



High quality diesel for SL by 2012

by *Ifham Nizam*

By the year 2012, Sri Lanka would be in a position to introduce Euro 4 diesel, the best quality diesel used in developed countries, National Council for Economic Development Executive Director Don Jayaweera said.

He told a recent workshop, titled 'Clean Fuels and Vehicles' organized by the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) in Colombo, that though at present Sri Lanka used Euro 2 type diesel upgraded by refineries it would be in a position to use Euro 4.

Senior officials of all member countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the two-day workshop.

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They conceded that air pollution objective of this workshop was to enhance knowledge among policy makers on the environmental and health benefits of using clean fuels.

During the discussion they agreed air pollution in many cities in the developing world is reaching crisis proportions.

According to the World Health Organisation, only 15 per cent of the largest cities in developing countries have acceptable air quality.

According to Colombo Municipal Council Deputy Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. Ruwan Wijaymuni the high levels of urban air pollution had attracted the growing attention of the governments, civil society, and industries as poor air quality is related to many deaths each year, and contributes to the plight of thousands more who suffer from asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cardiovascular disease and lung cancer.

He said that lead emissions are extremely harmful to children under age six, interfering with the development of brain and other organs and systems. These pollutants can be reduced by using lower-sulphur and lead-free fuels and by introducing the new vehicle technologies and emission control devices that require such fuels.

The number of vehicles in the cities of South Asia has seen a rapid increase in the last ten years. In Delhi alone, the vehicular population has increased around tenfold in 20 years and accounts for more than 60 per cent of the particulate pollution. Two-wheelers and diesel driven heavy trucks are a significant source of urban air pollution. Another issue leading to this problem is the poor road infrastructure development, which had lead to traffic congestions which is the norm in most South Asian cities, he said.



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