

Grand plan: Integrate all transport in Delhi, NCR

Source: Indian Express page 3 dated 13.03.2010.

A MINISTERIAL panel headed by P Chidambaram is considering a Rs 56,000 crore proposal to modernise the transport system of the National Capital Region (NCR) including Delhi, introducing uniform road design and signages, and an integrated fares, operation and information system for all operators.

A single planning, co-ordination, management and monitoring entity called the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA) has been envisaged to implement the system. The UMTA will be in charge of: A common fare collection system A common passenger information system Multi-modal integration at level of infrastructure, fares, operations and information, A common control centre for automated and computerised management of new auto-rickshaws and taxis On March 10, Urban Development Secretary M Ramachandran made a concept presentation before Chidambaram, HRD Minister Kapil Sibal, Urban Development Minister Jaipal Reddy and Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia, asking for Rs 41,350 crore of public and Rs 20,650 crore of private spending over the next five years to decongest and streamline the transport system in Delhi and the NCR. The money is broadly planned to be used to add another 500 km of roads, 1,500 parking complexes, 500 km of mass rapid systems such as the Metro and BRT, and 1,000 more buses.

According to the proposal, the Urban Development Ministry will draw up legislation superseding existing enactments and allowing for the UMTA to take over all planning, coordination and management functions. "Till such time as the UMTA is set up, this Group of Ministers will function as policy-making body for Delhi and NCR," says the Urban Development Ministry concept paper.

The salient features of the new modernisation plan are: Adoption of a standard design for arterial, collector and local roads A uniform signage system Establishing freight terminals outside the city to prevent trucks from entering the city Making proof of owning dedicated parking space mandatory for registration of any vehicle in Delhi and NCR Providing for a Regional Rapid Transit System through a joint venture between the Centre and states, called the NCR Transport Corporation Phasing out old and outdated yellow-and-black taxis, modernising auto-rickshaws, and synergising their operations using GPS The empowered group plan to include the chief ministers of UP, Rajasthan and Haryana in the deliberations. States may be reluctant to give up claims on the licensing machinery but the GoM's urgency derives from the dire transport situation in Delhi where around 1,200 vehicles are registered every day and roads are clogged despite 22 per cent of the area being under roads.