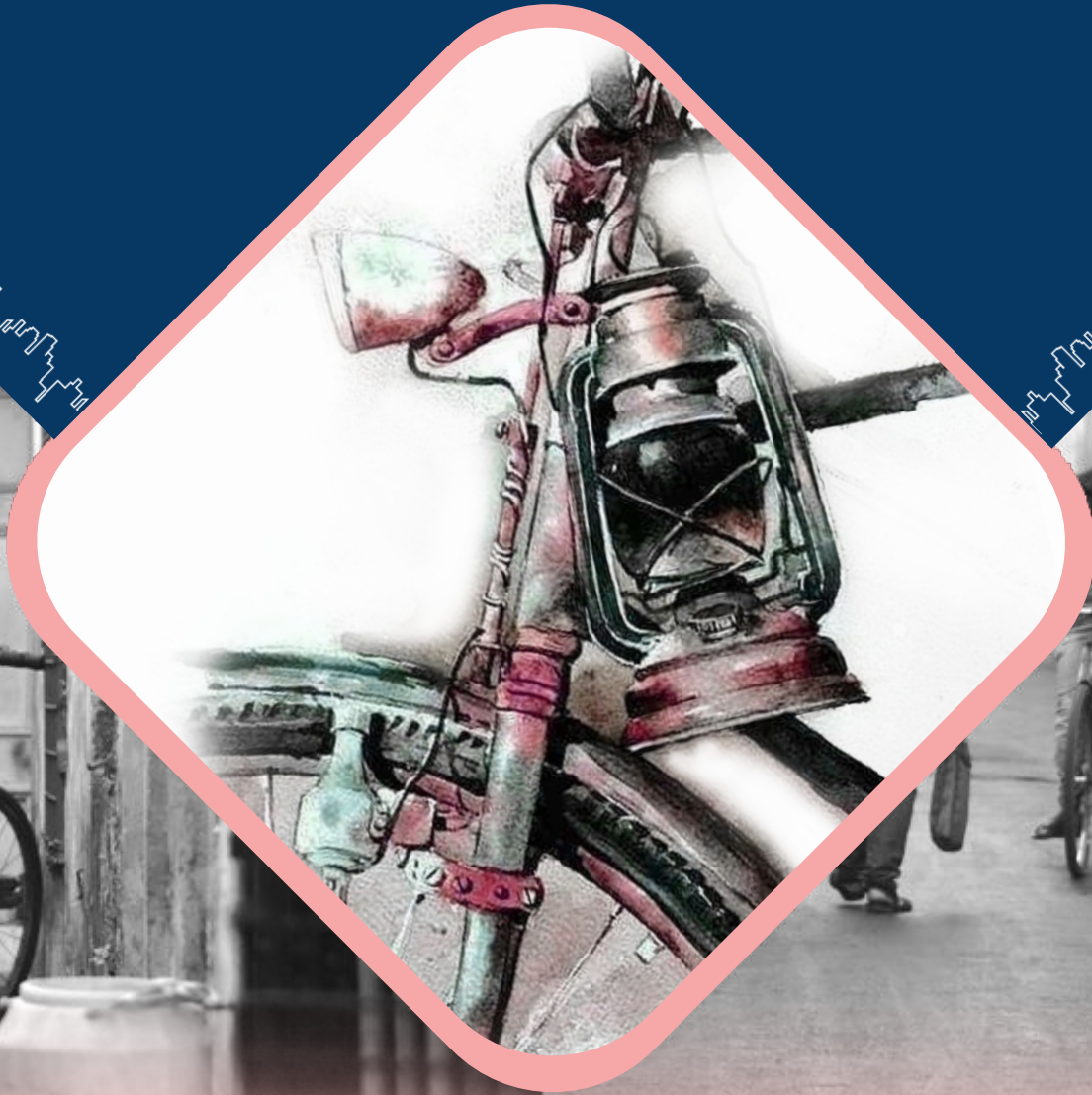




Rethinking a cycle-friendly Kolkata



Overview

Road vehicular emissions are one of the leading contributors to air pollution globally. **In the year 2019, air pollution caused about 21% of total deaths in Bengal.** A study by CSIR-NEERI revealed that **vehicular emissions contribute to up to 30% of particulate matter emissions in Kolkata.** In the wake of rising pollution and road congestion, several cities in India and abroad are incorporating bicycles in the current transport fleet.

But, Kolkata since 2008 has imposed a cycle restriction which is very regressive. This document looks to substantiate the concerns raised by Kolkata Police towards cycle restriction through empirical research and the suggestions of experts in the field.

Methodology



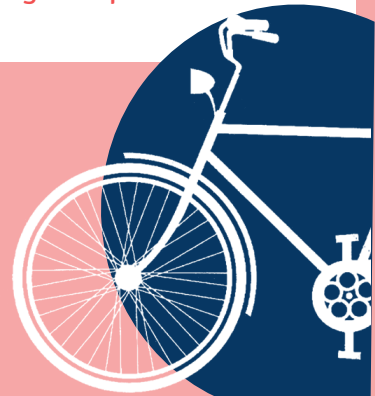
Primary Data

- Empirical Data from various research studies and data from RTIs



Secondary Data

- Kolkata Police statements in newspapers



CONCERN 1

CYCLES CAUSE SAFETY HAZARD

Cycles do not follow traffic rules on the road and interfere with smooth vehicular movement posing a safety hazard.



What do experts think?

Cyclists death are far lower in number than pedestrian deaths. Also, the police booked more cars than bicycles for parking rules violation. This indicated that cyclists are not the cause but the victims.



What does the data say?

88.2 lakhs cars were booked for traffic violation while only **5104** bicycle were booked

No data on cases for unregistered **slow-moving & no-entry violations**



6% of total deaths by RTA in Kolkata are of Cyclists.



55% deaths was among pedestrians (Highest)



88.2 L



CONCERN 2

CYCLES SLOW DOWN THE TRAFFIC

Cycles are slow-moving and they slow down the traffic on Kolkata roads



What do experts think?

- The average speed of traffic in Kolkata is 14 km/hr which can be easily matched by a cycle.
- Traffic speeds are slowed down due to excessive road congestion caused by large vehicles.



What does the data say?

The average speed of cycles is **14 km/hr** which is way past that of a car (i.e., **12 km/hr**) and matches up that to a motorcycle (i.e., **14 km/hr**)

AVERAGE SPEED DATA

18 km/hr



10 km/hr



12 km/hr



14 km/hr



14 km/hr



14 km/hr

CONCERN 3

CYCLES LANES ARE IMPRACTICAL IN KOLKATA

Cycles lanes on major roads of Kolkata are impractical. Kolkata has very little road space, we cannot block a lane for cycles because of the presence of multiple parking lots and bus stops
(Times of India, June 2021)



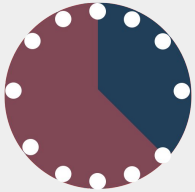
What do experts think?

- Kolkata has very small and compact roads in comparison to other cities which creates lesser possibility of motor vehicles.
- More cars means more congestion on roads. This creates all the more reason to implement cycle lanes in the city.



What does the data say?

TIME LOSS DUE TO TRAFFIC



20 - 60
minutes

74,077 INR

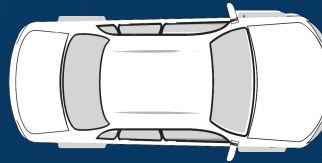
economic loss due to traffic congestion only in 2 hours

ROAD SPACE

6%
KOLKATA

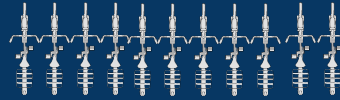
23%
DELHI

17%
MUMBAI



1
Car

1 car or 11 cycles
took same amount
of space



11
Bicycles

Chakraborty and Gupta, 2015

CONCERN 4

CYCLISTS ONLY FORM A SMALL SEGMENT OF THE SOCIETY

But cycles are used by only a small segment of the society. Majority in Kolkata travel by cars and motor vehicles.



What do we think?

- A large section of Kolkata's population rely on cycling for livelihoods, physical health, recreation and short-distance commute
- Between 2013 - 2020, cycles in Kolkata have increased 10.5 times indicating an increasing reliance on cycles
- The majority of cyclists in Kolkata use cycles as an integral to their daily livelihood.



What does the data say?



Most riders of cycles in Kolkata are **livelihood-based cyclists**. (WRI, 2020)



Zomato has over **5,000 cyclists** operating across **12 cities** including Kolkata (The Hindu, 2019).



Cycling to work is the **third preferred choice** of commute to work, after walking and public transport (2011 Census).



11% of the population uses cycles as their main mode of transport to work, with about **2.5M bicycle trips** a day. (Ministry of Urban Development, 2008).



Cargo cyclists are central to the **city's informal economy**. (The Conversation, 2018)

CONCERN 5

KOLKATA DOES NOT HAVE CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURES

Kolkata Police is not against cycling per se. We are only pointing out that the city's roads do not have the infrastructure to allow cycling (Times of India, July 2021)



What do experts think?

- Several cities, both in India and abroad have been incorporating cycling as a sustainable mobility option even on very busy and congested roads.
- Congestion and parking reforms can be effective in managing excessive traffic congestion on busy roads



What does the data say?



Goa, Udaipur, and Puducherry have dedicated cycle tracks (Travel Triangle, 2021)



100 KM

Pune

30 KM

Bengaluru

11 KM

New Town

Indian cities with cycle lanes



A stricter parking restrictions in Connaught Place, one of Delhi's busiest places, have led to the fall in the number of private cars. (CSE, 2018)

ON PARKING MANAGEMENT, IT IS INTERESTING TO LOOK AT WHAT INTERNATIONAL CITIES ARE DOING

BERLIN

Berlin has graduated parking fees of an average of **2 Euro per hour**

(Parkopedia's 2019 Global Parking Index)

New York, London, and Tokyo have an average parking fee ranging from **\$15 to \$34.94 for two hours** making them the most expensive cities for use of motorized vehicles.

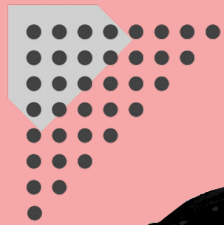
(Parkopedia's 2019 Global Parking Index)

NY

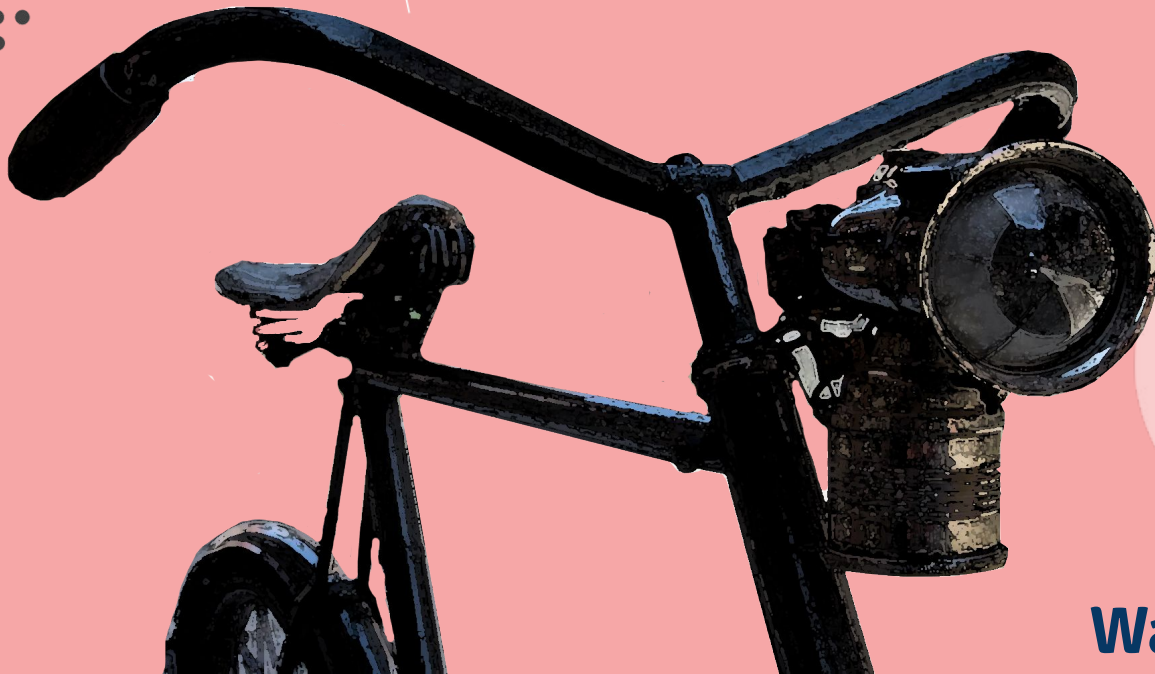
LONDON

TOKYO





Rethinking



Way Forward

Although Kolkata has an advantage over other cities in terms of limited distances of travel, having a **wide variety of public transportation** options, and **less ownership of personal vehicles** as compared to other metropolitan cities in India, Kolkata's rapid development into a huge urban agglomeration have severely impacted the mobility sector of the city. **To restore the mobility sector in the form of a well-planned and well-performing system**, it is therefore essential to:

Give prominence to building **cycle promotive infrastructure**.

Construction of well-designed cycling lanes and **traffic signages for safe cycling** etc.

Prioritize the integration of public transport, para-transit, walking, and cycling in the existing transport system.



Congestion and parking pricing need to be introduced. Additionally, tax concessions for low-income households for using public transportation and sustainable transport systems

Optimize the **implementation of already existing sustainable transport systems** and **mobility plans**.



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