Government of Assam collaborates with SaveLIFE Foundation and Skoda Auto Volkswagen India to initiate the First Tactical Urbanism Trial in Assam, Prioritising Road Safety

Khanapara Intersection, used by approximately 20,000 pedestrians and 43,655 vehicles daily, witnessed 15 fatal crashes between 2019 and 2022.

Guwahati, 21st February 2024: In a collaborative effort aimed at enhancing road safety and saving lives in Guwahati, SaveLIFE Foundation, with support from Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Private Limited and in close partnership with the Government of Assam's Lead Agency on Road Safety, Kamrup Traffic Police, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), and Public Works Department (PWD), has initiated a Tactical Urbanism Trial at the Khanapara Roundabout.

Khanapara is a 3-armed roundabout with an elevated corridor. The Guwahati-Shillong (GS) road forms the northern arm. NH-27 forms the east-west arms connecting Guwahati and Meghalaya. The roundabout mainly has institutional developments in the vicinity with few commercial infrastructures around. Situated in close proximity to the state border, the site serves as a regional transport hub with a bus terminal located at the roundabout catering to various interstate commuters using public transport. With a daily footfall of 20,000 pedestrians and 43,655 vehicular traffic it remains a busy site throughout the day.

Shri. Parimal Suklabaidya, Transport Minister, Government of Assam said, "With 2,994 road crash deaths in 2022 including 814 fatalities involving pedestrians and cyclists, the Assam Government has undertaken several initiatives aimed at improving road safety in the state. These include the Path Suraksha Jan Andolan, aimed at promoting evidence-based actions to prevent road crash deaths and injuries. The inaugural tactical urbanism trial at Khanapara offers sustainable road safety solutions by implementing small-scale interventions to ensure the safety of pedestrians and other such road users. Such initiatives that will foster a safer road culture through designs that encourage safe road user behaviour are encouraged by the Government.”

Speaking about the intervention, Adil Khan, Transport Secretary, Government of Assam, said, “The Tactical Redesign at the Khanapara roundabout is a timely and essential project that not only enhances safety but sets a replicable model for the entire state. It showcases our
Government's commitment to reducing road crashes and fatalities. This trial is a progress towards road safety in the Kamrup Metropolitan district and a stepping stone toward a safer future for all road users.”

Speaking about the immediate need to support such interventions, **Piyush Arora, MD and CEO, Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Private Limited**, said, “Safety is of utmost priority for the Volkswagen Group. We offer the safest cars to our customers and, at the same time, strive to make the Indian roads safer for all. Across the country, the social, economic, and emotional impact that road crashes have is tremendous. We have had a long association with SaveLIFE Foundation to combat this concern. Through innovative solutions like these, we are committed to make this stretch safer for all.”

The major TU interventions undertaken at the Khanapara Roundabout include the provision of continuous Pedestrian infrastructure inclusive of zebra crossing, waiting spaces and pedestrian realm. To streamline vehicular flow, organised parking facilities for all kinds of modes, segregated bus only lanes, pick and drop- off for safe boarding, alighting, earmarking of dedicated space for Bus Stops and Intermediate Paratransit (IPT) stands near the roundabout. For traffic calming measures, road geometry corrections, transverse bar marking with placement of wayfinding signages are introduced. Other significant interventions include chevron marking, placement of bollards and hazard markers at flyover landing to ensure smooth merging and diverging of vehicular traffic as per IRC guidelines.

The trial also included community engagement workshops at two nearby schools: Fairyland Primary School and Fairyland High School. Students from these schools, aged 6 to 8, participated in a drawing and poster-making competition on the theme of road safety. Meanwhile, students from the high school, aged 9 to 14, took part in the workshop. As daily users of this roundabout and individuals exposed to the inherent dangers there, approximately 500 of these students were explained about the safety interventions deployed and their usage.

Furthermore, a focused group discussion was conducted with various stakeholders, including union leaders representing taxis, auto-rickshaws, buses, and tempo traveller drivers. The objective was to disseminate knowledge about the installed interventions and their proper usage.
Commenting on the TU Trial, **Piyush Tewari, Founder and CEO SaveLIFE Foundation** said, “SaveLIFE Foundation uses scientific research and in-depth analysis to combat the road crash epidemic in India. The Tactical Urbanism trials undertaken by SaveLIFE Foundation within its Zero Fatality District programme uses data, evidence and design thinking to determine the best possible solutions for saving lives. We are grateful to Skoda Auto Volkswagen India Private Limited, Lead Agency on Road Safety, Government of Assam, Kamrup Traffic Police, NHAI, PWD for working with us towards improving road safety in the capital city of Assam.”

The redesign has led to an decrease in the pedestrian exposure distance by 60% and reclamation of the pedestrian realm area of about 3000 sqm. Launched on 21st February 2024, this is the first Tactical Urbanism trial undertaken in Guwahati, Assam.