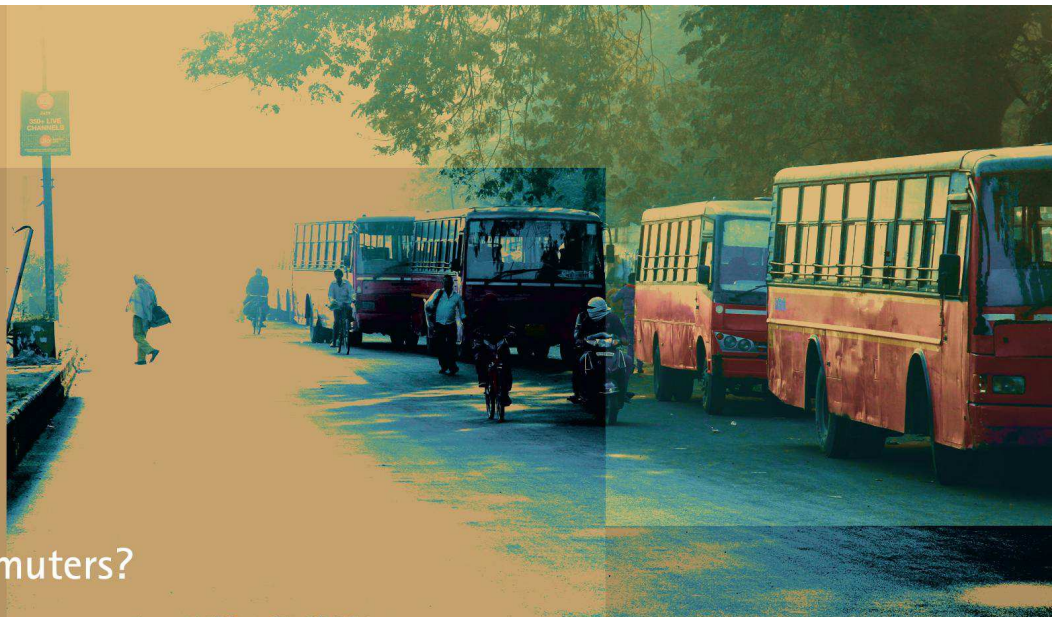


# PUBLIC TRANSPORT BUSES:

## Beasts of Burden or Preferred Choice of Commuters?



A good public bus transport system can become the lifeline of the city – transforming it to a more sustainable, people centric city, where majority of the citizens choose to ride the bus instead of their private vehicles. And while this is now being accepted in theory by the political and administrative class, action remain half hearted. While politicians speak of strengthening public transport the public bus system is starved of funds. Wide roads and flyovers continue to be popular options to fight increasing congestion although their failure to solve traffic problems is now well documented.

According to March 2010 data, India had 135,506 buses for a population of 1,150,000,000, i.e. one bus for every 8,500 passengers which shows a huge shortage of public transport in Indian cities (Roy Chowdhury, 2013). Time series data from State Road Transport Undertakings reveals a steady decline in bus registrations since 1961.

Most of our cities are plagued by steep rise in the number of private vehicles used for daily commute. At the same time the majority who can't afford personal vehicle, have no option but to rely on the poor public transport however unreliable it may be. In many cities there is no public transport at all and citizens are then forced to find their own means of travel and deal with the whims of private operators. Government bus systems in cities across India seem to be facing similar issues emanating from lack of financial, institutional and organisational support for years together now. Worse still is the fact that the bus system is now being overlooked in the wake of the metro rail, without understanding the fact that buses are imperative for any other transport system to work well.

The National Urban Transport Policy, 2006 spells out the objectives of achieving safe, affordable, quick, comfortable, reliable and sustainable access to work, education, shopping, recreation and other such needs for our cities. The policy acknowledges problems of road congestion and associated air pollution. To address these issues, NUTP has proposed several strategies – the key ones being the need to strengthen public transport and non-motorised transport (NMT).

SUM Net is a democratic, secular, membership-based coalition of individuals, voluntary organizations, and civil society networks and movements.

SUM Net seeks to improve the overall quality of life for all by securing deeply democratic processes of decision-making to ensure that urban transportation systems are universally accessible, socially just, safe and secure, economically viable, and environmentally sound.

**SUM Net India**

**CALENDAR 2017**





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## ABOUT SHAKTI SUSTAINABLE ENERGY FOUNDATION

Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation works to strengthen the energy security of India by aiding the design and implementation of policies that support energy efficiency and renewable energy.

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# PUNE

Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd. (PMPML)



The Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Ltd. (PMPML) was formed in 2007 and is currently serving 10 lakh users daily, with 365 routes and an approximately 1600 strong bus fleet. However, the bus service has perennially struggled with lack of institutional, financial as well as operational support since the beginning. PMPML has rarely had a full time dedicated Chairman and Managing Director and their tenures have been erratic with significant absences between the appointment of consecutive CMDs, thereby rendering the organisation leaderless and visionless. This reflects in the performance, with PMPML fares being costly compared to other Indian cities, while the service continues to worsen over the years.

*City's bus service is like an orphan child - unwanted, uncared for and abandoned.*

*Ironically it is the only public transport system in the city and it can be transformed into a safe, efficient, reliable and affordable system if only the political leaders wish to do so.*

- Sujit Patwardhan,  
Parisar, Pune

## JANUARY 2017

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SUM Net India

# BANGALORE

Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC)



*"BMTC has to provide public service to the citizens. It has unfortunately become profit-driven, which is taxing the everyday commuters. Many people cannot even afford to board a bus to their workplace, schools or colleges as the BMTC fares are very high. These people walk kilometres on end to reach their destinations."*

- Vinay K S,  
Alternative Law Forum, Bangalore

- Ferries 58 lakh commuters everyday in a fleet of 6,600 busses.
- Highest fares in the country, with a minimum fare of Rs. 6 for the first stage (of two-kilometres), thanks to BMTC receiving no State support, forcing it to become revenue/profit-driven, instead of functioning as a public service.
- Regular monthly passes for office goers start at Rs. 1,050. With monthly minimum wages at Rs. 6,500, it makes it difficult for the labour classes to use buses.
- Often, buses plying to IT hubs in Bangalore - Whitefield, Sarjapur, Electronic City - as well as to the Kempegowda International Airport are Volvo, a/c buses. There are very few regular buses that the general public can avail to reach these destinations.
- Constituted a Women's Safety Committee to look into preventing sexual harassment on buses. However, it is ineffective as no proactive measures are being taken.

## FEBRUARY 2017

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SUM Net India



# CHENNAI

Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC)



The buses in Chennai are one of the most crowded in the country, carrying an average of 1300 passengers per bus a day. The ridership has increased from 12 lakh per day in 1972 to 47 lakh per day in 2016. While the number of buses has also increased in the mean time, there is now a huge gap between the demand and supply.

*"Improper planning of routes has caused mixing of short and long route commuters hence over crowding the buses. This primary public transit mode has become an uncomfortable travel option causing citizens to gravitate towards convenient and lesser sustainable options like private vehicles and taxis."*

- Madonna Thomas,  
Citizen consumer and civic Action  
Group, Chennai

## MARCH 2017

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SUM Net India

# MUMBAI

Brihanmumbai Electric Supply and Transport (BEST)



- Reduced ridership from 46.75 lakh to only 30 lakh in the last 20 years. There are 521 bus routes, but 446 of them —85% — make losses. Just 75 routes are at a break-even point. Every ordinary BEST bus faces a loss of Rs. 9,000 a day.
- No political will to improve the system, which is the city's cheapest travel option – Almost no share in BMC's comprehensive mobility plan, which only proposes 5% (or Rs. 1,769 crore) of its funds for buses and the bus rapid transit system (BRTS). In comparison, Rs. 25,000 crore (64.9%) and Rs. 4,851 crore (12.6%) are estimated for Metros and construction of roads and highways.

*"BEST is being neglected by its own administration, the government, politicians and urban planners. The government is investing more than Rs 50,000 crore on Metro networks that it claims will carry 80 lakh passengers. BEST is already catering to 30 lakh passengers, with just another Rs 5,000 crore, it can easily cater to more."*

– Rishi Aggarwal,  
Activist, Mumbai

## APRIL 2017

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SUM Net India



# NAGPUR

## Starbus/Apli Bus



*"Nagpur is truly an international city when it comes to public transport. Nowhere else in the world will you find a city bus service where all its operations, repair, maintenance and parking takes place on its roads."*

– Jammu Anand,  
Activist, Nagpur

- MSRTC stopped running city bus service in 2006 citing losses
- The bus system, named Starbus was then outsourced to a private operator in 2007. Substandard performance, where Vansh Nimay India Ltd., the private operator hardly ran half of its 270 strong fleet in the city, spelled misery for the city's 2 lakh public transport users. The Star Bus public transport which was constantly caught in controversies was changed and in its place four companies were given charge to run the city bus service in Nagpur city.
- The Public Transport system now run under the title of 'Apli Bus Pariyojana' (Our Bus Service) will have 195 buses of which 55 buses will be Ethanol fuelled Green Bus. In the new system, only 237 of the old buses owned by NMC will be retained. The remaining buses are not fit for operation.

### MAY 2017

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**SUM Net India**

# DELHI

Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC)



- With the intent to attack pollution, Delhi bought the bulk of its low-floor CNG-powered buses during the Commonwealth Games. The fleet size had jumped to 6,204 in 2011. Today, with just 4,121 buses, the fleet size today is at a six-year low.
- The Delhi government says it tried thrice to buy buses in the past two years, but could not find suppliers. The June 2016 audit by the CAG blamed it on "frequent changes in the proposals, cancellation of tenders and retendering."
- Even with its depleted fleet, DTC buses carry 3.5 million passengers every day, much more than the Metro's average ridership of 2.7 million.

“दिल्ली में प्रतिदिन पैतालीस लाख यात्री बसों से सफ़र करते हैं और यहाँ तैतीस हजार किलोमीटर सड़कों का नेटवर्क है लेकिन बसों की संख्या सिर्फ छः हजार है। विगत कई वर्षों से बसों की संख्या में बढ़ोतरी के बजाये गिरावट आई है। आखिर वगैर सार्वजनिक बस सेवा के प्रदूषण की चुनौतियों से कैसे लड़ा जायेगा ?”

- राजेंद्र रवी,  
इंस्टिट्यूट फॉर डेमोक्रेसी अण्ड  
सस्टेनेबिलिटी, दिल्ली

## JUNE 2017

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SUM Net India



# PATNA

Bihar State Road Transport Corporation (BSRTC)



- Dilapidated mini buses, autos, rickshaws and even horse-carts plied in the name of public transport in Patna till recently. After the Nitish Kumar government came into power, Kolkata-based Eden Transport Private Limited inked a pact with Bihar State Road Transport Corporation (BSRTC), and the city in March 2011 saw a number of brand new buses running on the roads. Within a month, Eden withdrew its buses and blamed it on Bihar's bureaucracy.
- The BSRTC is currently operating 70 city buses in Patna. These buses were launched by chief minister Nitish Kumar on February 24, 2016. Forty out of the 70 buses launched by the CM were already being operated by Buidco under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM), but went off streets in November last year. The buses were withdrawn over the issue of non-payment. A B Grain Spirits, the transport wing of Adie Broswn and Buidco were running the buses. Following the withdrawal of services by Adie Browson, Buidco handed over the buses to BSRTC.

*"The condition of bus users is pathetic. The government run buses hardly suffice the huge demand thereby resulting in crowding and proliferation of private operators. The bus service has no definite schedule or time table – people may be stranded for hours without a government bus at the bus stop."*

– Mahendra Yadav,  
NAPM, Patna

## JULY 2017

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SUM Net India

# RANCHI

Ranchi Municipal Corporation



*"Ranchi still has a large share of people travelling on foot, bicycle and by public transport. The lack of a good bus system puts this population in a state of inconvenience as even after a decade of establishment as a capital city, we have no dependable bus system."*

– Vishwanath Azad,  
SHARC, Ranchi

Only 5% of commuters use bus as their mode of transport, while 28% use shared auto, thereby making clear that the demand for good public transport in the form of buses is largely unmet in the city.

The city has recently initiated bus services with funding assistance from JnNURM, but it has received limited state and local government support and suffers from poor image and quality. Out of the 190 minibuses procured under JnNURM by the city, only 30 ply the roads today on two routes only with no timetable, no operational schedule and very little institutional support.

## AUGUST 2017

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SUM Net India



# HYDERABAD

Telangana State Road Transport Corporation (TSRTC)



*"Public Transportation has not been receiving any priority over other modes in Hyderabad. Despite Road Transport Corporation being the backbone of public transport in the city, it has always been treated as a step child by the successive state governments."*

– C. Ramchandraiah,  
Centre for Economic and Social  
Studies, Hyderabad

- Ten years ago, buses ferried nearly 32 lakh passengers a day. The figure has increased by only 25% to 40 lakh now. In the same period, the number of buses has increased by 800.
- This is an almost 118% increase over 2008, when just over 16 lakh two-wheelers were present. Today, Hyderabad's total vehicular population is almost 50 lakh, which means two-wheelers account for 72% of the vehicles in the city.

## SEPTEMBER 2017

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SUM Net India

# AHMEDABAD

## Ahmedabad Municipal Transport Service (AMTS)



Modal share of AMTS had risen from 14% in the year 2000, to 21% in 2008. After the introduction of the BRT, AMTS routes were altered to accommodate the BRT, splitting the public transport ridership in Ahmedabad between the two modes. Before the BRT, AMTS had around 8 to 8.5 lakh commuters per day. Now, in 2016, the combined ridership of public transport has come down to 7.5 lakh passengers per day, with 6.1 to 6.2 lakh passengers using the AMTS daily.

*"The issue that plagues AMTS the most is the lack of information and service reliability experienced by its users. Buses do not function on a perceivable schedule, nor is there any information made available about when the next bus may be expected. This lack of reliability means that AMTS users are predominantly captive users.*

*Until recently, there was not integration between AMTS and BRTS. The systems worked completely independent of each other. This was another shortcoming as there is great potential for them to work as trunk and feeder to each other."*

- Vivek Chandran,  
Centre for Urban Equity (CUE) CEPT,  
Ahmedabad

### OCTOBER 2017

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SUM Net India



# INDORE

Atal Indore City Transport Services Ltd. (AICTSL)



Indore had a registered vehicle population of 0.48 million in 2000 increasing at an average annual rate of 8.8 percent. Currently total vehicle population is 732893. Even so, minibuses and buses put together contribute to a share of 60 percent of passenger trips. Majority of trips are made for the work, business and education purpose together accounting for nearly 76% of total trips performed. The intra-city public transport system is essentially road based with an estimated 550 private minibuses and 500 tempos. An estimated 22,469 passengers use the regional bus terminals daily.

इंदौर में पिछले एक दशक से प्रशासन द्वारा संचालित सिटी बसें आम नागरिकों के लिए आज एक सम्मानजनक और अपनेपन का अहसास है। हालाँकि सिटी बसों के इस संजाल और व्यवस्थाओं में अभी काफी कुछ सुधार और विस्तार की जरूरत है, फिर भी 250 कि. मी. से ज्यादा लम्बी सड़कों को नापती 125 से ज्यादा सिटी बसों के साथ महानगर बनते इंदौर के 50 हजार से ज्यादा नागरिक रोजाना आवाजाही करते हैं। स्मार्ट होने जा रहे इंदौर में हम उम्मीद करते हैं उस दिन की जब ये सिटी बसें शहर की रफ्तार की जीवनरेखा की मानिंद लोक परिवहन का एक अपरिहार्य और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण अंग बने और हम कहें - 'हमारी अपनी सिटी बसें'।

- अशोक दुबे,  
रूपांकन, इंदौर

## NOVEMBER 2017

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SUM Net India

# I M P H A L

Manipur State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC)



*"Manipur Government has completely washed its hands in providing any public transport such as buses. And in its absence, private vehicles have multiplied manifold and have led to increasing traffic in this small state. Unless, good, public and reliable public transport is introduced, this small state will soon be eaten up by cars."*

– Ram Wangkheirakpam,  
Indigenous Perspectives, Imphal

Imphal currently does not have a government run bus system. The citizens have to now depend on private shared intermediate transport services, mostly minibuses and Tata Wingers. The Manipur State Road Transport Corporation used to run the city bus service before but has been taken over by private operators.

When JnNURM came, the government acquired low floor buses which are not at all suitable for the city's topography and roads, which lie unused in the depots even today after a brief trial period. The city found no takers ready to operate these newly sanctioned buses due to various reasons.

## DECEMBER 2017

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SUM Net India