

Pollution-free e-rickshaw in cities

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bhubaneswar

IN a bid to check pollution level, the State Government on Tuesday directed Transport and Urban Development Departments to promote pollution-free e-rickshaw in cities with tax waiver incentives.

The direction was given by Chief Secretary AP Padhi while reviewing the City Bus services at a high level meeting here.

“The Transport Department has been advised to take appropriate steps for moving out of old and more polluting public vehicles from the city routes in phased manner,” Padhi told reporters.

It has been decided that the ongoing City Bus services in various urban local bodies (ULBs) will be augmented and made more effective in coming years. Besides, the City Bus services will be extended to the nearest industrial and growth centres, he said.

Issues relating to city level permits for the urban bus service, city bus modernisation through IT enabled services (ITES), development of bus terminals in ULBs and enforce-

ment of route permits were discussed and resolved in the meeting.

The Chief Secretary advised the special purpose vehicles (SPVs) managing the City Bus services to focus more on intra-city connectivity and communication.

Padhi directed the Housing and Urban Development Department to fix the intra-city routes and number of buses to ply on those routes depending on the requirement of people. It was also decided to allow auto rickshaws within the city upto the carrying capacity of the routes.

Housing and Urban Development Secretary G Mathivathanan said at present, seven SPVs are operating in various ULBs for managing City Bus services. Total 329 buses are running in 67 routes of different ULBs with around 88,500 passengers per day, he said.

Apart from Secretaries and senior officers of Transport, Housing and Urban Development, Collectors from 11 districts participated in the discussion through video conference.