

Deccan Chronicle 19.09.2009

No feet for city pedestrians

September 19th, 2009 By Our Correspondent

Bengaluru, Sept. 18: The city's footpaths have been usurped by construction companies, religious shrines, small-time vendors, trees and even electric posts. And some major roads never had a pavement to begin with!

The dire situation faced by pedestrians in the city was brought to light by a report of the Centre for Infrastructure, Sustainable Transport and Urban Planning (CiSTUP), which had been approached by the state government to think of ideas to make city roads accessible to pedestrians.

A report on pedestrian policies has also been submitted to CiSTUP and the organisation will revert back with their recommendations.

Speaking to Deccan Chronicle, a senior CiSTUP member said, "The policy has been drafted after consulting several stakeholders. Once the CiSTUP submits the revised report to the government, it will work on implementing the same."

“The traffic policies introduced during the last few years have been motorist-centric. It did not account for the pedestrians, who constitute a majority of road users. Our current emphasis is on pedestrian mobility and accessibility. The new policy will be implemented as soon as possible,” the member added.

Traffic experts point out that the encroachment of footpaths will make the task more difficult.

“Clearing the encroachment on the footpaths is a pending issue and the government has to think of rehabilitation ideas to solve the problem,” said additional commissioner of police (traffic) Praveen Sood.

“We have said time and again that pedestrians must not be ignored in our policy planning. Almost 60 per cent of those who die on the city roads are on foot at the time. Riders of two-wheelers are also a high-risk fatality group, accounting for 30 per cent of the deaths. Safe pedestrian crossings, underpasses and skywalks are a must in some busy areas in Bengaluru. More resources also have to be mobilised by the government to ensure that pedestrians can walk safely on the roads in the city,” the additional commissioner added.

