

Press Release
World Car Free Day Carnival

22nd September, 2016 Patna; Patna celebrated its first World Car-free Day on Thursday to encourage motorists to give up their cars for a day and raise awareness about the alarming pollution levels in the city. CEED's environment action group, Planet Paltan, organized the event along with hundreds of school and college students. The volunteers rode around their bicycles from Eco Park and Governor House Road to mark the importance of the day. The event symbolised a revolution against the excessive motor congestion in the city. A fairly pleasant event, hundreds came together to showcase a different vision of the city. The event included several fun-filled activities including street play, cycle stunts, jingle-singing, etc.

The accelerating number of vehicular population in Patna has majorly contributed to its already deteriorating air quality. The automobiles emit several harmful pollutants like carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, photochemical oxidants, lead, particulate matter, etc based upon the quality of fuel consumed, speed and car idling. It is interesting to note that Patna saw an increment of 173.3% on the number of public transport between the years 1996 and 2012, while the increase in the number of private vehicles was found to be a massive 225% within the same period. There is no doubt that the daunting change in these figures have gradually changed the city's state of air quality for the worst. There is an urgent intervention required to change the preference of transportation from single-occupancy private cars to public transport, carpool and other energy efficient modes like bicycles, bikes, and taking walks to shorter distances.

Shreya Singh, an active Planet Paltan member at the event shared that celebrating World Car-free Day shall dawn realisation into the public that they are not obliged to use private transport and that there are other more efficient modes of transportation that one can adopt for traveling around the city. The real change can only be reflected if we continue this practice on all days and not just restrict it to one. We shall also raise awareness about the effects of burning fossil fuels and the simple steps that we can undertake to stop the vehicular congestion in the city, she further added. Planet Paltan has taken upon themselves to urge the masses of Patna to switch to energy-efficient modes of transport.

Ankita Jyoti, Programme Manager - CEED, conveyed that "By organizing a carnival on World Car-free Day, we aim to take the heat off the planet by encouraging people to be less dependent on their cars and try alternatives. This new era is diseased with the downsides of chronic car dependency in the form of accelerated depletion of natural resources, traffic congestion, air and

noise pollution, global warming etc. There are more single- occupancy private vehicles on the road compared to public transport. Quitting car habit and finding alternative means for daily transportation cannot be achieved over-night, but the longest journey begins with the first step, and that's what the Car-Free Day is all about.”

The World Car-free Day celebration held in Patna, is a first of its kind event in the city and turns out to be a pioneer event with a unique perspective for all the participants and visitors.

CEED urged the Govt. for stricter implementation of law to ban polluting vehicles as per the Hon’ble Patna HC order, creating a dedicated cycling lane and implementing the latest emission standard such as Bharat Stage VI, which will be a key to decongest Patna and to reduce the air pollution in the city.

For more information;

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