



UP Directorate of Urban Transport and CEEW launch 'Meri Bus, Meri Sadak' to boost urban mobility

Lucknow, 19 June 2024: To enhance connectivity, provide accessibility to jobs and boost economic growth, the Directorate of Urban Transport (DUT) of Uttar Pradesh in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), today launched 'Meri Bus, Meri Sadak', an initiative to accelerate sustainable urban mobility in the state.

Alongside the initiative, three independent research studies produced as part of USAID - supported Cleaner Air and Better Health (CABH) project were also released. Under this initiative, CEEW conducted assessments of the number of buses required by 2031 in the 26 major cities of UP, the infrastructure and investments required, and the benefits of enhanced public mobility. The findings from the studies will inform the creation of the UP State Urban Bus Programme.

According to one of the reports, by 2031, Uttar Pradesh's urban bus demand would require over 12,000 buses to serve six million daily riders. Further, the reports highlight the benefits of introducing more electric buses as they would be 23-32 per cent cheaper than CNG, and significantly reduce emissions, thereby improving overall air quality. Also, the reports indicate that enhanced bus services could shift four million passengers from two- and three-wheelers to buses, significantly reducing congestion. This shift will enhance air quality by reducing 24 kilotonnes of PM2.5, 3.38 MT of CO, and 0.321 MT of NOx emissions by 2031.

Dr Rajender Pensiya, Director, Directorate of Urban Transport, Uttar Pradesh, said, "Uttar Pradesh is fast urbanising to achieve its ambitions for economic development. To meet these objectives of Viksit Bharat, cities have to be equipped with robust public transport systems, both to integrate growing passenger demand, and to arrest the impact of rising traffic congestion. This requires a vision and a framework for the state and its upcoming city bus undertakings. The studies released today by DUT with CEEW provide the roadmap for future city bus transport across Uttar Pradesh. We believe, in the years to come, the 'Meri Bus Meri Sadak' flagship event would become the beacon for more buses, better services, and robust city transport governance."

Soumitri Das, Team Lead - Environment, USAID/India, said "USAID is proud to support the 'Meri Bus, Meri Sadak' initiative, which marks a significant step towards enhancing urban mobility in Uttar Pradesh. The findings from the USAID supported studies underscore the transformative potential of expanding and electrifying the bus fleet. By addressing critical issues such as air quality, congestion, and accessibility, we can help create more sustainable, liveable cities and help achieve economic growth. This initiative aligns with USAID's commitment to promoting cleaner air and better health, ensuring a brighter future for all residents of Uttar Pradesh."

Dr Himani Jain, Senior Programme Lead, CEEW, said, "India will likely double its urban populations to more than 800 million by 2047. While cities would be the economic engines, they must tackle congestion, pollution and road risks to offer safe and comfortable connectivity. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mission LiFE sets the focus on active mobility. Globally, public transport is considered one of the most impactful solutions to simultaneously manage urbanisation, economic development and clean air. The event today shows the UP government's commitment and a renewed focus on buses."

Transportation will play a crucial role in UP's aim to become a USD 1 trillion economy. The Government of Uttar Pradesh envisions a transformative urban public transport system, with a strong emphasis on electric buses. By 2031, the reports estimate that a combined expenditure of INR 15,700 crore would be required for bus procurement across 26 select cities in UP to meet the daily ridership requirement. Further, most bus users and potential users demand better last-mile connectivity and reduced waiting





time for buses. The studies found that over 40 per cent of current bus users walk the last mile of their journey, emphasising the urgent need for better footpath networks integrated with bus systems. Further, the majority of bus users prioritise punctual arrival and adherence to schedules, with over 40 per cent rating current wait times as below average, highlighting the importance of timely services in enhancing user satisfaction and ridership.

Several mobility experts, government officials, and other dignitaries attended the event to discuss UP's transition to cleaner and more efficient transportation. These include Dr Rajender Pensiya, Director, Directorate of Urban Transport, Municipal Commissioners from Aligarh, Ayodhya, Bareilly, Shahjahanpur, Professor Geetam Tiwari, Emeritus Professor, IIT Delhi, TRIP-C, World Bank, Ms Sonal Shah, gender expert, Urban Catalyst, and Managing Directors from bus transport agencies in Uttar Pradesh.

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