

Interview: B-06 Hafeez-ul-Haq Hassan Zai Karachi Taxi, Yellow Cab and Motor Rickshaw Association

First of all on the behalf of Urban Resource Centre, We welcome Mr Hafiz-ul-haq on the 10th of February 2014, who is the president of the Karachi taxi yellow cab association.

Question: How long have you been associated with this association?

Answer: My uncle Mr Haji was the former president of this association, after him, I took the responsibility of it and have been in post almost 15 years. This is a social service which runs in our family. All the people who drive rickshaws are like my family members. We have around 52,300 rickshaws which the government has forcefully banned and no public institution is helping us regarding this, despite our plea and arguments. They only help us when they are gaining something from it.

I'll give you an example. First they put a ban on rickshaw stops, stating that they create noise and air pollution. The institutions who complain about pollution should understand that rickshaws are not the only ones causing it. There are other reasons too. We then met with the environment committee. The previous minister of that committee is really good friends with my uncle too. The committee has supported us throughout and unfortunately we don't have many people like Mr Ishrat-ul-Ebaad. Whenever we had a problem, they helped us out for three years, this is extraordinary. He understood our complaints which the city government did not. After his tenure, Mr Jadoon took over. This is a different story where profit is more important which is understandable.

Question: What sort of problems do the rickshaw members come to you with?

Answer: They came to me with all sorts of problems such as incidents with the police, accidents and any emergencies. They discuss all issues with me including diseases. We even complained to the government that if they aren't providing people with jobs, why are they making them unemployed? These rickshaws used to previously sell for 1.5 lacs and because of certain policies these rickshaws now cost 40 lacs and people would rent them; they would also sell them if they needed cash for treatments, or for their children's wedding. This is the mistake on the government's part. Secondly, it doesn't solely give us profit, we earn labour from it. The government charges us so much tax eg taxes for permits, taxes for fitness, taxes for exide battery kits, all these taxes directly go to the government, and these were also ended.

Question: What kinds of resources are required to run one rickshaw?

Answer: Route permit, fitness, insurance and vehicle tax.

Question: How much is a vehicle tax these days?

Answer: Around Rs 400. And Rs 550 is the cost for permits whereas RS 50-100 is the cost for fitness.

Question: Are all the other expenses covered in these amounts?

Answer: No.

Respondent: We do want the government to take tax, but where is all the tax going? It is disappointing that we are paying our taxes, but the government is not ready to listen to our problems. They say our vehicles emit smoke into the environment, but smoke is emitted by all sorts of vehicles, buses, motorcycles, factories as well. They say we are ruining the environment but the shops also create huge amounts of waste. These are thrown in the sea. They want to stop 1 lac 4,000 drivers but won't close down those 3,200 shops.

Question: How much does a rickshaw cost these days?

Answer: It ranges from RS 180,000 to 2 lacs. This is separate from the cylinder and the expense for the kit.

Question: How much does it cost to convert a rickshaw to CNG?

Answer: We tried to negotiate with the companies from which we buy these rickshaws to have CNG pre-fitted into the rickshaw. But they said it isn't possible. We reasoned with them that since they are constructing these rickshaws themselves then why can't they convert them to CNG? We believe it is because it won't bring any benefit to them. I talked to the governor of Sindh as well that this can be done. He said okay then we should give it a try ourselves. We agreed to it.

Question: How much did it cost you to construct one CNG rickshaw?

Answer: I only created a prototype. I don't own a factory and I certainly do not have the resources to construct one. The cost doesn't matter. It's like war. It doesn't matter how many people are being killed, it's just a matter of winning and losing. We created a successful prototype and after this, the governor published an ad in the newspaper asking a company to come forward that wished to help us in this regard. 10-12 companies came forward and agreed to this proposal. After this, again an ad was published in the newspaper that we are registering our company. I then went to the governor stating that we aren't registering our company but merely working on the conversion of rickshaws. Then a third ad was published in the newspaper. This just confused people. The government said that we should construct rickshaws. I told them that this wasn't our job.

Question: You talked about renting rickshaws. Could you please explain this in more detail?

Answer: We can buy rickshaws on loan/rent/instalments. There is no fixed payment for this.

Question: All the rickshaws which are being run on certain routes, do they come under your jurisdiction?

Answer: This is a fairly new system. It doesn't come under our registration. The transport in this country is for the rich not for the poor.

Question: So are these being run on any political parties' orders?

Answer: You are an educated man; I think you already know the answer to this.

Question: There was a time in Karachi where we used to see huge buses on the roads, now these are hardly seen; they have been replaced by rickshaws, taxis, and qingchis. In your opinion, what kind of transport system should a mega city with a population of 2 crore have: huge buses or small rickshaws?

Answer: Green buses were introduced, but the government could not sustain them. We are still running the old buses and wagons. The governor of Sindh did not want people to travel on the roofs of the buses, but with such a scarcity in the number of buses, what else they can do? The second issue is the strikes. It is not secure to run huge buses on our streets. People torch these each time there is a strike. Every new project which the government introduces, ends. We don't have electricity, petrol, CNG etc. You have seen the route from Gurumandir to Numaish. There are so many CNG stations in one single line. We told them that closing down petrol pumps is bizarre. The supply of CNG is unpredictable and it is only being supplied every other day. We have to put up with the trouble. They suggested we convert our rickshaws to CNG. What do they think? That it is so easy to pay for all these conversions? It costs 2-3 lacs per rickshaw. And now that CNG supply is low, they say to convert it back to diesel. You know the diesel prices, they are so high. We have seen the days where people used to park their cars and preferred traveling in buses!

Question: In old days rickshaws and taxis used to run on meters. Why don't they do it anymore?

Answer: It is a strategy of the government to make the institutions of transport and the public, fight amongst each other. Instead we should be taking care of these rickshaws. They don't treat them well. It is all about connections here. The government was unable to manage this service and hence the system of meters finished.

Question: If the roads of a city are not properly built, what kind of consequences can it lead to?

Answer: Many. If the roads are not built properly it damages the cars. The contractors take money and yet are still unable to fix the roads.

Question: The rickshaw drivers which you have hired, how much amount of money do they give you from their earnings?

Answer: Rs 80–100. Nothing fixed.

Question: How much do they earn in a day?

Answer: They don't tell us that.

Question: How much do the taxi drivers give?

Answer: Around Rs 100-200.

Question: Is it per day or per hour?

Answer: Per day.

Question: The taxis have reduced considerably in number. Is there anything being done on it?

Answer: As I mentioned earlier as well, the governor stated that taxis are now mundane. New taxis cost 8-12 lac. The government will have to pay for it. This is not in the government's policy. We are running them on loan.

Question: What is the structure of the taxis and rickshaws association?

Answer: We have general secretaries, president, chairman etc.

Question: If a rickshaw is destroyed in any incident, do you help your drivers/members?

Answer: We do as much as possible. But the government doesn't pay anything and we don't ask for it either. We give as much money as possible.

Question: What is the solution to all these problems according to you?

Answer: I believe we all should start from small deeds. We all should do our bit. There is no planning. Also, implementation of policies is important. Accountability is also a vital factor. Nobody asks that why a certain thing is occurring. They accept it without questioning it.

Question: We see small children driving rickshaws, is there a solution to it?

Answer: We have to protect them from the police since most of them are driving without a licence. Also, you would see that children are driving motorbikes, rickshaws, cars and I believe they are innocent children. Everybody is responsible for city's workings and problems.

Thank you so much for having this discussion with us. Thank you for your time.

C. Interviews with women

Women's transport issues

By

Anadil Iftekhhar

(December 2013 and May 2014)

Interview: C-01

Saima Ismail Shah, 33

Saima lives in Kharadar with her sisters. Both her parents passed away when she was 12 years' old. She lives in an extremely congested locality with daily traffic jams. By profession she is a freelance graphic designer and is currently enrolled at the Arts Central Institute of Arts & Crafts on a short course. She has been working for the past 10 years. Buses have always been her only mode of transportation. Her work requires her to travel distances too expensive to be covered by rickshaws. There was a time when she rode W-11 all the way from the main road to Karimabad. At Karimabad is the famous Memon Markaz, a vocational centre for women where Saima has taken many of courses, both computer and non-computer.

Her saga of commuting is much worse than others due to the long distance she travels. "I hate it when men enter the lady's section", says Saima, "and when the ladies get up on the bus, the gents refuse to vacate the seats, *Badtameez*", she continues. When the bus is bursting at its seams with people, many passengers have to resort to standing at the door, and sometimes when the bus screeches to a halt, many passengers fall over.

Saima has often been asked to get off the bus halfway before her destination as the bus broke down. The bus engine often failed or a tyre burst or sometimes there was no particular reason. The passengers are loaded onto another bus and the fare adjusted but sometimes they have to fend for themselves.

The bus journey with its unsolicited stops often made Saima late. When she was studying different courses at different universities, being late resulted in missing out on content from the course, receiving reprimands from the teachers and general disapproval. For her office jobs it resulted in monetary loss. At the advertising agency she worked for, Rs 250 were routinely deducted from her salary for arriving late. She has worked in various firms on a one-year or two-year contract. Eventually she decided to become freelance as the daily commuting was killing her. Now she has to go to the office once a week or every ten days. In addition she had to carry heavy material such as a drawing board, sheets etc. for her work. These things take up space and are cumbersome to carry on buses.

«There is not a single day when men don't harass me or other women», laments Saima. The seat by the partitioning metal bar is forbidden as men constantly poke their fingers through the grill. If the women reprimand them, men act as if they are unaware of the accusation being hurled at them. She gets depressed and talks about theft instead.

"Last week, my sister, along with two other women, were robbed by armed women *dacoits* (bandits) in the bus. Her money and NIC were both in the purse", recalls Saima. While the lady thieves were busy in the women's section, the men's section was also being robbed by male thieves. Saima firmly believes that theft will continue unabated.

While she prefers not to reveal her salary, she does say that bus rides may be the cheapest option available but they too aren't very economical. Her range of fare is from Rs 10-17 for huge buses like 4K and Rs 20-25 for coaches, even if only a single bus is taken. But if a single bus doesn't take her to her route then changing the bus can make one way of the journey as high as Rs 40-45. Even within the parametres of Saddar, a ride takes at least 30 minutes and for distances to Karimabad can take up to 90 minutes. In addition, too much time is lost in walking and crossing roads. At Shahra-e-Faisal, she has to walk a long distance to reach the pedestrian bridge, which she then has to cross to reach the other side of the road. If she can cross the road, it will take five minutes but walking via the pedestrian bridge takes 10 to 15 minutes.

At the end of the day when she gets back home, she is in a bad mood and also feels sick. Saima doesn't like to work when she gets back home, but she has accepted that things aren't going to change.

Interview: C-02

Bushra

Unlike the other passengers, Bushra, a bachelor student at Jinnah University for Women, has no complaints with regards to commuting. Her house is located in sector 5-C-4 north Karachi, while Jinnah University is approximately 14 kilometres away at Board Office at north Nazimabad. Her daily fare is Rs 40. During the days of the CNG closure, she pays an extra Rs 10. Her life became easier with the introduction of qingqi in the locality. Previously she had to resort to the bus but it was too troublesome. All the girls from the university take the bus, which gets extremely crowded. Her commuting time is approximately 30 minutes.

Apart from the comfort of the direct route of the qingqi, Bushra also has the advantage of being surrounded by an army of students of Jinnah University both in the morning and evening at her bus stop. So crossing the road in the morning isn't a problem as the volume of girls force the traffic to be considerate at the Board Office

signal. Similarly in the afternoon, enough girls walk with Bushra to the signal so she has been spared sexual harassment as well although she says that men stare a lot making the girls uncomfortable. If the city's situation worsens and the qingqis disappear from the roads, then some three or four girls living close to her house would hire a rickshaw and divide the rent accordingly. On being asked the choice of her university, Bushra casually replies that she didn't even consider any other option because Jinnah was so convenient. "Karachi University isn't that far but I heard cases where the point service was a misery for the girls so it was Jinnah", says Bushra.

Other than to university, Bushra hardly goes out on her own. With family, she has to resort to whatever mode of transport her family uses. So because of lack of mobility, Karachi transport is not that much of a hassle for Bushra.

Interview: C-03 Rimsha, 15 years old

A student of The Citizens Foundation (TCF) School Gulshan-e-Zia, Orangi Town, Rimsha had to move from her grandmother's house to her parents' house because of the terrible inconvenience of bus rides. She was more comfortable living in her maternal grandmother's house in Gulshan-e-Bihar where her aunt would also help her with studies. The journey time from her grandmother's house was approximately 15 to 20 minutes but in the morning, catching a bus was quite an ordeal due to the lack of buses. More than often, Rimsha, along with her other friends, resorted to walking for 30 minutes. She is not sure of the distance but it could be around 8 kilometres. It takes up more 30 minutes for her to walk to her school, and because there is no footpath or pavement, walking is a painful experience. The zooming bikes and buses that tend to drive recklessly made Rimsha and her friends extremely cautious. The locality in which her school is located is extremely under-developed. Her school has a radius of 2 kilometres of unpaved road. In fact the topography is slightly rugged with a mole nearby. At home time, Rimsha has to wait for at least half an hour for the bus. When the bus finally arrives, a sea of students climb onto it making it extremely crowded and congested. Rimsha often has to stand at the edge of the door. In such situations, the fear of falling is frightening.

The bus fare is Rs 2 per ride. All TCF students pay this amount. However, sometimes the bus driver refuses to stop his vehicle for students on the pretext that other passengers would pay the normal fare which is higher than the student fare. As Rimsha travelled on bus with lots of other girls, the group companionship saved them from sexual harassment. "No one ever bothered me because there were too many of us", says Rimsha.

As if crowded buses weren't enough of a discomfort, the drivers are often under the influence of drugs and drive rashly. The way the bus swerves on a straight road confirms for the girls that a horrible accident may occur. At times the buses start racing with each other on the roads, endangering the lives of all those on it.

"I was fed up of the daily ordeal so I decided to move in with my parents who live very close to my school," says Rimsha. She misses her grandmother's house but she is able to save a lot of time living in her parents' home. She has more time to study, do household chores, and carry out her embroidery work, which is a huge cottage-base industry in Orangi Town. While Rimsha was lucky to have an option of moving closer to school, her friends continue to suffer from commuting woes every day.

Interview: C-04 Shahnaz Anjum, 27

People say life gets harder for women once they get married. For Shahnaz, 27, this is true when it comes to commuting. Before marriage she lived in Nagan Chowrangi from where a qingqi for Rs 20 per ride took her to the school in north Nazimabad where she works as a librarian. Her new home in is Hussainabad. This area is almost 4-5 km from her school but there is no direct qingqi ride. The bus with its cylinder and congestion does not appeal to Shahnaz. Taxis with their jammed doors do not seem inviting so rickshaws are her only option.

But rickshaws offer no fairytale rides. She is charged Rs 80 each way, meaning Rs 160 per day. And on days of the CNG closure, they charge up to Rs 120. Her monthly cost of commuting falls between Rs 3,600 to Rs 3,800. So almost Rs 4,000 of her monthly income of Rs 25,000 goes towards commuting such a short distance.

She could take two qingqis and also walk to cut her costs. However the problem is that she is pregnant and the pollution and heat make her more nauseous. Shahnaz leaves home at 7:20 am to arrive by 7:45 am. She arrives back home by 4 pm or 4.15 pm. Her travel time also depends on the availability of the rickshaw and the mood of the driver. Every day is a constant battle for Shahnaz as she always has to negotiate and negotiate the fare. She often has a tense night's sleep as she anticipates the bargaining process for the next morning. "It is not just about bargaining. Even if the fare is decided on at Rs 80, on reaching my destination I give the driver a Rs 100 note. The driver keeps the extra Rs 20 saying he has no change. When the fare is set at 120, I give him Rs 100 and 50 notes. He doesn't bother returning my thirty rupees", laments Shahnaz. She struggles to carry change but is not always successful.

On days of the CNG closure, drivers act as if they are doing a favour or giving to charity. "Give me 120

rupees or go to hell”, drivers insolently remark. While rickshaw is the best option available, it is still a pain in the neck. There are too many mirrors where drivers can observe all parts of women’s body. Then there is the problem of reckless driving. Slowing the rickshaw at speed breakers would avoid the vehicle from tumbling over. The nasty bumps that occur make Shahnaz sure that one day her rickshaw will topple over. Speeding rickshaws often collide into other speeding vehicles, even the motorcycles.

In addition, choosing a rickshaw resembles shopping for clothes. Apart from the price (fare), the driver’s mood and temper, she also has to make sure it is cylinder-free. Many rickshaws carry LPG cylinders or unchecked CNG cylinders that have been termed as walking bombs. Sometimes she is lucky to find a cylinder-free rickshaw or the old-fashioned two stroke rickshaws that make too much noise. But putting up with the heat, bumps and noise is becoming too painful for Shahnaz.

As her pregnancy develops, she is fearful of continuing her job. And much more worrisome is the fact that once the baby arrives she doesn’t know how she will manage. She will have to carry the baby in the rickshaw because there is no one to take care of the baby at home. And the school doesn’t have day care. On reaching home, she has to bathe the baby and also prepare food for her husband and herself. She skips lunch because she is so tired and exhausted. Sometimes hunger wins and causes her to resort to unhealthy packet noodles. She might even have to leave her job at least for a while until the baby is old enough to be left with an aunt or uncle. This is a matter of grave concern as she really needs to work in order to run her house.

Interview: C-05 Sanjeeda, 35

When the birds are not yet awake and those who had woken up to offer *fajr* prayers have settled back into their beds, Sanjeeda’s day had already began. Some early morning chores along with breakfast have to be done or else the early Shama coach would leave the stop without Sanjeeda. She has to reach the bus stop of Korangi No. 2 and a half by 6 am as the coach leaves by 6.05 am. If that coach is missed, Sanjeeda is doomed. The next Shama coach leaves after 7.30 am. 7.30 am is the time she has to reach her workplace. On days of the CNG closure, she often runs late and gets reprimanded by her managers.

Sanjeeda works as a maid in a school in north Nazimabad block B. She commutes a daily distance of 18 kilometres. The Shama coach drops her at the Karimabad stop from where she walks approximately 2 kilometres. Sometimes when she is running late or when the heat is too strong, she takes a qingqi ride for Rs 10. Her routine bus fare is Rs 40 each way.

The bus route takes 90 minutes. “I sleep en route, what else can one do on the congested bus ride anyway?” shares Sanjeeda. She leaves the school at 4 pm and arrives home by 5:45 pm to 6:00 pm.

The bus nap is not just a way to kill time, it is an essentiality to recharge this mother of three children, who on reaching home has to run household errands. Her eldest child, a 15-year-old daughter helps her with the housework. Her husband has set up a food stall near their home.

Why did she choose to work in north Nazimabad if she resides in Korangi?

“I was working for a private school in Baloch Colony. The madame of the school got transferred to its north Nazimabad branch taking me with her. After working for almost a decade in the area, I came across a vacancy at another school’s new branch. She applied and got in”.

Life was already hard on her and the bus rides only add to her stress. She is tortured mentally and many times physically on these rides. The seat by the metal bar which segregates the male and female compartments is one where every female sits on as the last resort. The simple reason being, it is the hotspot for sexual harassment. Men sitting behind are often accused of poking fingers to touch a woman’s body, any part of it.

Sanjeeda narrates a similar ordeal that occurred in 2000. Forced to sit on the hotspot seat because all others were occupied, she took her usual nap. In her slumber she felt something touching her hip and back. She became wide awake as she realised that the man behind her was harassing her. She lashed out at him.

Apart from sexual harassment, timings, congestion, the bus ride has also become a haven for thieves. “There are two types of thieves. One is armed men and the second is groups of women unarmed pickpockets draped in *chaddar* or *burkas*.”

The armed male *dacoits* snatch stuff from men but refrain from touching the female passengers in Sanjeeda’s experience. They point their guns at women and ask them to hand over their belongings. Theft happens a lot near Purani Sabzi Mandi and Hasan Square. The second group takes the maximum advantage of the rush and congestion and swiftly pickpockets valuable items like wallets, money and phones. “It was I guess 2012 when I was carrying a 1,000 rupees note in my wallet, which was in a shopping bag. I was standing but when a seat got vacated nearby, I offered it to another lady. That lady stole my money”. As the heat intensifies in May, June and July, Sanjeeda’s rides become more suffocating but she can’t leave this job as the supply of labour for school janitors has increased. She earns Rs 8,000 without which she cannot run her house.

Interview: C-06 Christine, 31

New to the world of commuting, Christine, 31, is a resident of Essa Nagri, opposite the civic centre. Her husband is a mechanic. She has three children.

Christine currently works at a private school in Gulshan block 7. She has been working for 6 months now. Before this school, Christine worked at another school at Muskan Chowrangi for 2 years but left because her new employer offered more money. She also had the option of working for a school at Johar Mor but she didn't avail the opportunity as no single bus took her to Johar Mor from Essa Nagri despite the driving distance of 10-15 minutes. So she chose her job on the basis of available transport. She had to change two buses and that was very exhausting and time-consuming. Her children were small and she wanted to make sure that she spent time with them. So she quit. Currently, she leaves her children in the care of two other families that reside in the same house.

Christine took a gap and rejoined the workforce in 2011 as school maid. Her work timings are 7.30 am to 3.45 pm. She leaves her house at 6.15 am so that she can reach her bus stop by 6.30 am. The buses are usually empty in the morning so Christine can sit comfortably. She reaches her destination stop by 7.00 am. She walks a further 2 kilometres to reach her school, which is located deep in the web of a residential area. The school connects to Ispahani road but Christine gets off at main Gulshan road running from Gulshan Chowrangi to Muskan Chowrangi. She leaves the school at 4 pm and walks for 10 to 15 minutes to reach the bus stop. On the back, the bus is often loaded to the extent that she has to hang on the door. She reaches her house at 5 pm.

Since she has been commuting for only a few years, she has not faced any experience of sexual harassment or theft. 'Maybe because a lot of university boys are on bus, so they don't do anything to me', says Christine. The only thing that bothers her apart from long walks is that the bus conductor doesn't return the change. Her fare usually varies from Rs 15-17. She hands a Rs 20 note but has to ask the conductor to return the Rs 5 or 3. Often the conductor says he doesn't have the full change and returns only Rs 2 or so.

On days of the public transport shutdown, she uses the qingqi or more than often takes a rickshaw with other maids from her school as well as maids from neighbouring schools whose shift ends at the same time.

She really looks forward to the time when the school will provide her with transport.

Interview: C-07 Sughra, 48

Sughra lives in Essa Nagri. She is married but her husband lives with his other wife. She has four children, two to whom are married and live separately. Out of the remaining two, one daughter works at a beauty parlour. The son lives in Punjab with her mother as he suffers from asthma. Sughra also used to live in Punjab but she moved to Karachi some 15 years ago.

Sughra works at a private school in Gulshan block 7, which brings her Rs 7,500 a month. She also works at a house located within the Karachi University premises. "I have been working for them for a really long time", she informs. She earns Rs 2,000 from her second job. Her daily fare adds up to Rs 50 and at times even more depending on whether she takes a bus or qingqi, and this also depends on how much she walks. She leaves her house early morning, walking for 10-15 minutes up to the main road in front of the civic centre. From there she goes to the school in block 7. Again, she has to walk almost 2 kilometres. She leaves her school at around 4 pm and goes to the house where she works as a maid. She often opts to walk the distance between her two employers to save on fare. She finishes her chores by 6.30 pm. Finally, after a long and exhausting day she returns home between 7.30 pm and 8.00 pm.

"The second job is tiring but I need to save money for my son's treatment", says Sughra. With Rs 50 or more going out every day as fare, her monthly budget for commuting amounts to at least Rs 1,500. Rs Rs 4,000 of her total earnings goes on her house rent. This leaves her with Rs 4,000 approximately to run her house, buy the groceries and pay for her son's medical expenses.

Even though the distance she travels is not far, due to the slow movement of public transport and the time wasted in crossing roads, commuting takes up much of her precious time. And that is not all. At times, the bus conductor refuses to return the change. More than often, the bus arrives late causing Sughra to reach her destination late. "I get scolded a lot for being late but it isn't my fault", she says. In fact she had been fired from a few houses where she worked as a maid because of late arrival. She hasn't faced any sexual harassment. As far as theft is concerned she is safe because she doesn't carry a large amount or extra cash.

Interview: C-08 Tina, 26

Tina*, 26, works at the customer service department of a renowned bank at II Chundrigar Road. She lives in north Karachi, which is far from the main city. After graduating, she received job offers from different companies but she had to turn down good offers because she was unable to arrange for transport. "I don't want to spend

half my day on the roads,” she says about better paid jobs based in Clifton or Defence. She doesn’t want to disclose her salary.

Tina got married recently. She is continuing with her job. But every day is an ordeal for her. It takes her 1 hour and 40 minutes to reach her office in the morning and nearly 2 hours to return home in the evening. Tina mostly uses the bus but sometimes has to opt for the rickshaw, depending on her stamina. She finds the bus rides a great misery but owing to the lower fare compared to rickshaws, she mostly relies on the bus.

Tina claims that more than often, she wastes time waiting for the bus. And the buses are so loaded with passengers that Tina has to stay standing for the entire length of the journey. What bothers her the most is that there are males in the female compartment both in morning and evening. Even though the male compartment has more seats and many sit on the rooftop, men still continue to enter the ladies’ section. Passengers end up fighting for a seat as everyone wants to sit but there aren’t enough seats. As staring is a national hobby, men ogle from the back at the women in the front no matter how well covered the woman is, claims Tina. And if that wasn’t enough, the over-speeding of the bus is another concern. Even though it is commonly assumed that bus drivers stop the vehicles for women, Tina shares that it depends on the bus driver’s mood.

Besides the incidents inside the bus, many events at the bus stop irritate Tina as well. “It is common for desperate men to stop their cars and bikes in front of the female passengers and offer them rides”. Since those males are complete strangers, Tina feels insecure and annoyed.

Tina is extremely tired and feels low on reaching home. She is unable to participate in any household activities with energy. She sincerely hopes that the harassment decreases so that girls like her can feel safe.

Interview: C-09

MS, 31

MS, 31 is an employee at a private company on I.I Chundrigar Road. She joined the company in 2005. She lived in Gulshan Block 1. MS relied on the public buses back then to commute all the way to I.I Chundrigar road. She commuted on the buses for two and a half years after which she got married and resigned. However, a year later in 2009, she rejoined the same office.

Back in 2006, an incident shook MS. She used to take the U or U-4 from Gulshan Block 1 to Urdu Science College, from where she boarded another bus. At her first stop, a man of almost 35 years old started harassing her. His timings matched with her timings so she met that man daily. One day she felt the man

coughing behind her. At first she thought it was her imagination. But when the coughing persisted from one day to another, she thought it was an accident. The man would either stand behind her at the stop or sit behind the metal railing in the bus. MS started avoiding sitting on the seat by the metal. This ordeal continued for a month till finally she stopped getting on the bus if the coughing man boarded it. “I wasted my time waiting for another bus but I had to do something”, says MS. Sometimes she would leave early as well. After a while, the man disappeared.

MS suffered the usual issues of time and exhaustion while commuting on the bus. She now uses only rickshaws as she has lost her stamina for the bus. She has a little daughter. She still lives in Gulshan, in an apartment block on Rashid Minhas road. A rickshaw ride costs her Rs 250-300 and takes up to 45 minutes. “Harassment is prevalent in rickshaws as well”, she says. The driver touches your hands while taking the money and keeps staring through the mirrors. Passengers on bikes and cars also peep in the rickshaws if they see a woman sitting inside.

Her office provides her with transport in the morning and evening. MS can’t take advantage of the facility in the morning because she has to look after her daughter before her mother comes home to babysit and then drop her baby off at her mother’s house. In the evening, she mostly uses office transport or her husband picks her up on his bike. She has tried her best to find decent jobs in her area where the timings can be flexible enough for her to look after her daughter but so far she has been unsuccessful. She loses a significant portion of her income on commuting.

Interview: C-10

MJ

MJ is a resident of Agra Taj Colony in Lyari. She is in her early thirties. MJ studied at Karachi University. It was quite a hassle for her to commute everyday but this was some ten years ago when traffic and violence were not as bad as they are today. So MJ didn’t have much difficulty. After graduating she worked for a private company in the city’s commercial hub I.I Chundrigar road. Initially she came on public coaches. After a few years, she moved to another private firm also on I.I Chundrigar. She has been with this company for the past many years. Although the distance between her house and workplace is not much, she gets disturbed by the constant violence in Lyari. Often the streets become a no-go area or are blocked. But she has learned to survive.

In fact, just six months back, her office agreed to provide her with transport both in morning and evening. Life has become very comfortable since then. However, before this luxury, MJ used to come on her own in the morning.

Someone in her family dropped her or she used public transport. On her way back, she got the office van to drop her off. "I have been using the drop service for the past two years", shares MJ.

Once back in 2005, she was sitting in the bus on the seat by the door in the woman's compartment. Mobile phones had become newly popular back then and MJ had just bought herself a new phone. She had taken it slightly out of her purse to check the message she received. A man came in the ladies' section and hung and swung by the door. MJ thought he was the conductor. Unfortunately, he wasn't. As MJ's grip on her purse loosened, the man snatched her purse, jumped out of the bus and in two minutes disappeared onto the streets of Karachi. It was a heavy loss as there was money and documents in the purse.

MJ used to sit in such fear and insecurity like many other girls in Karachi. She was paranoid that someone would harass her. However, since the provision of the office transport, her miseries have lessened. She is single and has many family members living in her house so she doesn't have many domestic responsibilities.

Interview: C-11 TR, 24 (April 2014)

TR, 24, has a Masters in Economics from a renowned local university. She resides in Rizvia society, Nazimabad. She earns around Rs 40,000 per month, working at a research organisation situated on Tariq Road.

TR has commuted on buses all her life. She has to walk up to the main road of Nazimabad Number 1 and then use the underground crossing to reach the other side of the road. The underground crossing is necessary as the main road is barricaded, and being a girl she can't jump over the fence or squeeze through. However, she has been crossing it since childhood so that now it seems routine.

The buses are always overcrowded and she stands for most of her ride. She does get stared at but that is not frequent. But she still feels uneasy in the bus and stays extra cautious. "I can't think of using the public transport after 7 pm", she says. If office work holds her back, then she calls her father to pick her up.

Like most young girls, TR has also suffered from sexual harassment, even though she dons the *abaya*. More than on the bus, it is at the bus stops where the men ogle and try to intimidate girls in TR's experience. However, once a bus conductor tried to touch her in a very subtle manner.

She spends Rs 50 per day if she travels on the bus but the rickshaw cost goes up to Rs 200. Sometimes, TR takes the bus, sometimes the rickshaw or her father picks her up. Because she earns a decent salary, she

can afford the rickshaw rides. She is single and doesn't have many responsibilities at home. Her mood is good when she reaches home but on days she finds the bus overcrowded, and she gets exhausted and just wants to rest.

Interview: C-12 Xara, 23 (02 March 2014)

Xara, 23, is single. She lives in Garden West near Fuwara Chowk, with her mother, niece and nephew. She spent her life commuting on public transport. She did her B.Com from Commerce College PIB in 2012. She went to Kharadar for tuition.

While going to college was not regular as per the trend, Xara regularly went to the coaching centre at Kharadar which took 30 minutes and a fare of Rs 15 each way. If she went to her college, she went from her coaching centre. The bus took 15 minutes and cost Rs 10 for that ride.

Xara never travelled alone. She had a group of friends with her all the time. They always took extra cautions. They never sat on the seat by the metal bar which segregates the ladies' section. Xara has been lucky to not have been ever robbed but her friends have lost their mobiles to thugs and women pickpockets. In 2011, a group of women boarded the bus and very quietly deprived her friends of their mobile phones. The girls realised it much later. Xara was spared because she was sitting at the front corner seat.

"Once a very scary incident happened near Lea Market in 2012, four armed young boys entered the bus and looted everyone in the men's section", shares Xara. "I nearly fainted at the sight of the gun but for some reason they didn't approach the ladies' section", she continues. Xara further tells that all the while looting took place; the driver had increased the volume of the song so that the sound of the robbers screaming and threatening passengers would not be audible to anyone outside the bus, providing a smooth escape for the criminals.

After graduating, Xara taught at a school 10 minutes away from her house. She also enrolled on a master's programme at a university in north Nazimabad. While going to school in the morning was not inconvenient, commuting all the way to north Nazimabad in the evening was exhausting. She had to choose between the two. She chose the latter. She has to do some household chores in the morning. For university, she leaves at 5 pm. Her class is from 6 pm to 9 pm. She takes a qingqi that drives on a direct route from her house to her university. Her fare each way is Rs 30.

When her class finishes at 9 pm, she leaves with two of her friends, who are also from her vicinity. They have to cross the pedestrian bridge to reach the other side of the road from where they get a direct qingqi.

“People stare at me suspiciously as if I am a prostitute”, says Xara.

She doesn't wear a veil generally but travelling alone daily forces her to. She takes off the veil once she reaches the university. She is hopeful that once her masters is complete, she will have the relief of not travelling at night and find a day-time job.

Interview: C-13 Zaib-un-Nisa (January 2014)

Zaib-un-Nisa is a resident of New Karachi, sector 5-d. At the young age of 30, she is the mother to 3 children. Her eldest child is 13 years old. Her husband died three years ago. She moved in with her mother and brother after that. Initially she resorted to stitching as she didn't want to leave her children unattended. Unfortunately, she didn't receive enough orders and for the orders she got, women in her locality were paying less. Therefore she decided to join a school as a maid. Luckily, through word of mouth, she was hired by a school in Gulshan.

Zaib commutes via Masood coach, as it takes her directly to her destined bus stop. Although buses start their early morning journey from New Karachi and Surjani town but more than often, Zaib finds the bus overcrowded. She still gets on even if there is no seat available. “I will rather stand and take one bus than sit and take two buses”, she says. Sometimes the Masood coach doesn't even have the space for standing. She takes the F-18. But it drops her at another stop from where she takes another bus. Using two buses costs her double. Her charge for one way of the journey is Rs 17 but the conductor doesn't bother to return her change of Rs 3. When she takes the F-18, she pays Rs 20 and then Rs 10-15 for the second bus ride. Her fare goes up to Rs 60 for the whole day if she takes two buses.

In the morning she has to walk a short distance that takes up to 10 minutes. The bus journey itself takes approximately one hour. In the morning, she reaches the bus stop by 6.30 pm as buses coming after that time are packed. She leaves her school by 4.30 pm to 5 pm and reaches home by 6 pm. She does take part in household chores, but her mother helps her a lot in looking after her three children.

Once Zaib was carrying Rs 500 in her purse but on reaching home she found her purse was missing. “It was in my shopping bag, how can someone take it without me noticing it?” she laments.

Just recently she ended up spraining her ankle because as she climbed on the bus, it started moving and she lost her grip and ended up twisting her leg which caused her ankle to sprain.

Zaib hopes that the school provides her with transport or some sort of facility so that she could save money and have some comfort while she is on the road.

Interview: C-14 Fatima* 30 (13 February 2014)

Fatima* is 30 years old and is a bathroom cleaner/maid at a hotel on Shahra e Faisal. She started working there only 15 days prior to the interview. She worked at the kidney centre for two years and at Saylani Welfare for some 18 months before that. Her current job will bring her Rs 10,000 a month. Her husband has been diagnosed with diabetes, which has rendered him unemployed.

Fatima is only middle-pass and got married when she was 14 years old. She has six children, of whom three study at formal educational institutes while the younger three go for neighbourhood tuition.

Fatima doesn't like travelling on buses because she needs to save every penny she earns. She walks every day to and from work to save on the transport fare. She lives in an area called Bizerta line, which is close by but her journey on foot still takes 30 minutes.

“Sometimes my feet hurt but I still walk because I want to save the ten rupees that the Qingqi or bus costs”, shares Fatima. Her sister lives in Malir but she doesn't go to meet her that often because she can't afford to spend so much money on transport.

However, it is her eldest daughter's journey that drains money from the family budget. Her eldest daughter is around 17 years old and is studying at an intermediate college at Zamzama. She is dropped off at Cantt station in the morning by her father. From Cantt station she takes a public bus to Zamzama. She walks to her college. However, on her way back, she often has to stand for a long time waiting for the bus or walk further. In both cases, car drivers slow their vehicle around her making her very uncomfortable. “We give her Rs 100 every day, of which around Rs 50-60 is spent on commuting. She needs the rest of the money for stationery and a canteen lunch”, shares Fatima.

She is determined to educate her daughter so that she can work at a bank. Her daughter has already taken a computer course and will be enrolling on an English language course, which will increase her chances of becoming a receptionist or computer operator at a bank. For that Fatima will continue to walk and not take public transport.

Interview: C-15 Sehrish*

Sehrish* is considered to be a privileged girl as, unlike the vast majority, she has the luxury of possessing her

own car. She has been driving for the past 7 years. Before that, she resorted to school vans and rickshaws. Her father has always been stationed out of Karachi for work. She lives with her mother. She is an only child.

Sehrish is a teacher at a school and resides near Millenium Mall in Gulshan Iqbal. "The reason why I learned to drive is because once I was walking due to the unavailability of rickshaws to the shop with my mother when near Johar Mor, a drunkard in Prado started chasing us, shouting out profanities. It was a very scary episode", she shares.

Although, the fuel and maintenance of the car doesn't leave her cash-pinched, she has many woes that an average woman commuter faces.

In 2012, a motorcyclist took a wrong U-turn and came in front of her car. She had to pull her hand-brake. The motorcyclist instead of apologising, came out to her car, pulled out the car keys from her ignition and started abusing her. She had to scream for help. Luckily a policeman came and dealt with the motorcyclist.

Cases of sexual harassment don't spare her. "I was dressed up with a lot of makeup and around dusk, when two boys on a motorcycle deliberately brought their bike by my car window".

"Look at her", one of them said to the other. The other boy turned to look at her and also showed her his middle finger. They both zoomed away but Sehrish got upset. She picked up her pace with that of the motorcycle and swirled her car in front of the bike. The bikers took a sharp turn to avoid collision but ended up hitting the boundary wall of the flyover.

Recently, a white corolla also chased her. She used her sharp driving skills and took a sharp turn leaving the driver with his car rammed into the boundary wall of another flyover. "It is easy to manipulate the drivers on a flyover due to blind spots", she says proudly.

Apart from sexual harassment, she had the bitter experience of dealing with the police. The police penalised her for her car sticker, which was marked 2013. Even though, she had the registration and slip of tax registration for 2014. This incident happened near Time Medicos.

In March 2014, she came out of her university, where she studies, in Gulshan Block 13, at 9.30 pm after her evening class and put the keys in the ignition. She realised that the car battery was missing. It was very frustrating. She had to call her mother, who came in a taxi with a mechanic. The mechanic towed the car with a rope, while Sehrish returned home with her mother. She had to purchase a new battery. "It was scary to stand alone at night being a girl when everyone around me could see that my car battery was missing and I was helpless".

While she doesn't have to worry about wasting time commuting, negotiating over fares and the worry of transport availability, she nevertheless faces gender-related problems.

Interview: C-16 Khursheed Bibi, Lyari Re-settlement

Interviewer: Rizwan-ul-Haq

7th March 2014 at 4:00pm

Khursheed Bibi: We have lived in Golimar # 1 for 2.5 years. We lived in Lyari for ten years prior to that. We were first comers.

Khursheed Said: Our houses were demolished due to the construction of the Lyari express way. My house was located in the third lane from the creek.

Question: Why did you come here?

A: We were given a plot and Rs 50,000. At that time only the boundary walls were built with some of the money and the rest was spent on other expenditure. There were no supplies of electricity, water and gas. Those days, Pathan would come from the nearby hill and run off after Snatching. With my two daughters' efforts we constructed two rooms gradually from our savings amount (B.C). We would use wood for cooking food, most of which was bought from Golimar which was very difficult to carry in buses due to a shortage of buses. To get water, a tanker of Rs 500 had to be bought every month. There years later my elder daughter came from Punjab and purchased a gas cylinder for our kitchen. Some time later the electricity was connected. Then the water supply started but now we can't fill water without power. So, we often have to buy water from tankers. Vegetables are three times more expensive here than in lasbella Karachi.

This area is more expensive than our previous place.

Question: What do you do for your living and how much is your income?

A: I work as a cleaner in a bungalow located in Nazimabad and earn Rs.5000 per month. My daily transport expenses are Rs 80. Rs 4800/- from my husband's pension are received monthly and my elder son gives me Rs 4,000 per month.

Question: How was your previous house in Golimar?

A: It was a double storey building with three rooms. We had a better arrangement at the previous place. Our daughters' marriages were also held there.

Question: What problems did you face in moving?

A: We faced many problems. The government officers were saying again and again we would move soon. They didn't allow us to take our belongings. Because of this

my husband had a heart attack and then he died within three days. We lived here in a camp for some days.

Question: You had lived there for 25 years. After moving here, how are your relationships with those who were your previous neighbours?

A: Most of our Christian community has moved here but meetings with relatives who reside in nearby areas such as Lee Market and Nazimabad have almost finished except for marriage ceremonies. Due to the expense of time and money it has become quite difficult to go there. We used to go to Lee market by rickshaw for Rs 50 and come back on foot across the dry creek in the evening.

D. Interviews with the public

Interview: D-01

Amjad Ali, Saiban Office, Khuda-ki-Basti

Interviewed by Rizwan-ul-Haq

(April 2014)

Question: What is your name?

Answer: My name is Amjad Ali

Question: Where did you live before?

Answer: In Liaqtabad Sindhi hotel

Question: How long did you live there?

Answer: We lived almost 35 to 40 years I was born there my parents were there when it was just being cultivated.

Question: When did you come here?

Answer: When plots were being cut but we hardly lived here because there weren't any facilities such as water, gas or electricity. As time passed we got these things except water which we still have to buy.

Question: Why did you come here?

Answer: Because our house was very small and only one family could live in it. Me and my elder brother got married we couldn't adjust there so our parents forced us to buy a plot here.

Question: But why didn't you buy house in Liaqtabad Sindhi hotel?

Answer: Because houses are too expensive we didn't have resources to buy a land or any house; we had to buy as cheaply as we can that's why we came here

Question: What difference do you feel here as compare to that place?

Answer: The city is very far from here that's why we face problems getting work but there we easily got work.

Question: Where did you work?

Answer: I was an employee at Liaqtabad furniture market

Question: And what about now?

Answer: I sell children's clothes at the market now

Question: How many years have you been doing this work?

Answer: Almost two years

Question: When you were working in the furniture market how did you travel?

Answer: By bus, but I arrived late everyday that's why my owner got a bike for me

Question: What were the expenses when you travelled by bus?

Answer: Almost Rs 100 because I had to take 2 modes of transport – there wasn't any straight route so I took the gingchi and gave Rs 35 then took another because the distance was too much and he took Rs 10 to 15 which means Rs 50 each way totalling Rs 100.

Question: Why did you leave that work if your owner gave you a bike as well?

Answer: Because the shop closed

Question: How much money did you earn and what about now?

Answer: Both are same just a little bit different for travelling and lunch. I can save this money now because I work here and have lunch at my house. Suppose if I earn Rs 500 and include Rs 150 in it so the total money is Rs 650 but as I earned Rs 500 and spent Rs150 for travelling and lunch then I saved Rs 350.

Question: How much money do you earn in a month?

Answer: Around Rs 10,11,14,15 thousand but in a season I earn more than that like Rs 20 to 25 thousand. In the off season I earn less than Rs15 thousand – more like Rs 8 to 10 thousand

Question: What difference do you feel in your expenses?

Answer: The only difference is that if we go outside for work it wastes our time and money

Question: Where do you get things for your children?

Answer: We get things from the city we go once in a week not everyday

Question: How much time and money is required to go once in a week?

Answer: I get things from the empress market at Sadder. It takes one and a half hour and Rs 50 to 60 for travelling, but when I go there I become very tired and aren't able to do any other work

Question: How do you go to marriages?

Answer: We can only go with our own conveyance. If I would go alone I would prefer to go by bike, but if my family is with me then I have to get a taxi for them

Question: How much expense is required if you hire a taxi?

Answer: Rs 500 to 600 if I go to Liaqtabad but when we come back we hardly find any conveyance and it would cost more than Rs 600.

Question: What are the circumstances when you travel?

Answer: It's dangerous late at night because my mobile and money got snatched before near Rivulent. I was on my bike; that's why I don't take the risk after 12 am.

Question: How many children do you have?

Answer: 5 MASHA ALLAH

Question: Are they studying or working?

Answer: Three are studying and two are still small.

Question: Are they studying in this basti?

Answer: Yes they are studying there.

Question: What are the expenses for children's education?

Answer: They are studying in the government school so their total expenses are Rs 2 to 3 thousand per month

Question: How do you pay the Rs 3 thousand?

Answer: Rs 150 for each and tuition fees also then the expense of stationery etc.

Question: Is there any hospital or dispensary for health here?

Answer: Baqai hospital is here where treatment is better. They don't take money but I prefer to go outside for treatment

Question: Where do you take your family for treatment?

Answer: I prefer to go Nagan for my younger children especially.

Question: In case of emergency?

Answer: I am thankful to ALLAH that no emergency occurred I always take them on bike either day or night.

Question: As you lived in Liaqtabad among your relatives for many years is your relationship still the same?

Answer: The relationship is better but I don't meet them often

Question: What is the reason?

Answer: Because they are far away.

Question: Is this right or wrong?

Answer: It's good to often meet them but it's our choice that we meet less because it takes so much time and money as well, so we save time and money by meeting less frequently

Question: You met them every day but don't see them now for more than a week so how do you feel?

Answer: We all understand each other terms and conditions, so it's better to be in touch by mobile phone.

Question: Do you feel like going there to live again?

Answer: No, not really the only time I feel like that is when we have no water. But since I have spent so much time here, my children were also born here and their schools are here, if I go back they would get disrupted.

Question: Have you maintained relations here?

Answer: Yes I have made relations here because of my children. If I left they would get disrupted.

Question: What are the issues of transport here?

Answer: Two buses run – 55 or Masood at daytime if the whole family comes.

Question: What about the qingchi rickshaw are these also included in the transport?

Answer: Yes it is but they cost a lot of money. If we were to go to Nagan, it would cost Rs 35.

Question: How much does Mazda cost?

Answer: Almost Rs 15 to 20 for both ways but the qingchi costs Rs 35 for one way only

Question: But why do people like the qingchi?

Answer: Because they save time. Buses run every 20 minutes. Buses are fewer than qingchis that's why people prefer chingchi to save time. They don't care about the money

Question: You can go to Sadar for Rs 50. If large buses ran it would take Rs 35 to Sadar or Tawar is that ok?

Answer: It would be better if large buses run for long journeys for less money because we pay Rs 35 to Nagan so it would be better if we paid Rs 35 to Sadar

Ok thank you so much we will meet again.

Interview: D-02**Jawed Sultan, Saiban Office, Khuda-ki-Basti**

Interviewed by Rizwan-ul-haq

(April 2014)

Question: What is your name?

Answer: My name is Jawed.

Question: How long have you been living in Khuda ki Basti?

Answer: Almost 12 years.

Question: Did you come at the beginning?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Where did you come from?

Answer: From New Karachi No:5

Question: Did you rent or live at your own house?

Answer: I rented. I am a butcher at day time I am there at night.

Question: Why you come here?

Answer: Because we lived on rent there but ALLAH blessed us with our own house here.

Question: Who told you about Khuda ki Basti?

Answer: It was the effort of my wife. The lady doctor came and told us about it. Shahid Sahab invited us to live here he gave us one room for me and then my family came with all our luggage for one year. After that he gave us a plot whose owner is somebody else, but he cancelled his name and gave it to us. We gave them Rs 25,000 for construction and paid Rs 10,000 to prosecute then we got this plot.

Question: When you came from New Karachi No 5 these areas are thickly populated and in full bloom at night so how do you feel?

Answer: I always wish that I have my own house where me and my family live and settle happily and finally ALLAH fulfilled my desire.

Question: How do you go to work?

Answer: I go to work at 9 am pick and drop my sir then I go to home it's my everyday duty.

Question: How do other people go to their work?

Answer: By rickshaw.

Question: How much fare do they charge?

Answer: Rs 25 from New Karachi.

Question: Rs 25 for both ways?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How many children do you have?

Answer: 5 children – 3 daughters and 2 sons.

Question: Does anybody work?

Answer: Nobody.

Question: How many children go to school, college, or university?

Answer: My daughters go to college.

Question: How much expense is required for them?

Answer: Almost Rs 250 everyday Rs 125 for each.

Question: That means Rs 250 for their daily expenses?

Answer: Definitely I give them.

Question: And what about those who are getting education in school?

Answer: Rs 80 per month.

Question: How much money do you earn as you are butcher and driver as well?

Answer: I earn Rs 5,600 for the organisation.

Question: Rickshaws are moving now but before that how did you go?

Answer: By Mazda van.

Question: Is that more as compared to Mazda?

Answer: When we travelled by Mazda we also used to go by foot but at least rickshaw save us from that walk

Question: How do you go to marriages or anywhere else?

Answer: Either I borrow car from my boss or by taxi or rickshaw.

Question: How much do you pay for it?

Answer: It depends on the distance. If we go to Korangi then Rs 600 for one way so a total of Rs 1,200.

Question: Do you face any problem for travelling at night?

Answer: I am very thankful to ALLAH that no incident has happened as I heard people got mugged every time but ALLAH keeps me save because I earn pure money and I hope that he will always save me like this

Question: If you go to hospital or some issues occurred at night then?

Answer: No it never happened to me yet.

Question: Are hospital facilities provided here?

Answer: Yes Baqai and two more hospitals are here

Question: It means you have facilities here?

Answer: Yes I am thankful to ALLAH and his kindness

Question: Where do your relatives live?

Answer: In New Karachi.

Question: When you lived in New Karachi you used to meet your relatives?

Answer: Yes they come here now. When we lived in New Karachi we often met each other on a regular basis, but now we meet once a month or so.

Question: How do you see this difference – is that right or wrong?

Answer: Actually we could not get time to meet each other because my daughters went to college after that. Each daughter fees is Rs1,600 and the total is Rs 3,200 for the first and second year.

Question: As you don't meet them often does it impact on your social relations?

Answer: We meet at weddings because otherwise everybody is busy working

Question: Do you feel like moving back to New Karachi?

Answer: No I am thankful to ALLAH that I got this place

Question: Buses run then Mazda, UTS, CNG bus and after that qingchi – do you think large buses should run?

Answer: It should run because rickshaws are more than enough they take Rs 25 usually but when CNG close they take Rs 40 and when CNG closes for 2 days they feel like they have a supreme power like GOD

Question: Why do people give them a lot of money?

Answer: People have to give them money because there are not enough buses.

Question: If large buses were running and charged Rs 35 to Sadar do you think people would use them?

Answer: They should support them.

Question: Do you think it would be better if 25 to 30 buses run?

Answer: Buses should run in fact must run because there isn't enough place in rickshaws and they can accidently divert any time but we have no choice than to travel in them.

Question: How did you make house here?

Answer: We have completed our house in one and a half years. They gave us a plot we constructed it slowly through committees.

Ok thank you very much.

Interview: D-03

Nadeem Bakhsh, Khuda-ki-Basti

Interviewed by Rizwan-ul-Haq

(April 2014)

Question: When did you come in Khuda Ki Basti?

Answer: We came here when the basti was being inhabited. That time just a few lanes were inhabited. Selling cold drinks/sweet syrups was our business. Our selling point was located at Sindh Govt hospital U.O Morr Karachi.

We lived there in a rented house. My friend told me about cheap plots for low income families at Khuda Ki Basti seeing that the area was depopulated we would come here time to time. One day we met with Mr Akhtar Sahib he suggested we buy a plot and save the money which we were spending on rent. Five other low income families came here who couldn't afford to live in rented places. Six plots were bought at a time now we are paying instalments for the plots. Initially we had difficulties but now we are relaxed due to the available facilities.

Question: Where did you come from?

Answer: We came here from UP Society.

Question: How long had you been there?

Answer: We spent our whole childhood there.

My father had been living in a flat in Haji Camp since the beginning of its settlement when people were being evicted from the area. He bought a house at UP Karachi and moved there with his family and later his sons bought houses to live separately; then we settled in Khuda ki Basti. We have been living here for 14/15 years.

Question: How did you feel living here in an unoccupied area compared to the saturated UP area?

Answer: In the beginning we were deprived of water, gas, and electricity. We said that we when we pass away our children would have their own residence. We couldn't afford to buy a house at any other place, when we had saved money the prices of houses became higher than our savings.

Question: What are the benefits of living here?

Answer: The environment is very calm here but recently the water and electricity supply are major issues. Some sewer lines have been laid but others will be constructed in the future. We say that God will solve our problems and we are waiting for good days and they must come.

Question: Are your expenses the same living in UP as compare with Basti?

Answer: Expenses have increased now. We use wood for cooking, purchase water from tankers. We have been using wood for 6 years. Vegetables and other things are more expensive than in UP. We have Rs 150 expense daily on buying water at Rs 10 per gallon. People purchase water from tankers with underground storage tanks. But those who had no tanks would buy 3-4 gallons daily and store them.

When we settled here there was no water at 50 feet depth but now it exists at 20-22 feet depth. We dug for six weeks with our own hands. We use it and the people from the area carry water from it. It is sweet water so, they are using it for drinking as well and people bear just the material cost. It was our good act (sadqa-e-jaria)

Question: How did you do this work? Did you hire mechanics and labour?

Answer: We did this work jointly with four friends to help people and to get blessings from God without hiring labour and mechanics. We fixed four rings; two of them were fixed at the bottom of the well and two at the upper level. These rings will provide protection for those who might fall in it.

We get water from the well throwing a can on a rope.

Question: Where do you work?

Answer: I sell goods setting up stalls in daily bazaars in the basti.

Question: How Much is your income?

Answer: I earn an average Rs 500 daily.

Question: How many family members do you have?

Answer: I have a son and seven daughters which totals ten family members including my wife.

Question: Are the children all getting education?

Answer: No, They are not studying anywhere. Some time ago they would go for tuition at someone's home.

Question: What about the citizen foundation school which has no tuition fees?

Answer: We visited there two or three times for our children's admissions. They took a test and failed. Their official requirements were wrong; they embezzle funds having shown poor children round. I don't trust them.

Question: Do your children want to get education?

Answer: Yes they are interested.

Question: Are you the only earning person in your family?

Answer: Yes

Question: How do you bear home expenses with a very low income?

Answer: It is very difficult. I do embroidery work

Interview: D-04

Muhammad Yaseen, Khuda Ki Basti

Interviewed by Rizwan-ul-Haq
(April 2014)

Question: What is your name?

Answer: M. Yaseen

Question: Where did you live previously?

Answer: We lived in Lal market, Khameeso Goth, New Karachi. We moved to the Goth from Shikarpour district in the interior of Sindh during ethnic violence between the Sindhi and the Mahajir after having sold our 80 yard built house for Rs 40,000. We came here for our safety. We sold the house at a very low price and didn't claim because we were to pay Rs 500 as bribe for it but my 110 year old father wouldn't pay the hush money.

Question: When did you sell out that house?

Answer: In 1992 during ethnic violence, people were being killed on both sides so we were forced us to move to a safer place and people left their houses without selling them. I studied up to fifth grade. My father died in Shikarpour. I came here with my younger siblings because I was the only person to look after them.

Question: How long did you live in Khameeso Goth?

Answer: For 14 years.

Question: Did you have your own house at Khameeso Goth?

Answer: No, We didn't; we lived there in a rented house.

Question: Why did you come here in Khuda Ki Basti?

Answer: Because we bought our own house. I bought here at a very low price. We couldn't afford to buy a house in any other part of Karachi.

Question: What is the difference between living here and the Khameeso Goth?

Answer: We don't have to pay house rent here but we purchase water.

Question: How much do you spend for water in every month?

Answer: We buy two tankers of water for each Rs 1000 every month. There are also power shortages here.

I sell pakoras and samosas at the daily bachat bazaar taking a stall for Rs 100 per day. It was Rs 50 in 2006. I sell in these bazaars which are at different places on fixed days. Every Tuesday and Saturday it is fixed in

the basti. The stall rent is Rs 50 for a Saturday here because it is a small bazaar.

Question: Where do you sell in the evening?

Answer: At the main bus stop.

Question: How much is your daily income?

Answer: Rs 500-700 is my daily sales income; sometimes it reaches up to Rs 1,000-1,200 per day. Now my average is Rs 300 per day.

Question: How many children do you have?

Answer: I have six children

Question: Are your all children studying or working?

Answer: All three daughters are studying but the three sons have given up their studies now they are learning to recite the QURAN PAK. My elder son works in a refrigerator and deep freezer repair shop and is learning the work and earning Rs 100-150 weekly.

Question: How do you bear your expenses on such a very low income?

Answer: I sell fried fish in the winter season but I earn very little because I buy ice for Rs 100 to use daily to keep the fish fresh. There has been no electricity for two months due to the disconnection of illegal connections. I don't have any savings. I work hard daily until late at night to cover all my expenditure.

Question: How do you go to the city?

Answer: I have a motor bike and I transport fish and other things on it. We could not afford Rs 1,000 per day for the rickshaw fare so I bought the bike. We use this for visiting relatives as well. My family doesn't go out together as we do not have a big vehicle.

Question: Where do your relatives live?

Answer: Some live in Orangi, Some in New Karachi and mostly in the interior of Sindh.

Question: How often you visit to relatives?

Answer: Our visits have reduced due to not having a big vehicle. They come to meet us. We visit only to attend marriages, funerals and if someone is sick.

Question: Do you want to live again in your previous place?

Answer: Yes, in Shikarpur where I was born. My business of making Peshawari slippers was good there. It's my fate to live here. God will also give and bless us here but there is an electricity and water shortage which is a headache. If I could save the Rs 2,000 per month that we are paying for water, I would easily afford the plot instalment.

Question: How many ethnic groups are there in Shikarpur?

Answer: Urdu speaking people are in the majority. Sindhi and Gujrati people also live there.

Question: Which relatives are there?

Answer: My in-laws live there. Two months ago I visited to attend a marriage ceremony.

Question: What are the issues of transport here?

Answer: There are no buses except two mini buses (Mazda) CNG rickshaws are available here which demand fares of Rs 15-25.

Question: What health facilities are available here?

Answer: There is one hospital named Baqai where doctors treat sick people like animals and do not give any medicine. They just write on papers. Those who opened private clinics are not qualified. They charge high fees. Most of them opened their own medical stores. They prescribe unnecessary medicines.

Question: Why did you move here in absence of facilities?

Answer: We cannot afford to live in any other better place. If we live at other place and pay rent who will live in this house? We have a house that we rent to my brother. Now he says it is his house. He is not paying electricity bills although he installed a separate meter. It is very difficult to retrieve the house from him.

Question: What are the security matters here?

Answer: There is no security. We should pray to God for it.

Question: Did any incident take place while you coming back house in nights?

Answer: I don't go anywhere at nights whenever I go to attend marriages I go with my family Thank God no incident has happened with us.

Question: How do you feel living here?

Answer: In the beginning when the area was under control by the office of Saiban (the housing scheme) we felt better, but now anyone who has political power can stand here.

Question: Did you do any effort acquiring water?

Answer: We also went to the water board but due to not having political influence we haven't succeeded. We cannot do anything to bypass them. People went to Akhter Sahib many times. Water pipes exist here but there is no water. Electricity has been disconnected for two months. People have paid the electric bills that were received of Rs. 1,000-1,500 last month.

Question: Did you give requests to the parties for this?

Answer: Yes, they always promise that electricity power will connect soon. Actually they have electricity

all the time in their houses or in offices. They don't see troubles.

Question: How did you sleep in nights without electric fans?

Answer: We sleep with mosquito coils on hot nights.

Thank you very much Yaseen Sahib

Interview: D-05

Mr. Basheer, Khuda-ki-Basti

Interviewed by Rizwan-ul-Haq

(April 2014)

Question: Where did you live previously?

Answer: I lived in New Karachi

Question: How long did you live there?

Answer: We lived there for about 20-22 years.

Question: Do all your relatives and friends live there now?

Answer: No, Some of them live in New Karachi and some live in Baldia Town.

Question: When did you come here?

Answer: We come here in 2001.

Question: Why did you come here?

Answer: We lived in a rented house. We heard about available cheap plots being sold to very low income families through a low cost housing scheme project called Saiban. We wanted to get our own house.

Question: What is your job?

Answer: I labour in a factory. I installed a stall for first time today because there has been no work for me in the factory for the last four months. The textile factory is disrupted nowadays due to shortage of water and electricity.

Question: Where is the factory located?

Answer: It is in an industrial area of Gabol Town New Karachi. There are many small factories there.

Question: How did you used to go to the factory?

Answer: I had used to go by changing 2 or 3 Mazdas every day.

Question: How much would you spent of transport fare?

Answer: Rs 70-80 per day. When CNG remains shut down we have to pay higher fares for the CNG rickshaws.

Question: You aren't doing work in that factory? How are you running your house?

Answer: In the beginning of my joblessness I took loans but now I took another loan of Rs 10,000 for a restart of selling slippers.

Question: How many children you have?

Answer: I have six children.

Question: Are they studying or working?

Answer: Three of them are studying and a daughter is married.

Question: Are you the only earning member of your family?

Answer: Yes I am.

Question: How much was your monthly income in the factory?

Answer: It was not fixed, I would receive between Rs 10-12 thousand from that work; my work was on a contract basis according to weave fabric availability.

Question: How much time would you spent travelling to the factory?

Answer: About 1 hour or 1¼ hours daily travelling by CNG rickshaw – time saving but much more expensive than Mazdas. On the closed day of CNG the rickshaw driver charged an extra Rs 5-10.

Question: What is the difference of living between here and New Karachi?

Answer: New Karachi is in the city. There are many facilities available – hospitals, big markets. There is no big hospital and market here. If we want to buy good things we have to pay much higher prices. Otherwise we have to go to the city markets.

Question: If you need to go to hospital in emergency do you get transport at night?

Answer: Public transport is not available here in nights we have to hire a taxi or rickshaw which is expensive for us. Taxi or rickshaw drivers charge two or three times the fare. Usually we pay between Rs 300-600 for the visits.

Question: How do you go to attend weddings?

Answer: Last month I went to a wedding with my family by taxi and coming back home in the late hours of the night. There was no transport available we changed vehicles four times and came back home spending Rs 350 and taking 1 and half hours.

Question: What your children do?

Answer: I have four daughters. My two sons are younger. One of them is studying in grade six and the other is in youth grade.

Question: How are security matters especially in nights?

Answer: Transport runs on the roads until the late hours as being a populated Lyari settlement there is no problem of transport in nights.

Question: What are the difference in your expenditures between living here and the New Karachi?

Answer: We have to buy water here. We had to pay house rent in New Karachi. Due to the remote area we have to pay more amounts in transportation. There are also problems of power shortages.

Question: How do you get water?

Answer: There are water pipes, but there is no water in the pipes so people buy water. Previously water from the tanker was Rs 700. Now it is Rs 750 [for about 1000 gallons].

Question: Do you want to live again in New Karachi?

Answer: Yes, it was better living there in a rented house because my work place was near – 10-15 minutes' walk. In case of strikes I would come back on foot. Now I own my house and I and my family are facing problems happily.

Question: Do you visit your relatives more or less often?

Answer: The prices of everything have gone up and we need much money and time to visit them. Most of my relatives live in Baldia town which is very far from here I have a big family with six children. Our visits have been difficult in the absence of our own vehicle.

When we lived in New Karachi, transport problems were not as bad as today. It was a cheap period and CNG wouldn't shutdown then. Transport would be available except during strikes and coming back home late at night was easy. Now travelling late at night from any other place to Basti is risky due to muggings and lootings. If I had a late night in the factory I would stay there the whole night.

Question: Would you like to live again in a city renting a house?

Answer: No, nobody takes any house on rent here because most people have their own houses. A rented house can cost easily Rs 1,000-1,500 monthly. A house rent is high in the city; a single room in a rented house is about Rs 3,000-4,000 which is not affordable for us.

Interview: D-06

Dr. Qazi Mujahid Ali

MBBS, DIP. DIAB, Family Phycian & Diabetologist

**Interviewed by Rizwan-ul-Haq
26th March 2014 at Surjani Town**

Question: What kind of illness are caused by transport, traffic, noise or air pollution?

Answer: The most common illnesses are divided into two main categories:

1. Diseases related to air pollution
2. Diseases related to noise pollution

1. Diseases related to air pollution.

Studies demonstrate a special vulnerability to air pollution among those with serious illnesses, including asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and lung cancer. Hundreds of thousands of Karachiites suffer from these diseases mainly due to living in areas where air pollution is dangerously high. Children, the elderly, those with compromised immune systems, and those with specific genetic traits are at special risk.

2. Diseases related to noise pollution.

Noise pollution is not believed to be a cause of mental illness, but it can accelerate and intensify the development of latent mental disorders. Noise pollution may cause or contribute to the following adverse effects: anxiety, stress, nervousness, nausea, headache, emotional instability, argumentativeness, sexual impotence, changes in mood, increase in social conflicts, neurosis, hysteria, and psychosis.

It also causes hearing defects.

Question: What kind of prevention is necessary?

Answer: The transport sector emits a wide range of gaseous air pollutants and of suspended particulate matter (PM) of different sizes and composition. There are tailpipe emissions of primary particles from road transport. Road transport is also the biggest source of emissions of nitrogen dioxide and benzene in cities.

Implementation of technological improvements, such as particle traps, preheated catalytic converters and electronic vehicle controls, may have an impact on transport-related air pollution. Also, stricter exhaust-emission legislation (on PM and nitrogen oxides from conventional diesel and petrol engines) can

also contribute to a decrease in transport-related air pollution. Alternative vehicle technologies and fuel substitutes may play an important role in substantially reducing the emission of hazardous air pollutants especially CNG. However, many of the positive effects of technological improvements risk being offset by an increase in the number of vehicles, of the number of kilometres travelled, by a trend towards replacing smaller vehicles with more powerful engines and by an increased use of diesel fuel. That is why technological improvements alone may be insufficient to bring concentrations of transport-related pollutants below levels that pose a threat to human health.

Question: What is the ratio of disease or illness of patients caused by transport?

Answer: Surely it is very high but the exact ratio is very difficult to describe due to lack of any comprehensive study on this subject.

But as a family physician I see an increase in the cases related to this pollution.

Question: What do you suggest to reduce illness caused by the transport issue?

Answer: CNG is not only a cheaper fuel but also environmentally friendly and CNG vehicles do not emit harmful smoke and gas. It is better to use CNG as an alternative fuel if it is available.

I suggest launching an aggressive programme of tree planting in Karachi – trees are the lungs of any city. Karachi needs millions of trees to make its roads,

streets, parks, playgrounds, educational institutions, beaches and public places greener – more trees would ensure that the harmful high levels of air pollution could be offset to some extent.

There is also a need to consider measures that influence the amount of travel. For example, integrated urban planning, such as zoning offices, green areas and non-residential functions around urban highways, separating pedestrians and bicyclists from road traffic, and introducing measures that provide disincentives to using private vehicles (such as parking fees and congestion charges) seem to contribute to lowering emission rates. Such measures encourage a shift in favour of public transport and an increase in cycling and walking, which have additional positive effects on health. Moreover, control mechanisms, such as mandatory car inspections, are needed to eliminate polluters and avoid badly maintained vehicles.

If we make the public transport system better, develop a mass transit system and discourage encroachment, especially on main roads, and make sure to apply traffic laws effectively, we can decrease this pollution to some extent.

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Transport-related problems in Karachi have increased considerably in recent decades. Traffic congestion contributes to increased air and noise pollution, leading to health problems, high accident rates, and environmental degradation. It has also meant declining living standards, as to avoid long commutes, people's livelihood choices have become more limited and this has determined where they live. This has resulted in a drop in income and a decrease in personal security, which has affected the most vulnerable, in particular women. This paper presents a historical perspective on the causes of the current crisis, and its repercussions on transporters, fuel suppliers, and the public; outlining current government plans and making recommendations.

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