THE BUS INSIDER

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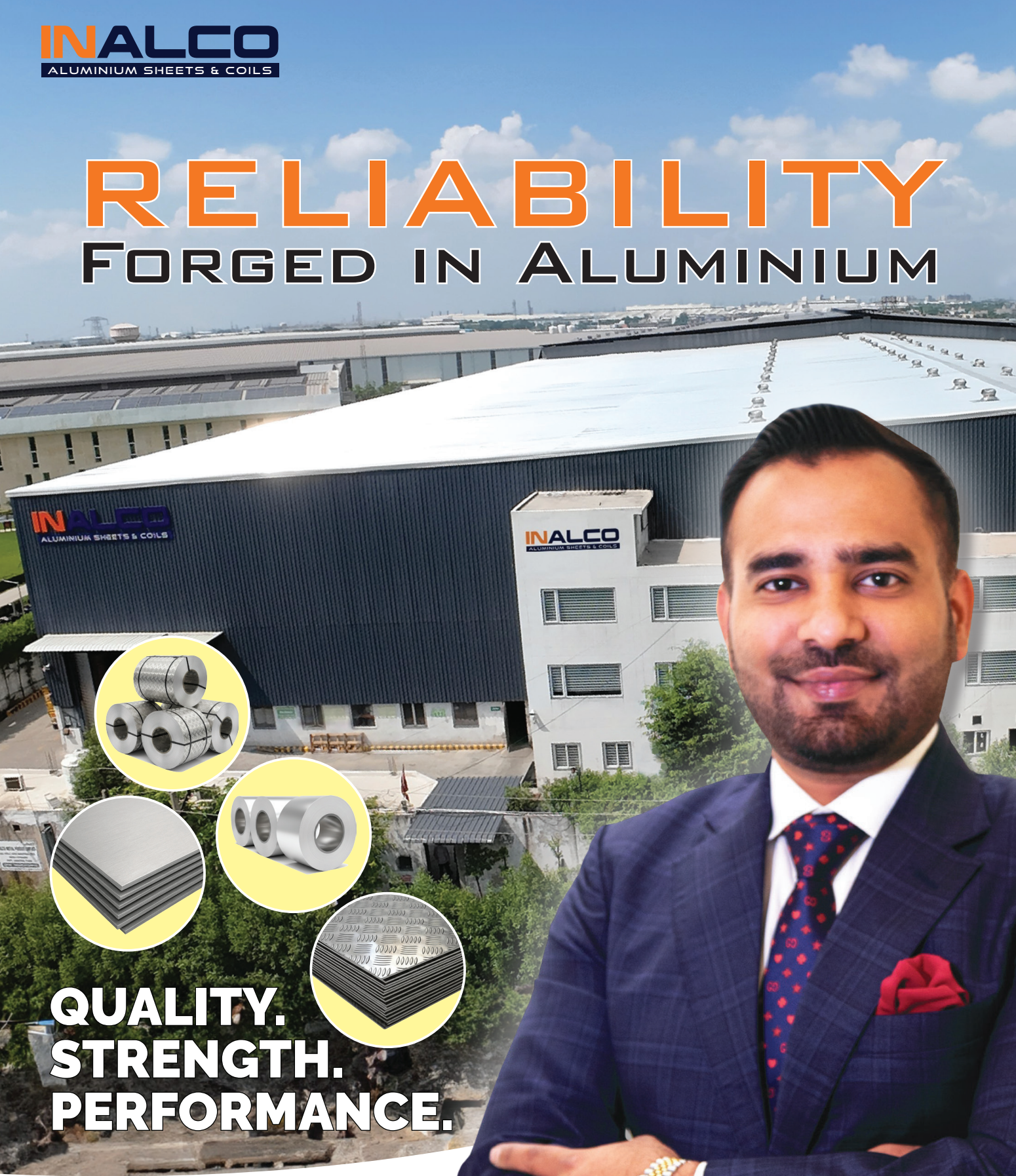


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EDITORIAL

Hello everyone,

It was a pleasure meeting so many of you at the Busworld India Conclave 2026 yesterday.

You could feel the energy in the room. The conversations, the exchange of ideas, the shared sense of purpose. It was a reminder of what this industry truly is — a community of people building, operating, and keeping India moving, every single day.

We need more moments like this. Because when the industry comes together, the conversation moves forward.

And in many ways, this issue feels like one of those moments.

This is our first anniversary issue of The Bus Insider. A year ago, we started with a simple belief - that this industry deserves to be seen, understood, and told with depth and dignity. Because the truth is, India's bus sector has moved billions quietly, tirelessly, without always getting the recognition it deserves. That belief continues to guide us.

Today, the industry stands at a decisive phase. Regulations are tightening, expectations are rising, and the gap between prepared and unprepared players is becoming more visible.

Our cover story on Sita Singh & Sons reflects this transition. A company built on legacy, now evolving with sharper execution, scale, and a clear focus on compliance. It raises an important question - what does it take to stay relevant when the rules are changing?

At the same time, the operator landscape is shifting. Our spotlight on Easy Ride (Kaushik Road King) shows how a new breed of operators is entering with clear intent - to build brands, not just run buses.

But alongside progress, there are concerns we cannot ignore. Bus fires continue to surface, reminding us that growth must be matched with responsibility. As industry voices highlight, the challenge is not just technology, but systems, discipline, and accountability.

As we complete one year, I want to thank each one of you for your support. This magazine has always been by the industry, for the industry.

Here's to the journey so far. And to what lies ahead.

Cheers!

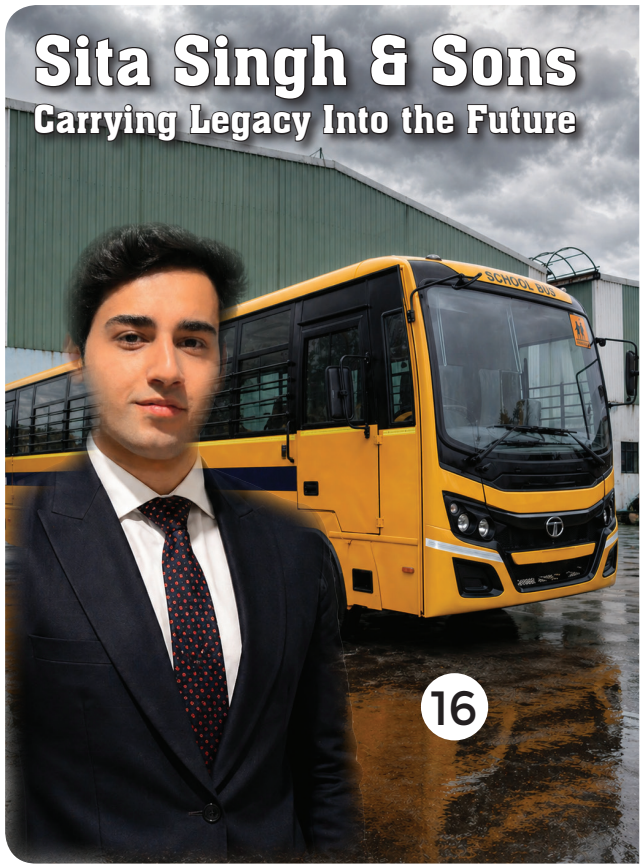


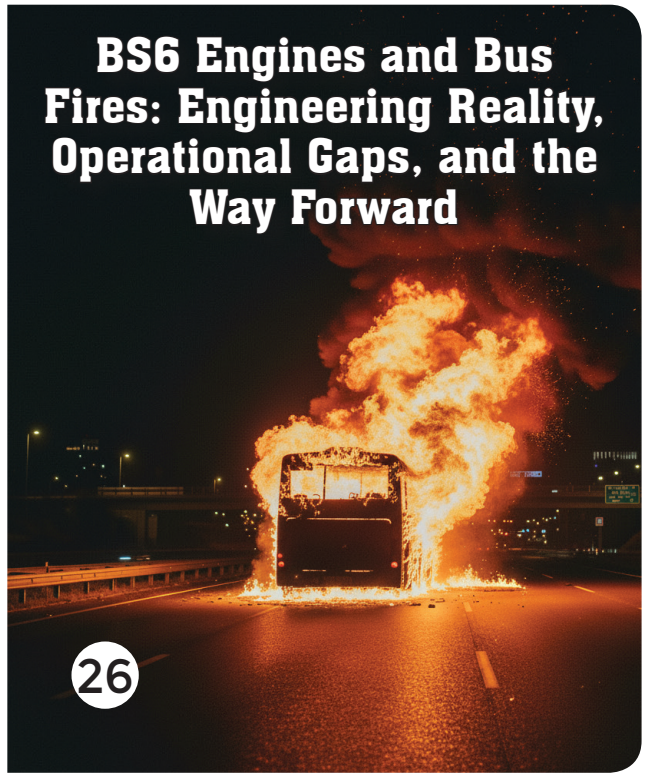
CONTENTS

APRIL 2026

5 National News

40 International News





32 MOBILITY INNOVATORS
FROM OPERATOR TO AIS 153 LEADERSHIP TIRTH AUTOMOBILES' NEXT CHAPTER

36 INDUSTRY VOICE
WHY INDIA'S BUS FIRE CRISIS NEEDS A NATIONAL-LEVEL INVESTIGATION



MARKET INSIGHTS
ELECTRIC BUS SALES VOLUME IN INDIA IN MARCH 2026



SWITCH Mobility Completes 100 Electric Bus Delivery to Mauritius, Marks India's Largest EV Bus Export

SWITCH Mobility has completed the delivery of 100 electric buses to Mauritius, marking the largest export of electric buses from India to date and a key milestone in the country's growing EV manufacturing footprint.

The final batch of 90 buses was handed over by India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar to Mauritius Prime Minister Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, in the presence of officials from both countries.

The delivery is part of a government-to-government initiative under which the Government of India is donating 100 electric buses to Mauritius to support public transport electrification.

Ganesh Mani, CEO, SWITCH Mobility, said the delivery marks a key milestone in supporting Mauritius' transition to cleaner mobility.

Phased Delivery Under Government Initiative

The total order comprised 100 electric buses, with the first batch of 10 units delivered in August 2025. The remaining 90 buses have now been handed over, completing the order.

The buses supplied are based on SWITCH Mobility's EiV12 platform, designed for urban and intercity operations.

The buses were supplied through an open tender conducted by Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) in India and will be operated by the National Transport Corporation (NTC), Mauritius' state-owned public transport operator.

This delivery forms part of a broader collaboration between India and Mauritius aimed at strengthening sustainable public transport systems.

The completion of this order highlights India's growing capabilities as a global manufacturing hub for electric buses.

Exports of this scale signal increasing international confidence in Indian-built electric buses, both in terms of product reliability and cost competitiveness.



PC: GIS

Prasanna Purple Launches Private Electric Bus Service Between Pune and Mumbai

Prasanna Purple Mobility Solutions, one of India's largest bus operators, has launched SWITCH Mobility's EiV12 coaches on the Mumbai–Pune route, marking a fresh phase in its intercity electric bus operations.

The first batch of 10 buses was flagged off in Pune on April 10, 2026, in the presence of Madhuri Misal, Minister of State, Government of Maharashtra. The total order stands at 25 units, with the remaining deliveries scheduled over the year.

The deployment is being carried out in partnership with Vertelo.

Building on an Early Lead in Intercity Electric Mobility

While this marks a new milestone, Prasanna Purple is not new to electric intercity operations. In March 2020, Prasanna Purple introduced intercity electric buses between Pune and Mumbai. The 12-metre, 2×2 luxury electric coach, sourced from Mozev, a brand of Mytrah Mobility, was deployed with a scheduled frequency of two trips per day.

That early move positioned the company among the first private operators to experiment with electric mobility beyond city limits.

The latest deployment builds on that foundation, reflecting a more structured and scaled approach to electric intercity travel.

SWITCH MOBILITY EiV12 Platform Designed for Intercity Operations

The 12-meter EiV12 electric coach from SWITCH Mobility is developed for long-distance and high-frequency intercity routes, with a focus on performance, efficiency, and passenger comfort.

Key features include:

- 45 pushback seats
- Range of over 300 km per charge
- Fast-charging capability for improved turnaround time
- SWITCH iON connected technology for real-time fleet monitoring and performance tracking

These features make the EiV12 platform well-suited for intercity operations, where reliability, efficiency, and service consistency are critical for operators.

Partnership-Led Deployment Model

The deployment is being executed in collaboration with Vertelo, underlining the importance of ecosystem partnerships in enabling electric mobility adoption.

Such partnerships are increasingly becoming central to addressing financing, infrastructure, and operational challenges associated with scaling electric bus fleets.



PC: Shantanu Gokhale

Olectra Greentech Unveils New Brand Identity to Drive Next Phase of EV Growth

Olectra Greentech Limited, one of India's leading electric bus manufacturers, has unveiled a refreshed brand identity, signaling its evolution into an innovation-led company focused on integrated mobility and energy solutions.

The new identity introduces a modern visual language, clearer messaging, and a unified voice aligned with Olectra's long-term vision of leading the global transition to sustainable, value-driven mobility and energy solutions. Its mission is to become a trusted partner by delivering accessible innovation, operational excellence, and a superior customer experience while creating value for all stakeholders.

The company's new tagline, "Transforming Everyday," highlights its commitment to improving daily mobility, supporting communities, empowering partners, and fostering purpose within the organization.

Olectra's repositioning is built on three key pillars: Pragmatic Futurism, Accessible Innovation, and Trusted Guide. These reflect its approach to developing practical, scalable solutions while positioning itself as a reliable partner in the evolving mobility ecosystem.

As part of the rebranding, Olectra has reimagined its visual identity. The central triangle, now called the Olectra Prism, symbolizes strength and direction, while the surrounding circle, the Olectra Universe, represents the broader ecosystem of stakeholders and infrastructure it serves.

Managing Director Mahesh Babu said the new identity reflects the company's ambition and strategic direction as it transitions from an electric bus manufacturer to a future-ready organization delivering comprehensive mobility and energy solutions.

Backed by strong manufacturing capabilities, a growing government order pipeline, and an expanding portfolio that includes electric buses, trucks, and tippers, Olectra aims to deepen its engagement with markets and strengthen its role in the global EV ecosystem.



JBM Auto Reports 24% Share in India's Electric Bus Market in FY26, Leads Tarmac and Luxury Segments



JBM Auto has reported a 24% market share in India's electric bus segment for FY26, with 1,282 buses registered across states including Telangana, Delhi, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Assam. The company said this performance reflects its growing presence across both public transport and private mobility segments.

The company said its growth is driven by strong participation in both public transport and private mobility segments.

According to JBM Auto, deployments have been supported by ongoing procurement programs and partnerships with state transport undertakings as well as private operators. The performance reflects a broader trend of consolidation in the electric bus market, where



"OUR MARKET LEADERSHIP IN FY26 REFLECTS JBM EV'S TECHNOLOGICAL STRENGTH AND OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE. WE WILL CONTINUE SCALING MANUFACTURING AND R&D TO ENSURE EVERY FOURTH E-BUS ON INDIAN ROADS CARRIES THE JBM PROMISE OF SAFETY, EFFICIENCY, AND INNOVATION."

NISHANT ARYA, VC & MD, JBM AUTO LTD.

a few OEMs are scaling up across multiple applications.

Beyond City Buses: New Growth Segments

JBM Auto also reported strong performance in specialised categories. The company claims a dominant 79% market share in the electric tarmac bus segment, along with over 50% share in the intercity luxury coach segment.

While these segments account for lower volumes compared to urban bus fleets, they reflect growing diversification in electric mobility use cases, extending beyond traditional city transport applications into airports and long-distance travel.

Commenting on the development, Nishant Arya, Vice Chairman and Managing Director, JBM Auto Ltd., said the company's performance reflects its continued focus on electric mobility and manufacturing strength.

He added that JBM Auto will continue to scale its production capacity and strengthen its research and development capabilities to support the increasing adoption of electric buses across India.

Backing Growth with Fresh Capital

JBM Auto is exploring a potential $500 million fundraising to accelerate the expansion of its electric mobility business, according to industry sources. The move comes as the company prepares to execute and scale an order book of nearly 10,000 electric buses, signaling a significant ramp-up in operations.

So far, the company has raised over $250 million for its electric mobility platform, including a $100 million infusion in FY26. With deployments gaining momentum across multiple states, JBM Auto is expected to seek additional capital in the coming months to sustain its growth trajectory.

What It Signals for the Industry

The company's performance highlights rising competition in India's electric bus segment as deployments expand across multiple states. It also reflects stronger demand from both government and private operators, along with increasing readiness of manufacturers to support large-scale electrification.

With expanding order books and diversification into specialised mobility segments, the industry appears set for continued consolidation and steady growth in electric bus adoption over the coming years



Scania Strengthens India Presence with Bengaluru Corporate Office, Partners With Axis Bank

Scania Commercial Vehicles India has strengthened its presence in the country with the inauguration of a new corporate office in Bengaluru on April 16, 2026. The launch event was attended by Jan Thesleff, Ambassador of Sweden to India, along with senior company leadership, dealer and finance partners, customers, and representatives from Business Sweden.

The Bengaluru office is designed to function as a central hub for key business operations, enabling closer coordination across departments and enhancing engagement with stakeholders. The move also reflects Scania's focus on tapping into Bengaluru's deep talent pool to support its expanding operations in India. At the same time, the company confirmed that its Regional Product Centre in Narasapura remains fully operational, continuing to deliver end-to-end manufacturing capabilities and customized transport solutions.

Marking the occasion, Scania also announced a White Label financing program in partnership with Axis Bank. This initiative aims to improve access to competitive financing solutions for customers purchasing Scania trucks, particularly fleet operators seeking structured funding options. Axis Bank emphasized that the collaboration aligns strong product offerings with tailored financial solutions to better serve the commercial vehicle market.

From a strategic standpoint, Scania reiterated India's importance as a key growth market within its global roadmap. Senior leadership highlighted that the new corporate office, combined with the financing partnership, will enable the company to operate closer to its customers while supporting fleet expansion through integrated solutions.

Overall, the development underscores Scania's long-term commitment to the Indian commercial vehicle sector, focusing on operational efficiency, customer proximity, and financial accessibility to drive growth in a competitive market.





Tata Motors Rolls Out 10 Lakhth CV from Lucknow Plant, Marks 35 Years

Tata Motors has achieved a major production milestone with the rollout of its 10 lakhth commercial vehicle from its Lucknow manufacturing facility, marking 35 years of operations in Uttar Pradesh. The milestone vehicle—a zero-emission electric bus—was flagged off on April 15, 2026, in the presence of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Tata Sons Chairman N. Chandrasekaran, along with senior government and company officials.

Established in 1992, the Lucknow plant has evolved into a key manufacturing hub for Tata Motors' commercial vehicle business. The facility produces a wide range of trucks and buses across multiple powertrains, including conventional diesel, battery-electric, and emerging fuel cell technologies. With an annual production capacity exceeding 100,000 units, the plant also supports exports to international markets.

Spread over approximately 600 acres, the facility plays a significant role in regional economic development, supporting over 8,000 livelihoods directly and indirectly. It operates entirely on renewable energy and holds a CII-certified water-positive status, underlining Tata Motors' focus on sustainable manufacturing practices.

The plant is also a center for skill development, running structured training programs such as Kaushalya, Lakshya, and Saksham. These initiatives follow a dual system of training and apprenticeship model, equipping youth from across Uttar Pradesh with industry-relevant manufacturing skills. The workforce includes a diverse mix of employees, including women and persons with disabilities.

From a strategic standpoint, the Lucknow facility will continue to play a crucial role in Tata Motors' transition toward sustainable mobility. The company aims to align its production with its net-zero emissions target for 2045, while contributing to Uttar Pradesh's broader vision of achieving net-zero by 2070.

Hindustan Zinc Launches Rajasthan's First Staff Electric Bus Fleet in Udaipur

Hindustan Zinc Limited has launched Rajasthan's first and largest electric bus fleet for employee transportation, marking a significant step in the adoption of sustainable mobility within the industrial sector. The fleet was flagged off at the company's Zinc Smelter Debari plant in Udaipur in partnership with Enviiiro Wheels Mobility Pvt. Ltd., and forms part of a broader strategy to reduce emissions linked to daily operations.

The deployment at Debari is the first phase of a larger plan to introduce 41 electric buses across Hindustan Zinc's operations in Rajasthan. These buses will replace conventional diesel vehicles used for employee commuting, a key contributor to Scope 3 emissions. By transitioning to electric mobility, the company aims to address one of the more challenging aspects of industrial decarbonisation—indirect emissions from transportation.

Hindustan Zinc estimates that the shift from diesel to electric buses will help avoid more than 11,000 tonnes of CO□ equivalent emissions over the contract period. The initiative aligns with the company's long-term sustainability roadmap and its target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 or earlier. CEO Arun Misra said the move reflects a broader shift in how industrial growth is being approached, with sustainability increasingly integrated into core operations.

The company's electric mobility push is supported by its ongoing transition toward cleaner energy. Renewable sources currently account for around 18% of its total power mix, and a 530 MW round-the-clock renewable energy agreement is expected to meet more than 70% of its overall power requirement. Supply under this agreement has already commenced, further strengthening the environmental benefits of the EV fleet.

Hindustan Zinc's efforts have also been recognised globally. The company was ranked the world's most sustainable metals and mining firm in the S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment for the third consecutive year, underscoring its focus on ESG-led growth.





Blackbuck EV Launches VIRO 2X Electric Bus for Urban and Corporate Mobility

BY **VIOLINA PEGU**

Blackbuck Electric Vehicles has announced the launch of the VIRO 2X, a 9-metre battery-electric bus designed for urban transport, corporate mobility, and premium shuttle operations. The move marks the company's entry into the urban electric bus segment, expanding beyond its long-distance electric coach, the ELON 3X.

Developed in-house, the VIRO 2X is positioned as a high-efficiency solution for high-utilisation routes where uptime, operating cost, and reliability are critical. Pilot deployments are scheduled to begin in Q4 2026 across select urban markets.

EV-Native Platform Focused on Efficiency

At the core of the VIRO 2X is Blackbuck EV's proprietary EV-native architecture. The bus combines an aluminium-composite spaceframe with a stainless steel skateboard platform, designed to reduce weight while maintaining structural strength. This lightweight yet durable construction plays a key role in improving energy efficiency and overall range. Blackbuck EV claims an energy consumption of up to 0.6 kWh per km and a range of up to 260 km at 80% state of charge.

The company attributes this performance to its integrated approach, where vehicle design,

electrical systems, and software are developed as a unified platform. This enables lower cost per kilometre and improved operational uptime—two critical factors for fleet operators.

Flexible Configurations for Multiple Use Cases

The VIRO 2X has been designed to cater to a range of deployment scenarios, with multiple seating configurations:

- 34-seat standard layout for urban and staff transport
- 30-seat premium configuration with fully reclining seats

These options allow operators to deploy the bus across corporate employee transport, app-based mobility services, and private charter operations.

The bus also features a low-noise cabin, improved suspension, and enhanced ride stability, supporting a more refined passenger experience in urban environments.

Lifecycle Efficiency and Controlled Rollout

Blackbuck EV is positioning the VIRO 2X around lifecycle efficiency rather than upfront specifications alone. The platform is engineered to reduce maintenance requirements and improve reliability, enabling higher utilisation across daily operations.

"With VIRO 2X, we are focused on how efficiently mobility can operate in real-world conditions," said R. K. Raju, Founder and CEO of Blackbuck EV.

The product has been engineered and manufactured in India, with a strong localisation strategy supported by global suppliers. The company describes it as "engineered in India with global technology standards," reflecting its dual focus on domestic manufacturing and global benchmarks.

Pilot deployments will begin in Q4 2026, with initial units entering select urban markets for validation ahead of a wider commercial rollout.





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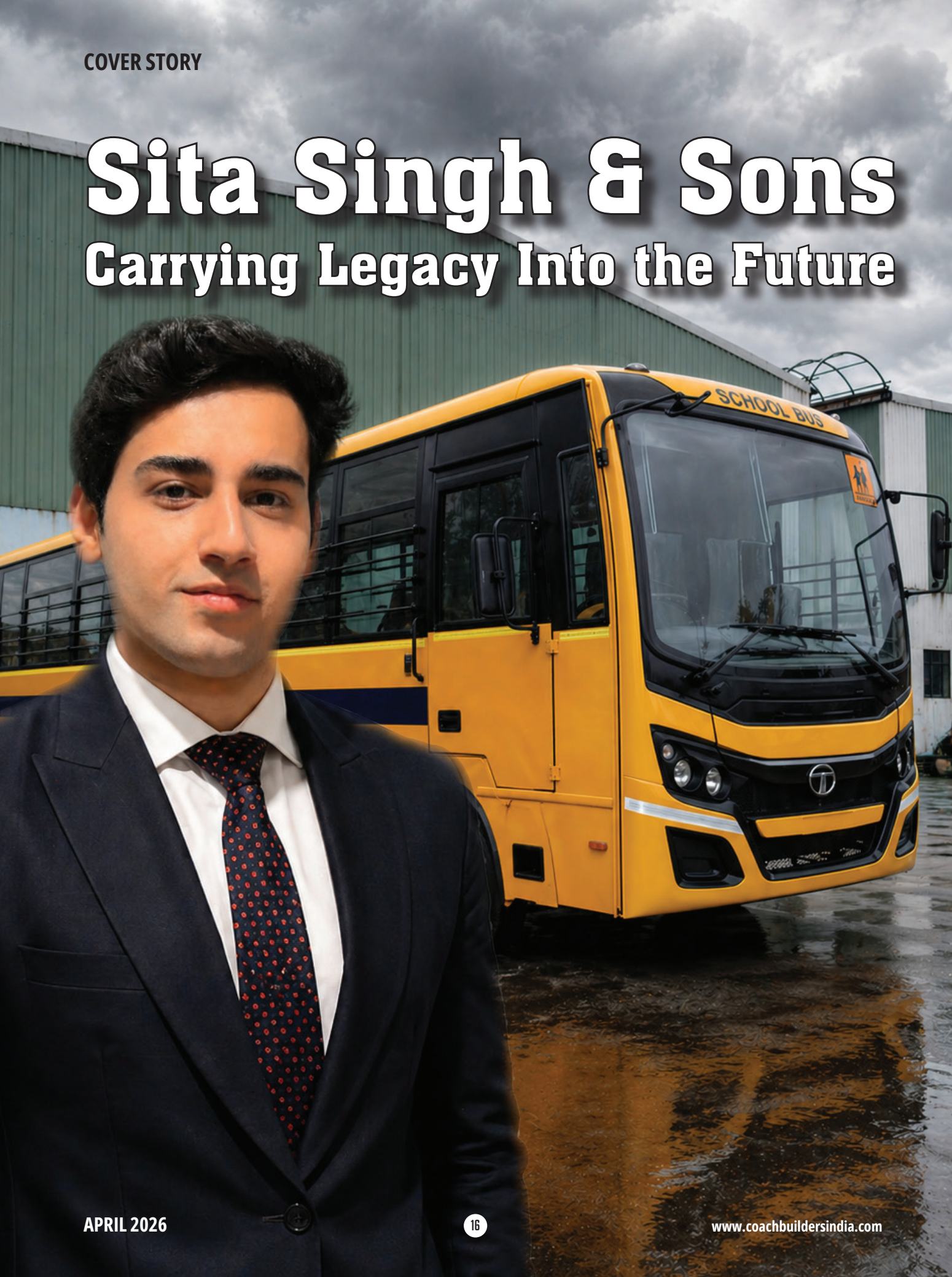
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Sita Singh & Sons

Carrying Legacy Into the Future





India's bus body building industry is entering a decisive phase. Regulations are tightening. OEM expectations are rising. And scale is no longer a differentiator - it's a requirement.

For decades, the industry has been a mix of organised manufacturers and fragmented, small-scale builders. But that balance is shifting. With standards like AIS 153 coming into force, the gap between compliant, process-driven players and the rest is widening rapidly.

In this changing landscape, legacy manufacturers are being tested. Experience alone is no longer enough. The ability to scale, standardise, and adapt is becoming critical.

Sita Singh & Sons sits right at the centre of this transition. Founded in 1965, the Faridabad-based company has evolved from building defence trailers to becoming one of India's key OEM-focused bus body builders. Over the decades, it has built scale quietly - strengthening OEM relationships, expanding manufacturing capabilities, and diversifying into specialised vehicle segments.

Now, under the leadership of CEO Samarth Barar, the company is entering its next phase. One defined not just by growth, but by sharper execution, new segments, and a clear focus on the future.

In an exclusive conversation, Samarth Barar breaks down the company's push for scale, its approach to compliance, and what it takes to stay competitive in a rapidly formalising industry.

Sita Singh & Sons has a legacy spanning decades. Can you take us through how it all began and how the company has evolved over the years?

Sita Singh & Sons was established in 1965, initially focusing on manufacturing trailers and troop carriers for the Indian Army. Over time, the company expanded into bus manufacturing, building bodies for OEMs.

One of the earliest partnerships was with DCM Toyota, followed by SML Isuzu. As the business grew, the company steadily strengthened its capabilities and expanded its presence in the OEM bus body building segment.

Today, we are among the larger players in India in this space, primarily focused on building buses for OEM partners. In addition to buses, we also manufacture load bodies, further diversifying our portfolio.

Over the years, we've continuously upgraded our infrastructure to match demand. The focus has always been on scaling with consistency - not just increasing numbers, but maintaining quality at higher volumes.

Our current facility spans approximately 30 acres, with a production capacity of around 400 buses per month. The setup is designed to support large-scale, efficient manufacturing while maintaining consistency in quality.



You are known for building bus bodies for major OEM platforms. Which OEMs do you currently work with?

We are among the few players in the country who have had the opportunity to work across almost all major OEM platforms.

Our current partnerships include SML Isuzu, Mahindra & Mahindra, Eicher, Ashok Leyland, and Tata Motors. In the load body segment, we also work with OEMs such as SML Isuzu and Euler Motors and Hero MotoCorp.

These partnerships reflect the trust OEMs place in our manufacturing capabilities and our ability to deliver at scale.

Could you walk us through the range of bus models you currently offer?

We manufacture a wide range of buses across key segments such as school and staff transportation. Our portfolio includes platforms like:

- SML Hiroi
- Eicher Starline
- Ashok Leyland Oyster
- SML Eco Max
- Tata Ultra
- Mahindra Cruzio

Within these, we build a variety of configurations, from 18-seater to 60-seater buses, across multiple wheelbases.

In addition, we have developed a strong capability in special-purpose vehicles. These include ambulances, army ambulances, prison vans, and soil testing vans.

This diversification allows us to cater to a wide spectrum of mobility and utility requirements.

How do you approach bus design and manufacturing, particularly when it comes to safety and regulatory compliance?

Design and manufacturing in our space are driven by discipline. Working with OEMs demands a high level of precision, strict adherence to specifications, and the ability to deliver at scale without variation.

Every bus is built strictly as per the specifications and design protocols provided. From structure to fitment, everything has to align precisely with defined standards. And every unit must meet the same benchmarks, every time.

At the same time, we have developed strong in-house capabilities for special-purpose vehicles. Our design team can conceptualise, engineer, and manufacture a new model within 60 days, allowing us to respond quickly to specific requirements without compromising on process integrity.

You recently secured AIS 153 certification. What does this milestone mean for your business?

AIS 153 marks a clear shift in how the industry is moving forward, and for us, securing this certification is a significant step.

We currently have around 134 variants approved across staff buses, school buses, and ambulances. This places us in a strong position as the industry transitions towards stricter safety and structural standards.

More importantly, this milestone reflects our approach. We have always believed in building within the framework of compliance, and AIS 153 reinforces that philosophy.

From a business standpoint, it strengthens our credibility with OEMs and customers alike. It signals that we are not just meeting requirements, but are prepared for the next phase of the industry - one where safety, consistency, and compliance will define long-term growth.



Are there plans to enter the luxury coach or sleeper bus segment?

Yes, we are actively working towards entering the luxury bus segment within this year itself. We are setting up a new plant in Palwal, spread across approximately 1 lakh square feet, which will be dedicated to manufacturing luxury buses, including 12 to 13.5 metre sleeper coaches.

One of our key focus areas is reducing turnaround time. We are targeting a build time of around 30 days per bus, compared to the current industry norm of 75–90 days. This will give us a strong competitive edge in this segment.

Are there any plans to enter the electric mobility space anytime soon?

Electric mobility is clearly where the industry is headed, and we are closely aligned with that direction.

We have already begun building capabilities in this space through load bodies for electric three-wheelers and four-wheelers. That gives us an early understanding of the requirements and challenges associated with EV platforms.

On the bus side, we are actively evaluating opportunities. We are currently in discussions with overseas partners for a potential joint venture, which would allow us to bring in the right technology and expertise.

Our approach is measured. We are not looking to enter the EV segment prematurely. Instead, we want to ensure that when we do step in, we have the right engineering capabilities, infrastructure, and partnerships in place.



What lies ahead for Sita Singh & Sons?

We are entering a decisive growth phase. Over the next three years, we are targeting a production capacity of around 800 buses per month. This expansion will be backed by continuous investments in infrastructure, process optimisation, and workforce development.

At the same time, we are stepping into the luxury bus segment this year, which opens up a new avenue for growth and capability building. Alongside this, we are investing in technology - both in our manufacturing systems and in our products - to ensure we are aligned with the future of mobility.

The long-term objective is to build a stronger, more competitive organisation and establish ourselves as one of the leading players in North India, driven by scale, consistency, and disciplined execution.



EASY RIDE

Kaushik Saha's Big Bet on Premium Travel

BY **VIOLINA PEGU**

India's intercity bus industry is becoming increasingly competitive. Across key corridors, the intensity of competition is pushing operators to rethink not just pricing, but how they position themselves in the market.

In this evolving landscape, a new breed of operators is emerging.

These are not legacy businesses adapting over time. They are entering the market with clear intent from day one - to build a strong brand, not just operate buses. The focus is on experience, consistency, and differentiation. Structured operations, better products, and a service-led approach are central to how they operate.

One such operator is Easy Ride (Kaushik Road King).

Founded in November 2023 and headquartered in Siliguri, the company took an unconventional route. Instead of starting with standard fleets and scaling gradually, it launched directly with premium Volvo buses, setting a clear tone for its positioning.

And thinking extended beyond the fleet. With onboard hostesses and a strong focus on service, Easy Ride aimed to deliver a more refined, passenger-centric experience.

In under two and a half years, the company has built a presence across key routes in West Bengal and Assam, positioning itself as a premium operator in a highly competitive market.

In conversation with Coach Builders India, Kaushik Saha, Founder of Easy Ride, shares how the company is approaching growth, differentiation, and operational discipline.

Could you walk us through the journey of Easy Ride, from its inception to its current market presence?
The idea behind Easy Ride was simple. We wanted to change how people perceive bus travel.

Traditionally, buses are seen as basic transport. We wanted to move away from that and build a more premium, safe, and customer-friendly experience.

From the start, our focus was on comfort, cleanliness, and service. One of our early differentiators was introducing onboard bus hostesses to bring an airline-style hospitality approach to road travel.

Along with that, we invested in better interiors, stronger safety measures, and consistent service delivery. These changes helped us stand out early on.

Today, we operate across key routes in West Bengal and Assam. We are still growing, but the focus remains the same - to build a modern, reliable, and experience-driven bus service.

Easy Ride chose to launch with premium Volvo buses from the outset. What drove this decision?
From day one, we were clear that we wanted to build a premium brand. For that, the product had to reflect the positioning.

Volvo buses offered exactly that. Better ride quality, stronger safety, superior suspension, and overall passenger comfort. It aligned perfectly with the kind of experience we wanted to deliver.

Yes, the initial investment was higher. But it helped us create a strong first impression. Customers could immediately feel the difference. Smoother rides, quieter cabins, and better seating.

More importantly, it helped us build a strong brand perception centred on reliability, safety, and luxury. In a crowded and price-sensitive market, that differentiation becomes critical.

Over time, this approach has helped us attract a more quality-conscious customer base and build long-term trust.





So this higher investment did translate into stronger brand positioning and customer perception?
Absolutely, it changed our brand perception and positioned us as a high-quality service from the start.

Passengers experienced better comfort, smoother journeys, and improved safety, while onboard hostesses further elevated the experience. This helped us build trust quickly, driving strong word-of-mouth. Customers were also willing to pay a slightly higher fare, contributing to early brand recall around quality and reliability.

Instead of trying to compete on every route, our focus remains on maintaining high standards on selected routes, building a loyal customer base, and gradually expanding while protecting service quality.

You were among the first operators to introduce onboard bus hostesses. What inspired this idea, and what impact has it had?
It started with a simple thought. Why should bus travel feel so transactional?

If you look at airlines or even premium trains, there is always a strong focus on service. In buses, it was mostly about getting from point A to point B. We wanted to change that.

The idea was to bring a hospitality layer into bus travel. Not as a gimmick, but as a real support system for passengers. Someone who could help them settle in, assist with luggage, handle small issues, and be a reassuring presence, especially for families and solo travellers.

The impact was visible almost immediately. Passengers felt more comfortable. Boarding became smoother. There was less confusion during the journey.

From a business perspective, it helped us stand out. In a market where most operators compete on price, this gave us a clear service edge. We saw better feedback, more repeat customers, and stronger word-of-mouth.

You follow a highly structured and process-driven approach to operations. Where does this mindset come from?

It comes from a clear decision to treat this as a service business, not just a transport business.

We believe most challenges in this industry come from a lack of structure. Delays, inconsistent service, and poor quality are often the result of weak systems and low accountability.

So instead of following traditional practices, we looked at more organised industries like aviation and hospitality. In those sectors, processes, training, and customer experience are well defined.

Operating premium buses also reinforced this thinking. When you offer a high-quality product, your operations have to match. That means preventive maintenance, punctual scheduling, and consistent onboard service.

Over time, this has shaped our culture. We focus on planning over improvisation, training over shortcuts, and consistency over one-time excellence. That is what helps us maintain quality and stand apart from traditional operations.

The intercity bus segment is highly competitive. How do you stay ahead?

It indeed is a very competitive space. But we stay focused on differentiation, not price.



From the start, we positioned ourselves as a premium service for customers who value comfort, safety, and reliability over low fares.

Beyond the fleet, consistency is key - clean buses, trained staff, punctual departures, and strong safety practices ensure a dependable experience every time.

We also invest in technology, with real-time tracking and smooth booking to improve transparency and convenience.

This builds trust, drives repeat customers, and generates steady word-of-mouth. We're also selective about expansion, focusing on key routes and maintaining high standards, which helps us stay ahead.



From your experience, what does it take to run a successful bus business in India today?

First is operational discipline. Punctuality, well-maintained buses, trained staff, and strong safety practices. These are what build trust over time. Whether you operate premium or economy buses, how you run them matters more than what you run.

Second is customer experience. Today's passengers are more aware and expect comfort, cleanliness, and respectful service. Small details like staff behaviour, onboard cleanliness, and clear communication make a big difference.

Third is process-driven operations management. Route planning, demand forecasting, staff training, and the use of technology like live tracking and digital bookings help improve efficiency and reduce dependency on ad-hoc decisions.

Finally, financial discipline is critical. Not every route works. You need to choose carefully, manage costs, and scale gradually without compromising service quality.

In a price-sensitive market like India, long-term success comes from consistency, clear positioning, and disciplined execution.

What emerging trends do you see shaping the bus industry going forward?

The industry is clearly moving in a few defined directions.

Clean energy: There is a strong shift towards electric buses. This is driven by rising fuel costs, policy push, and sustainability goals. But for operators, it is not just about changing vehicles. It also means rethinking infrastructure, operations, and cost models.

Smart technology: Buses are becoming more connected. GPS tracking, predictive maintenance, and real-time diagnostics are improving efficiency and reducing breakdowns. Operations are becoming more data-driven rather than experience-driven.

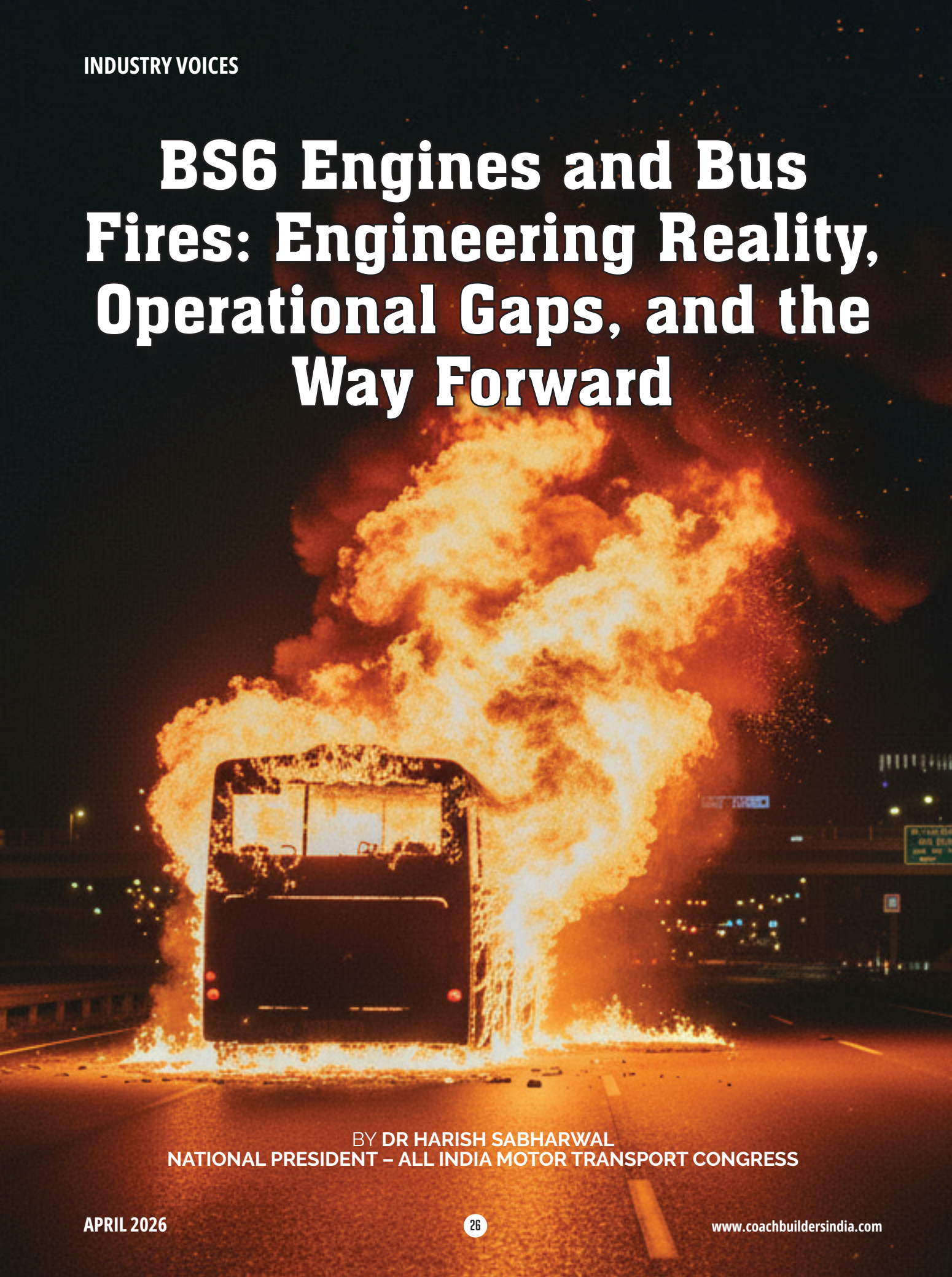
Premium customer experience: There is a clear move from basic transport to experience-led travel. Passengers now expect better comfort, cleanliness, digital booking, and service. Features like onboard staff and improved interiors are becoming key differentiators.

At the same time, infrastructure gaps still exist. So operators have to balance innovation with practicality.

Overall, those who can adapt to these shifts while maintaining operational discipline will stay competitive.



BS6 Engines and Bus Fires: Engineering Reality, Operational Gaps, and the Way Forward



BY **DR HARISH SABHARWAL**
NATIONAL PRESIDENT – ALL INDIA MOTOR TRANSPORT CONGRESS



India's transition to Bharat Stage VI (BS6) emission norms in April 2020 marked one of the most significant upgrades in the country's automotive history in reducing vehicular pollution and cleaner air.The move brought Indian standards closer to European benchmarks and drastically reduced permissible levels of particulate matter (PM) and nitrogen oxides (NOx). For public transport fleets, this transition meant adopting advanced combustion and emission-control technologies.

Yet, the recent bus fire tragedies in states like Rajasthan and Maharashtra have sparked a difficult question: are BS6 engines inadvertently contributing to fire risks, or are systemic safety failures to blame? The debate is not just technical—it touches on regulation, industry practices, and passenger safety. Concerns range from higher operating temperatures and increased wiring complexity to elevated fuel pressures and overall fire risks. A closer technical and operational examination is necessary to separate perception from engineering reality.

What Changed with BS6?

BS6 is not a minor calibration update; it is a systems-level transformation. Compared to BS4 engines, BS6 diesel engines incorporate high-pressure common rail fuel injection, advanced Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR), Diesel Particulate Filters (DPF), and in many heavy-duty applications, Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR). These systems are monitored and controlled by sophisticated Engine Control Units (ECUs) supported by multiple sensors.

The result is cleaner combustion, better fuel atomization, and significantly lower emissions. However, these gains come with greater mechanical and electronic complexity. And complexity, if not supported by equally robust maintenance practices, can expose operational vulnerabilities.

Do BS6 Engines Run Hotter?

One of the most common concerns is that BS6 engines operate at higher temperatures, thereby increasing fire risk. This perception largely stems from two aspects: higher injection pressures and DPF regeneration cycles. High-pressure fuel injection improves combustion efficiency and reduces soot formation. Meanwhile, the DPF periodically undergoes regeneration - a controlled process where accumulated soot is burned off at elevated temperatures. During active regeneration, exhaust temperatures can exceed 500°C–600°C.

However, these processes are engineered within defined safety limits. Thermal shielding, calibrated cooling systems, and heat-resistant materials are integral to BS6 engine design. In well-maintained vehicles, temperature levels remain within controlled thresholds. The risk arises not from the technology itself but from improper maintenance. A clogged DPF, failed regeneration cycles, or neglected cooling systems can lead to abnormal heat accumulation. In fleet operations where downtime directly impacts revenue, preventive maintenance is sometimes delayed - and that is where vulnerabilities begin to surface.



- BS6 engines rely on Diesel Particulate Filters (DPF) and Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) to meet stringent emission standards.
- DPF regeneration cycles can push exhaust temperatures above 600˚C.
- In tightly packed bus engine bays, inadequate insulation or poor ventilation can turn these hotspots into ignition risks.
- Maintenance lapses—like clogged filters or faulty sensors—can exacerbate heat buildup, raising the probability of fire.

Wiring Complexity and Electrical Risks

BS6 compliance requires more sensors, ECUs, and wiring harnesses than older BS4 engines. BS6 buses rely heavily on sensors to monitor NOx levels, exhaust temperature, fuel pressure, air-fuel ratios, and after-treatment performance. This naturally means more wiring harnesses, connectors, and electronic control modules.



Greater wiring density does increase potential fault points. Electrical short circuits remain one of the most common causes of bus fires. Damaged insulation, loose connections, rodent interference, or exposure to moisture can create ignition sources within the engine bay.

- The complexity increases the chance of short circuits, especially when buses are built or retrofitted by local body builders with inconsistent quality standards.
- Fires often originate not from the engine itself but from faulty electrical installations, compounded by flammable interiors and overcrowding.

A critical distinction must be made between OEM-designed systems and post-delivery modifications. In many cases, additional lighting systems, entertainment units, or unauthorized retrofits add electrical loads that were not originally designed into the vehicle. Such modifications, particularly when executed without adherence to engineering standards, significantly elevate fire risk. Thus, the issue is not wiring complexity per se, but the quality of installation, inspection, and oversight.

High Fuel Pressure: A Cause for Concern?

BS6 engines operate with common rail systems exceeding 2,000 bar of fuel pressure. While this may sound alarming, high-pressure injection has been standard practice in Europe and other regulated markets for years. Under proper conditions, these systems are safe and reliable. However, fuel leaks in high-pressure systems can atomize diesel into fine



- High-pressure common rail systems make fuel leaks are more volatile.
- Poor-quality connectors or neglected maintenance can result in leakage or rupture in fuel lines can be catastrophic, as atomized fuel ignites more easily.

mist, increasing the possibility of ignition if exposed to hot surfaces. Again, maintenance is the determining factor. Degraded seals, improperly secured fuel lines, non-OEM spare parts, or contamination can create vulnerabilities. Routine inspection of fuel systems and adherence to manufacturer guidelines are critical to minimizing risk.

Are Bus Fires Increasing Because of BS6?

It is tempting to draw a direct link between BS6 adoption and bus fire incidents. However, bus fires are typically multi-factor events. They can be triggered by electrical short circuits, coolant system failures, brake overheating, accidental collisions, or poor-quality repairs. India's operating environment compounds these risks. High ambient temperatures, heavy traffic congestion, dust exposure, and long duty cycles place immense stress on vehicles.

In such conditions, even minor lapses in maintenance can escalate into serious incidents. Importantly, advanced technologies - whether BS6 diesel engines or electric drivetrains - demand ecosystem readiness. Upgraded hardware must be matched by upgraded service capabilities.

- The tragedies in Jaisalmer, Buldhana and others highlight that bus fires are rarely caused by a single factor.
- Flammable interiors, jammed exits, inflammable cargo and overcrowding make buses deathtraps once a fire starts.
- Thousands of small-scale body builders operate with limited oversight, making uniform safety enforcement difficult.
- Without a collaborative ecosystem approach—involving regulators, manufacturers, operators, and body builders—BS6 technology alone cannot guarantee safety.

The Maintenance Ecosystem Gap

The transition to BS6 significantly raised the technological threshold for heavy commercial vehicles. However, the supporting ecosystem has not always evolved at the same pace. Many fleet operators, including state transport undertakings, operate under financial pressure.

Preventive maintenance is sometimes deferred. Smaller workshops may lack advanced diagnostic tools. Technicians may not be fully trained to handle DPF systems or interpret ECU fault codes accurately. Precision engineering requires precision upkeep. When maintenance shifts from preventive to reactive, the margin for error narrows considerably.

Strengthening Fire Risk Mitigation

Rather than framing the debate as a technological flaw, the focus should be on systemic strengthening. India has already begun moving in this direction. The Automotive Industry Standard AIS-135 lays down requirements for Fire Detection and Suppression Systems (FDSS) in buses, reflecting a growing policy emphasis on early fire detection and automatic response mechanisms in passenger transport vehicles. The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways (MoRTH) has further amended AIS-135 to make fire alarm, fire protection, and suppression systems mandatory for passenger and school buses. AIS-153 (Bus Body Code) sets uniform standards for bus design, construction quality, and safety systems. It ensures structural integrity, emergency exits, seating, and ITS equipment across all manufacturers. These measures are specifically aimed at managing heat, smoke, and fire risks and significantly reducing occupant casualties in the event of an incident.

To prevent bus fires, India must:

- Mandate fire-resistant interiors and emergency exits.
- Enforce strict certification for bus body builders.
- Conduct regular audits of wiring and fuel systems.
- Define Luggage Limits as in Trains & Airplanes.
- Strict Enforcement & Ban on Carriage of Commercial Goods in Buses.
- Train operators and passengers in evacuation protocols.



- Stricter safety audits and certification for bus body builders.
- Mandatory fire-resistant materials in interiors.
- Regular maintenance checks on wiring and fuel systems.
- Greater awareness among operators and passengers about evacuation protocols.

However, regulatory mandates are only one layer of safety. Enhanced pre-trip inspection protocols - including thermal checks, inspection of fuel lines, and verification of electrical integrity - should become standard operational practice, particularly for long-distance and high-duty-cycle buses. Preventive inspections remain one of the most effective risk-reduction tools available to fleet operators. Technician upskilling programs focused specifically on BS6 after-treatment systems are equally essential. DPFs, SCR units, and electronically controlled fuel systems require precise diagnostics and calibrated servicing. Without adequate training and diagnostic tools, even minor faults can escalate into safety risks.

Conclusion

From an engineering standpoint, BS6 engines are not inherently more prone to fires. They are more advanced, more sensor-driven, and more maintenance-sensitive. Fire incidents are rarely the result of a single technological feature; they usually reflect a combination of operational stress, maintenance gaps, and oversight weaknesses.

Blaming emission norms oversimplifies a complex systems issue. Cleaner engines are a necessary step in India's environmental journey. Ensuring safety within that transition requires institutional strengthening - better training, stronger compliance, and improved operational discipline. BS6 represents technological progress. The real question is whether the ecosystem supporting it is progressing at the same speed.

Cleaner buses must also be safer buses. The ongoing discussion around BS6 engines and bus fires is not just about technology—it is about accountability, enforcement, and valuing human life.

About the Author

Dr. Harish Sabharwal is the National President of the All India Motor Transport Congress (AIMTC) and the owner of Sabharwal Travels. A veteran transport entrepreneur, he has decades of experience in the passenger transport sector and is a strong advocate for policy reforms, road safety, and the welfare of transport operators and drivers across India.

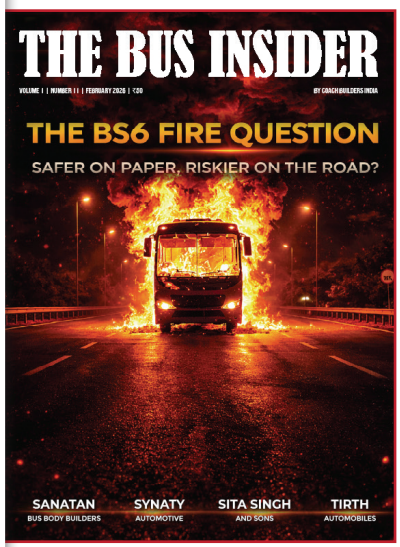


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From Operator to AIS 153 Leadership

Tirth Automobiles' Next Chapter



India's bus body building industry is undergoing a structural shift. With AIS 153 pushing the sector toward higher safety and compliance standards, mid-sized players are being forced to evolve rapidly or risk being left behind.

Tirth Automobiles represents a unique case within this transition. Unlike traditional body builders, its journey began not on the factory floor, but on the road - as an operator. Today, with AIS 153 certification in place and expansion plans underway, the company is positioning itself as a serious player in India's organised bus manufacturing ecosystem.

In conversation with Coach Builders India, **Nirmal V. Shah**, Managing Director, Tirth Automobiles, shares the company's journey, philosophy, and future roadmap.

Your journey into bus body building has been unconventional. Can you take us through how Tirth Automobiles evolved?

Our journey is quite different from most traditional bus body builders. In fact, we didn't set out to become manufacturers.

The foundation was laid in 1996 with V C Shahpatel Services Pvt. Ltd., which was a facility management company. In 1999, we entered the transportation space through Tirth Travels, focusing on staff transportation.

As our fleet grew, the need for better control over quality and turnaround time became critical. That's when we decided to establish our own bus body building facility. Initially, it was purely out of necessity.

Our focus from the beginning has been on safety and quality. So when AIS 153 standards were mandated, we made a conscious decision to align ourselves fully and secured certification from ICAT.

Interestingly, the impact was immediate. Within just two months of receiving the AIS 153 certification, we secured orders for 35 buses from across Gujarat.

That was a clear signal that the market is ready to move towards compliant, high-quality manufacturing.

You are the first bus body builder in Gujarat to achieve AIS 153 certification. What types of buses and how many layouts have been approved?

Yes, we are the first in Gujarat to achieve AIS 153 certification, and it is a significant milestone for us.

The certification currently covers 103 bus models across leading OEM platforms, including Ashok Leyland, Tata, BharatBenz, and Eicher. We have approvals for buses ranging from 10.5 metres to 12 metres, and we have already applied for certification of 13.5 metre sleeper coaches, which we expect to receive shortly.

But beyond the numbers, this achievement is much more than a regulatory requirement. It represents a shift in mindset.

For mid-sized manufacturers like us, AIS 153 is not just about compliance. It is about entering a more disciplined, process-driven, and safety-focused ecosystem. In many ways, this is a defining moment for the industry, where professionalisation is no longer optional.





How do you approach bus design, especially when operators demand customization?

Every operator has specific requirements based on routes, passenger profiles, and service positioning.

However, our approach is very clear. We design buses based on operator needs, but strictly within the framework of regulatory norms. We do not deviate from compliance.

Strength, durability, and safety are the three pillars that guide our design and manufacturing process. We ensure that all materials used in our buses are ARAI-approved, which helps us maintain consistency in quality and performance.

Additionally, we use fire-retardant interior materials sourced from certified vendors. These decisions may increase upfront costs, but they significantly improve long-term safety and reliability.

For us, customization should never come at the cost of compliance. The rulebook is non-negotiable.

You bring both operator and manufacturer perspectives to the table. How does this dual experience influence your approach?

This dual experience is one of our biggest strengths. Having been operators for nearly three decades, we understand the real-world challenges of running a fleet. We know what works on the road and what doesn't.

For example, operators are not just concerned about how a bus looks when it is delivered. They are concerned about how it performs over time - maintenance cycles, durability, ease of repairs, and overall lifecycle cost.

Because of this, our design philosophy is very practical. We focus on building buses that are aesthetically appealing, easy to maintain and reliable in the long run.

We also understand operational pressures such as downtime, route schedules, and passenger expectations. This helps us make design decisions that are aligned with actual usage conditions, not just theoretical standards.

We've also been associated with Force Motors since 2016 and Eicher Motors since 2020 as authorized dealers, helping us better serve our customers end-to-end.

What are your current manufacturing capabilities, and how are you preparing for future growth?

Currently, our facility spans approximately 60,000 square feet and is equipped with dedicated bays for structural fabrication, paneling, and interior fit-outs. This setup allows us to produce around 100 buses per month.

However, we are now in an expansion phase. We are upgrading our infrastructure to increase capacity to around 200 buses per month.

In addition to our existing facility, we have access to two more plants measuring approximately 3,00,000 square feet and 1,20,000 square feet. These will be gradually integrated into our operations as demand scales up.

This expansion is not just about increasing volume. It is about building a more organised, efficient, and scalable manufacturing system that aligns with the evolving demands of the industry.

What lies ahead for Tirth Automobiles?

This is a phase of transformation for us.

With AIS 153 certification in place, expanding manufacturing capacity, and increasing market demand, we are moving towards becoming a more organised and scalable player in the bus body building space.

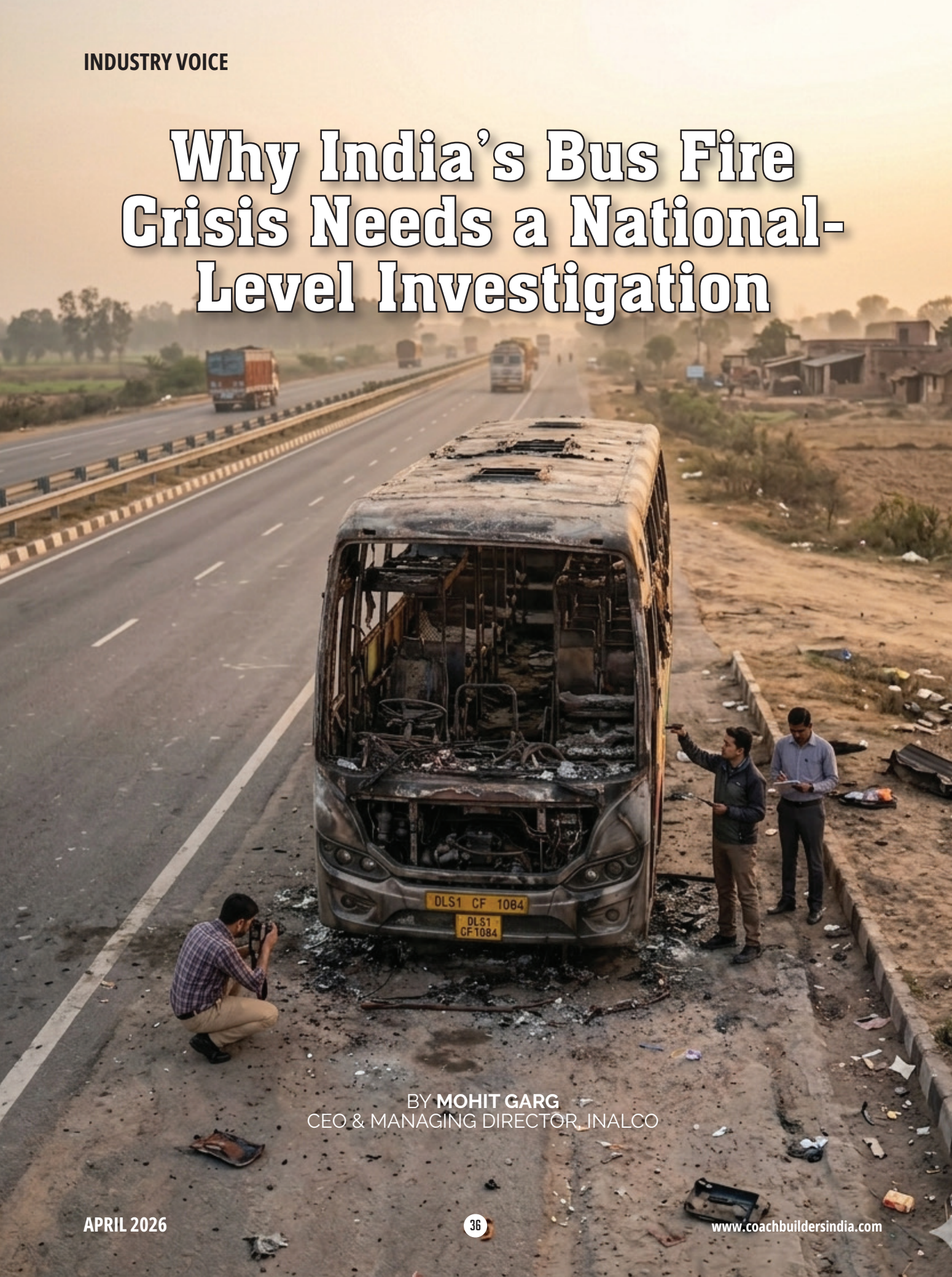
Our focus will remain on quality, compliance, and long-term reliability. At the same time, we are preparing ourselves to adapt to future trends, including electrification and evolving customer expectations.

The opportunity in this industry is immense. But it will belong to those who are willing to invest in systems, discipline, and engineering.

That is the direction we are committed to.



Why India's Bus Fire Crisis Needs a National-Level Investigation



BY **MOHIT GARG**
CEO & MANAGING DIRECTOR, INALCO

India's bus industry is facing a growing safety challenge, one that is quickly turning into a crisis of confidence. Over the past six to seven months, bus fire incidents have increased at a pace that is no longer explainable as isolated failures. What was once occasional has become alarmingly frequent.

From Isolated Failures to a Systemic Risk

Early investigations into major incidents like the Jailsalmer and the Kurnool incidents pointed toward clear and addressable issues - illegal modifications, use of flammable materials, and compromised emergency exits.

Regulators responded swiftly. AIS 153 norms were strengthened. Enforcement tightened. Many of the most visible risks, unauthorized modifications, poor material choices, and exit blockages were addressed.

But the fires did not stop.

In fact, they have continued at an increasing frequency, even as compliance has improved and oversight has become stricter.

Crucially, the fire map has expanded - standard seater buses, built by reputable manufacturers that operated within strict regulatory frameworks, also started succumbing to the same fate

This fundamentally shifts the discourse. If compliance is up and enforcement is tighter, why do bus fire incidents persist?

The Missing Link: Fire Origin Analysis

What remains largely unaddressed is the most critical question - where and why do these fires begin?

Every time a bus burns, we treat it as an isolated accident rather than a data point. Are they triggered by electrical failures in wiring or HVAC systems? Are they linked to fuel system vulnerabilities? Is it thermal stress? Or are multiple systems interacting in ways not fully understood?

Today, most incidents are treated as standalone events. What's missing is a structured, evidence-based mechanism to investigate and document the point of origin versus the point of spread.

Without this distinction, interventions risk being reactive - focused more on containing fires than preventing them.



Why a National Investigation Framework Is Essential

A fragmented, case-by-case approach cannot solve a systemic issue. What the industry needs now, as industry leaders like Shivakumar V have suggested, is a centralized, pan-India investigation framework - independent, technical, and data-driven.

Such an approach would enable:

- Identification of recurring failure patterns across fleets and geographies
- Clear differentiation between ignition sources and fire propagation factors
- Data-backed design improvements for OEMs and body builders
- More precise regulatory interventions, instead of broad restrictions
- Maintenance protocols aligned with real-world risk areas

The Way Forward: From Compliance to Insight

India's bus industry has demonstrated that it can respond quickly to regulatory change. But the limits of compliance-driven safety are now visible.

The next phase must focus on insight.

This means institutionalizing forensic fire investigations, creating a national database of incidents, and ensuring that every major fire contributes to a growing body of technical knowledge.

Because safety cannot be built on assumptions or on the absence of visible violations. It must be built on forensic evidence.

The industry has acted on what is visible. Now, it must act on what is not.

About the Author



Mohit Garg is the CEO & Managing Director of INALCO and a recognised leader in India's aluminium sector. With over a decade of experience across ferrous and non-ferrous industries, he drives the company's strategic growth and industry influence. Known for his clarity of vision and decisive leadership, Mohit is shaping Inalco's role in the future of aluminium manufacturing.



Electric Bus Sales Volume in India in March 2026

BY **VIOLINA PEGU**

India's electric bus market witnessed a mild correction in March 2026 after a strong surge in February. As per data from the Vahan Dashboard (as of April 2, 2026; Telangana data not included), total electric bus registrations stood at 559 units in March, compared to 578 units in February.

This reflects a month-on-month decline of 19 units, translating to a 3% decrease in registrations. In terms of manufacturer performance, JBM Electric Vehicles emerged as the new market leader, followed by Switch Mobility in second position and PMI Electro Mobility retaining third place.



The modest dip comes after a particularly strong February, when registrations had climbed sharply from 391 units in January to 578 units, a 48% increase.

Overall Market Performance

Category	Units
March 2026 Sales	559
February 2026 Sales	578
Difference	-19
MoM Change	-3%

Market Leadership: Top Three OEMs

The competitive landscape saw a notable reshuffle in March 2026. The top 3 OEMs include:

- **JBM Electric Vehicles**
- **Switch Mobility**
- **PMI Electro Mobility**

Together, these three players continued to dominate the market, accounting for nearly 88% of total sales.

JBM Electric Vehicles

JBM Electric Vehicles emerged as the strongest performer in March 2026 with 206 units, up from 151 units in February. This represents a 36% month-on-month growth, allowing the company to capture a leading 36.9% market share. The strong surge pushed JBM to the top position, overtaking Switch Mobility for the first time in recent months.

Switch Mobility

Switch Mobility, which led the market in February, slipped to second position in March 2026 with 161 units, down from 280 units. This marks a sharp 42.5% decline, reducing its market share to 28.8%. The drop reflects a normalization in dispatches after a strong February execution cycle.

PMI Electro Mobility

PMI Electro Mobility continued its steady upward trajectory, registering 123 units in March compared to 83 units in February. This reflects a strong 48% growth, taking its market share to 22%. The company retained its third position, strengthening its presence in the market.

The Broader Market

Beyond the top three, March 2026 showed highly mixed performance across OEMs, reflecting uneven order execution cycles and shifting dispatch schedules.

Pinnacle Mobility recorded a strong rebound with 35 units, compared to just 2 units in February. This sharp rise significantly improved its visibility in the market, pushing its share to 6.3% after a subdued previous month.

Aeroeagle Automobiles posted 22 units, slightly higher than 20 units in February, marking a 10% increase and maintaining a stable 3.9% market share.

Azad India Mobility also entered the market in March with 10 units, compared to no sales in February, capturing a 1.8% share and indicating initial order execution activity.

On the downside, Tata Motors saw a sharp decline to 2 units, down from 18 units in February, reflecting an 89% drop and reducing its share to 0.4% amid weak dispatch momentum.

Olectra Greentech recorded zero units in March compared to 20 units in February, marking a complete 100% decline, likely due to timing differences in order deliveries.

VE Commercial Vehicles also reported no sales in March, down from 4 units in February, indicating a temporary pause in execution.

Electric Bus Sales in India – March 2026

OEM / Brand	Mar 2026 Sales	Feb 2026 Sales	Difference	% Change	Market Share (Mar 2026)
JBM Electric Vehicles	206	151	+55	+36%	36.9%
Switch Mobility	161	280	-119	-42.5%	28.8%
PMI Electro Mobility	123	83	+40	+48%	22.0%
Pinnacle Mobility	35	2	+33	-	6.3%
Aeroeagle Automobiles	22	20	+2	+10%	3.9%
Azad India Mobility	10	0	+10	-	1.8%
Tata Motors	2	18	-16	-89%	0.4%
Olectra Greentech	0	20	-20	-100%	-
VE Commercial Vehicles	0	4	-4	-100%	-
All OEMs	**559**	**578**	**-19**	**-3%**	**100%**



MTA To Receive 1,000th Prevost Motorcoach In 2026 As Fleet Partnership Expands

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) is set to take delivery of its 1,000th motorcoach from Prevost in 2026, marking a major milestone in the long-running procurement relationship between the agency and the North American bus manufacturer.

Prevost, a subsidiary of the Volvo Group, confirmed that the milestone reflects decades of continued deliveries to New York City Transit and the broader MTA bus network. The company described the development as an indicator of sustained large-scale fleet collaboration across public transit operations in the United States.

“This is a historic milestone for us. Just imagine — 1,000 Prevost coaches on the road every day, serving the citizens of New York City and its suburbs,” said François Tremblay, president of Prevost and Volvo Group Canada. He added that the company has built a long-standing relationship of trust with the MTA through repeated contracts and fleet support.

The MTA said the incoming buses are part of its ongoing fleet renewal strategy aimed at maintaining service reliability across one of the largest urban bus networks in North America. New York City Transit currently serves more than one million daily bus riders.

“Modern, dependable, and safe buses are how New York City Transit delivers for over 1 million daily bus riders in New York City,” said Demetrius Crichlow, president of New York City Transit.

“We look forward to continuing to upgrade our fleet with high-quality buses to ensure we are providing safe and efficient service for the New Yorkers who rely on our bus network,” he added.

Volvo Buses highlighted that sustainability considerations continue to play a growing role in fleet development as transit agencies work to reduce emissions and modernise operations. Anna Westerberg, president of Volvo Buses, said sustainability remains central to vehicle design and support for operators transitioning toward lower-emission fleets.

Prevost has been a key supplier to the MTA in recent years. In December 2023, the company secured its largest-ever contract from the agency, an order for 381 coaches, including a firm order for 250 units scheduled for delivery between 2025 and 2026.

Vy Flygbussarna To Introduce Volvo BZR Electric CD In Airport Shuttle Service

Vy Flygbussarna will become the first operator to deploy Volvo Buses' new electric coach, the Volvo BZR Electric – CD, in commercial service. The vehicle will enter operation on the Gothenburg–Landvetter Airport route during spring.

The launch marks an important step in Volvo Buses' ongoing electrification strategy, extending its electric coach portfolio into airport and intercity applications. The deployment also represents the first regular passenger service use of the Volvo BZR Electric – CD.

"We are delighted that Vy flygbussarna will be the first to operate the Volvo BZR Electric – CD. Our long-standing partnership is built on trust and shared ambitions," said Martin Spjern, Country Manager Sweden at Volvo Buses. "Vy Flygbussarna's decision to continue its electrification journey with us is a clear vote of confidence."

Vy Flygbussarna said the introduction supports its broader shift toward sustainable operations in airport connectivity services.

"We want to be at the forefront of the transition to sustainable travel, and that is exactly what we are doing together with Volvo," said Zakaria Abna-Aissa, Commercial Director, Bus at Vy in Sweden. "By bringing this new electric coach into real service, we are showing that the future of long-distance travel is already here."

The Volvo BZR Electric chassis platform is designed with a modular architecture that allows adaptation for different operational requirements, including both shorter and longer-range services. In this application, the coach will operate as an airport shuttle between Gothenburg city centre and Landvetter Airport.

The vehicle is equipped with seven battery packs providing a total installed capacity of 630 kWh. It is designed to deliver low-noise, smooth operation, supporting both efficiency and passenger comfort.

The coach has a seating capacity of up to 67 passengers and includes onboard Wi-Fi and USB charging facilities. The driver environment features an ergonomic layout with an adjustable instrument cluster and seating designed to improve operational comfort and control.

Volvo Buses confirmed that the Volvo BZR Electric – CD will be publicly presented for the first time at the Busstorget fair in Halmstad, Sweden, on 16–17 April.



Temsa Delivers 15 MD9 ElectriCITY Electric Buses To Lithuania



Turkish manufacturer Temsa has delivered 15 electric MD9 electriCITY buses to Lithuania under an order placed by UAB Kautra, a transport operator based in Kaunas. The vehicles will be used in Kaunas and other municipalities for public transport services.

The MD9 electriCITY is a 9.5-metre midibus introduced in 2019, designed for narrow urban routes and challenging road conditions. Temsa states that the model has been upgraded since launch, particularly in terms of battery capacity and driving range.

The original range of up to 230 kilometres has now been extended to up to 480 kilometres under ideal conditions, supported by an increase in battery capacity from 200 kWh to 280 kWh.

UAB Kautra, one of Lithuania's largest public transport operators, has been a Temsa customer for more than 20 years. The new electric buses will be deployed across multiple municipal transport networks, strengthening the operator's zero-emission fleet.

"At TEMSA, we have been investing in electrification for a long time. Today, we have 11 zero-emission vehicles in our portfolio," said Temsa CEO Evren Güzel. "We develop our own battery systems and invest in charging and energy solutions. This allows us to act as a mobility partner beyond manufacturing."

The delivery aligns with Lithuania's broader push toward zero-emission public transport. Industry data shared at the handover indicated that 52% of new bus registrations in the country last year were electric. Representatives of the European Commission attended the delivery ceremony in Kaunas, highlighting EU-level support for such procurements.

Lithuania remains an important market for Temsa in Europe. Including planned deliveries this year, the manufacturer will have supplied 321 vehicles to the country through its partnership with UAB Kautra. The operator also supports distribution and servicing for smaller transport companies in the region.

Temsa did not disclose the exact breakdown of electric and diesel vehicles in its total Lithuanian fleet, though it continues to supply a mix of powertrain types depending on operator requirements.

Daimler Buses To Introduce Mercedes-Benz Conecto To German Market

Daimler Buses will introduce the Mercedes-Benz Conecto to the German market in the future, expanding its city bus portfolio in response to sustained demand in the private-sector urban bus segment. The low-floor model, manufactured in Turkey, is positioned as a complementary product to the Mercedes-Benz Citaro range.

The Conecto has been in operation across several European markets for many years. Its introduction in Germany is intended to broaden Daimler Buses' offering for operators with standardised operational requirements. While the Citaro remains the flagship model for complex configurations, high customisation, and municipal tender specifications, the Conecto will target simpler use cases such as school transport, replacement capacity, and conventional urban line services.

The model will be offered as a 12-metre solo bus, including a fuel-efficient hybrid variant, as well as an articulated version for higher-capacity routes. According to Daimler Buses, the positioning is aimed at operators that require functional specifications without extensive configuration requirements, while still relying on the company's service and support network.

In the solo configuration, the Conecto is powered by the Mercedes-Benz OM 936 7.7-litre inline six-cylinder diesel engine producing 220 kW (299 hp) and 1,200 Nm of torque. A hybrid version with 48-volt low-voltage technology is also available and complies with Euro 6 E emissions standards. The articulated Conecto G is equipped with the OM 470 10.7-litre Euro VI diesel engine delivering 265 kW (360 hp) and 1,700 Nm of torque.

Production is carried out in cooperation with Turkish manufacturer Otokar. Daimler Buses supplies key components and production equipment to Otokar's facility, while also maintaining an on-site support team to oversee manufacturing. Deliveries to the German market are planned to begin in mid-2027.

Daimler Buses stated that the expansion of the Conecto range is aligned with its broader transformation strategy. The company continues to focus on electrification and alternative drivetrains, while the Conecto addresses short- to medium-term demand in the conventional diesel-powered city bus segment.





Karsan Wraps Up Autonomous Bus Trial in Paris with RATP

Karsan and RATP have concluded a six-month pilot of an autonomous electric bus operating in regular traffic conditions in Paris. The trial featured the Karsan e-ATAK and was conducted on bus line 393, a high-demand 8.5-kilometre route connecting Sucy-Bonneuil RER and Thiais-Carrefour de la Résistance.

The project tested autonomous driving systems in mixed urban traffic, including interaction with pedestrians, vehicles, intersections, and traffic signals. Over the course of the trial, the vehicle completed approximately 3,000 kilometres, operating around five hours per day.

A safety driver remained onboard throughout the pilot, and the service did not include passenger operations. The objective was to validate system performance under real-world conditions in one of Paris' more complex transport corridors.

The e-ATAK was equipped by technology partner Adastec, which provided the vehicle's autonomous driving system, including lidar, radar, infrared sensors, and supporting hardware and software. The same vehicle-platform configuration is also deployed in ongoing projects in Stavanger, Norway since 2022, and in Burgdorf near Hanover, Germany with Üstra.

According to Karsan, the vehicle achieved a 98% autonomous driving success rate without driver intervention during the trial period. "Our vehicle demonstrated its operational capabilities by successfully testing advanced driving scenarios such as navigation in mixed traffic conditions, precise stopping at stations, and real-time interaction with traffic infrastructure," said Karsan CEO Okan Baş.

Adastec CEO Dr Ali Peker said the Paris deployment demonstrates the maturity of Level 4 autonomous technology in public transport applications, even in dense metropolitan environments.

The pilot also underwent technical validation by certification body UTAC and received approval from DGEC under the French Ministry of Transport, allowing autonomous operation testing in public transport environments across France.

Karsan and Adastec now plan to advance to the next phase of deployment in Stavanger, Norway, targeting a fully autonomous operational model without a safety driver.



Skoda Group Launches 40 Battery Trolleybuses In Tallinn With 25 Km Off-Wire Range

Skoda Group has officially presented its latest generation of battery-powered trolleybuses in Tallinn, marking a new phase in the city's electric public transport development. The presentation took place on 8 April and included a first test drive of the new vehicles for stakeholders and media.

As part of the project, Skoda Group will deliver a total of 40 trolleybuses to Tallinn this year. The order includes 22 articulated Skoda 33Tr 18-metre units and 18 Skoda 32Tr 12-metre vehicles. The contract, which includes service, maintenance, and options for up to 30 additional units, is valued at more than EUR 50 million.

The new-generation trolleybuses combine traditional overhead-wire operation with battery-electric capability, enabling up to 25 kilometres of off-wire driving. This allows greater operational flexibility, particularly in areas where overhead infrastructure is limited or visually restricted.

The presentation event included remarks from city representatives and Skoda Group officials, along with technical presentations from Tallinn's transport operator TLT. A demonstration run was conducted to showcase vehicle performance in real operating conditions.

The project also reflects ongoing upgrades to Tallinn's trolleybus infrastructure, ensuring compatibility with the new fleet and supporting long-term operational reliability.

The vehicles are equipped with air conditioning, fully low-floor access, Wi-Fi connectivity, and modern passenger information systems. Accessibility features include sliding doors and electric ramps for wheelchair users and passengers with strollers.

The articulated Skoda 33Tr units feature two driven axles, improving traction in winter conditions and enhancing manoeuvrability in urban environments. The propulsion system is based on modern IGBT-based electrical technology with integrated diagnostics and remote monitoring capabilities.

According to Skoda Group, the new fleet is designed to maintain the energy efficiency advantages of trolleybus systems while increasing route flexibility through onboard energy storage. The delivery is part of the company's broader portfolio of integrated electric mobility solutions combining vehicle technology and infrastructure compatibility.



Neoenergia And TEVX Launch Brazil's First Green Hydrogen Fuel Cell Bus in Brasília

Neoenergia, TEVX Motors Group, and the Federal District Government (GDF) of Brazil have joined hands to introduce the country's first commercial bus powered by green hydrogen. The vehicle will operate on the Rota Monumental, a free civic tourist route in Brasília.

The launch took place at Neoenergia's green hydrogen refuelling station in Taguatinga, the first facility of its kind in Brazil dedicated to hydrogen-powered mobility. The event was attended by government officials and sector representatives, including Neoenergia Commercial Executive Director David Benavent del Prado, Tourism Secretary Cristiano Araújo, and Transport and Mobility Secretary Zeno Gonçalves.

The bus was acquired by Neoenergia from TEVX Motors Group and is equipped with a hydrogen fuel cell system that generates electricity through a reaction between hydrogen and oxygen. The vehicle has a capacity of up to 71 passengers, including 31 seated and 40 standing, and offers a range of approximately 300 kilometres.

Refuelling time is estimated at 10 to 15 minutes. The hydrogen used for operation will be produced at Neoenergia's facility in Taguatinga, which was developed with investment exceeding R$30 million under Brazil's National Electric Energy Agency Research, Development and Innovation Programme (PDI ANEEL).

The Rota Monumental route begins at Brasília's TV Tower and passes key landmarks including the National Museum, Cathedral of Brasília, Esplanade of Ministries, Three Powers Square, and National Theatre. The full tour takes approximately 90 minutes and includes stops at selected points such as the Cathedral and Three Powers Square for visitor access and photography.

According to project partners, the deployment marks a step in demonstrating hydrogen mobility applications in public transport operations in Brazil. The initiative combines energy infrastructure development with transport sector innovation through a locally produced green hydrogen supply chain.



MAN Launches Series Production Of Lion's City E In Ankara As Global E-Bus Network Expands

MAN Truck & Bus has started series production of its fully electric Lion's City E city bus at its Ankara plant in Turkey, marking a key expansion of its global e-mobility manufacturing network. The first electric buses have recently begun rolling off the production line, strengthening MAN's transition toward zero-emission transport solutions.

The Ankara facility becomes the third MAN bus production site adapted for electric mobility, alongside Starachowice in Poland and Olifantsfontein in South Africa. Starachowice has been producing the Lion's City E since 2020, while Olifantsfontein manufactures the Lion's Explorer E for the South African market.

"With the launch of e-bus production in Ankara, we are setting a significant milestone on our path to electromobility," said Barbaros Oktay, Head of Bus at MAN Truck & Bus. "We are expanding our production capacities and strengthening our global bus network to meet rising customer demand faster and more flexibly."

MAN said Ankara will play a central role in its e-mobility strategy, with future production planned to include electric intercity buses and the Lion's Coach E for tourist applications. The plant has undergone infrastructure upgrades, production optimisation, and workforce training to support electrified manufacturing.

Mehmet Ğermet, Head of Production Bus at MAN Truck & Bus, said the site's flexible production setup allows both electric and conventionally powered buses to be built on the same line, enabling response to varied market requirements.

Since its launch in 2019, the MAN Lion's City E has recorded around 3,300 units delivered and approximately 250 million kilometres operated in service. MAN estimates these vehicles have reduced CO2 emissions by around 150,000 tons compared to diesel equivalents.

In 2025, MAN reported 1,970 electric truck and bus sales, an increase of 168 percent year-on-year. The Lion's City E alone grew by 118 percent, with more than 1,300 units sold.

MAN continues to expand its zero-emission portfolio across multiple segments, including city buses, intercity models, and long-distance applications, supported by ongoing battery production and drivetrain development across its European manufacturing network.



Google Maps Launches Nationwide Bus Tracking Across England

Google Maps has officially transformed the daily commute for millions across England by launching live, real-time bus tracking nationwide. Announced on April 2, 2026, this landmark collaboration between the Department for Transport and Google represents a major leap forward in the government's "Better Connected" strategy. By integrating live data from every registered bus operator in the country, the update effectively ends the era of the "ghost bus" and provides passengers with unprecedented certainty.

The new functionality allows users to see more than just a scheduled arrival time. When a user selects a transit route, a live bus icon appears on the map, moving in real-time along its path. This is supported by a precise countdown timer that accounts for traffic conditions and unexpected stops. If a service is delayed, Google Maps now highlights the delay in red and automatically recalibrates the user's entire journey itinerary, including walking times to the stop and subsequent connections.

While major hubs like London and Manchester have long enjoyed similar features through local apps, this rollout is specifically designed to bridge the gap for rural and suburban commuters. In areas where services may only run once an hour, the ability to see a bus's physical location on a map reduces the anxiety of waiting at isolated stops and allows passengers to stay indoors or in shops until the vehicle is truly nearby.

Furthermore, this digital integration is part of a broader push to modernize British transit. Alongside live tracking, the government is expanding contactless "tap-and-go" payment systems to ensure that the physical experience of boarding a bus is as seamless as the digital experience of finding one. As the rollout stabilizes across all regions, the UK sets a global standard for how open data can be used to make public transportation more reliable, accessible, and user-friendly for everyone.



Solaris Secures 103 Electric Bus Order from Nobina for Swedish Operations

Solaris has strengthened its position in the Nordic zero-emission bus market with a new order from Swedish public transport operator Nobina for 103 Solaris Urbino 15 LE electric buses. The vehicles will be deployed across key Swedish regions, including Stockholm, Göteborg, and Skåne, with deliveries scheduled for mid-2027.

The order is structured across three contracts, with 50 buses allocated to Stockholm, 49 to Skåne, and 4 to the Göteborg region. The deployment reflects Nobina's continued strategy of expanding its electric fleet to support both urban and suburban mobility needs.

Designed for mixed-use applications, the Solaris Urbino 15 LE electric is a low-entry vehicle developed for both city and regional transport operations. Each bus in the order will be equipped with high-capacity Solaris High Energy batteries, enabling extended range performance suitable for longer intercity routes while maintaining zero tailpipe emissions.

Commenting on the agreement, Sverre Skaar, CEO of Solaris Sverige AB, highlighted the strategic importance of the partnership, noting that the latest order reinforces both companies' shared commitment to sustainable mobility and passenger comfort. He emphasized that Nobina's continued selection of Solaris vehicles reflects strong confidence in the manufacturer's technology and long-term performance in Nordic operating conditions.

The collaboration between Solaris and Nobina spans over a decade, beginning in 2010. During this period, Nobina has steadily scaled up its adoption of electric buses as part of its broader decarbonization roadmap. Since 2024 alone, Solaris has delivered 201 electric buses to the operator, with an additional pipeline exceeding 320 vehicles scheduled for delivery across 2026 and 2027.

This latest contract further underscores Nobina's ambition to accelerate the transition toward fully electric public transport networks in Sweden, while reinforcing Solaris' role as a key supplier in Europe's rapidly expanding e-bus ecosystem.

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