

## DIMTS sensitizes children towards the benefit of public transport



The sharp increase in vehicular population is one of the main culprits behind the increasing pollution levels in the city. It is now being realized that one of the means of countering this is through a strong public transportation system which will ensure that more people travel in public vehicles and thus reduce the number of private vehicles on the road.

DIMTS is working towards the promotion of public transport and has been trying to generate awareness to this end. Realizing the importance of

the role that children could play in achieving this goal, DIMTS has launched an interactive 'School Outreach Programme' to sensitize children and inspire them to join this fight to save the environment.

DIMTS has already conducted the programme successfully at three schools, i.e. Amity International School, Pushp Vihar, The Indian School and the latest being KR Mangalam World School, Greater Kailash II.

In its latest 'School Outreach Programme' at the KR Mangalam World School, officers from DIMTS interacted with the students of class VIII and talked to them about the increasing pollution levels and the need to promote public transport. In this context, the children were also shown how bus based infrastructures like the BRT corridors help in achieving this end.

Reacting to the discussion on the BRT corridor, the students began by almost unanimously stating that the BRT was a bad idea. They raised concerns about the public safety aspects and the efficiency of the entire system. "Why is the corridor in the middle of the road?", "Where are the Traffic Police and Zebra Crossings?", "The bus drivers drive very rashly!", "There are no proper street lights!", were some of their pertinent observations along with some amusing solutions to traffic jams such as "flying cars".

However, once they were shown, by way of a presentation, how the BRT corridor helps in promoting public transport, they soon came around to appreciating the concept. They were explained how the BRT emphasizes on the movement of total number of people rather than the total number of vehicles and thus gives priority to buses which carry more number of people than cars. To explain to the children how the corridor had actually reduced the average travel time for commuters by 19%, the





officials quoted from an independent evaluation carried out by EMBARQ, a global level center for Sustainable Transport, that works with cities in the developing world to catalyze and help implement sustainable solutions to problems of urban mobility. The EMBARQ report states that the average travel time for the buses has reduced by 35%, thus benefitting 55% of the commuters who travel by bus. On the other hand the travel time for personal vehicle owners has increased by 14% which carries only 33% of the commuters.

Students were explained how central lanes facilitate uninterrupted flow of buses and consequently allowed more people to travel faster. In addition the corridor not only gives priority to bus commuters, but also ensures safety of the cyclists and pedestrians as both have a lane dedicated to them. In fact contrary to popular perception, it was shown how the accident rates have come down after the introduction of the BRT corridor as each mode of transport has to keep to a distinct lane. The provision of speed breakers and marshals at sensitive spots like zebra crossings also help in ensuring the safety of all commuters.

As for the other issues concerning the corridor such as insufficient buses, enforcement of lane discipline etc, the officials assured that these were being worked upon and would be soon resolved.