

THE BUS INSIDER

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BY COACH BUILDERS INDIA



THE METEORIC RISE OF SYNATY AUTOMOTIVE

SWAMY AYYAPPA

GO TOUR

FUTURE AUTOTECH

RELIABILITY FORGED IN ALUMINIUM



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EDITOR:

Shivam Gautam

shivam@coachbuildersindia.com

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

Zainab Azhar

zainab.a@coachbuildersindia.com

Violina Pegu

violina@coachbuildersindia.com

CREATIVES

Mohd. Shakeel

shakeelmohd@coachbuildersindia.com

MARKETING

Kumar Shantanu

shantanu@coachbuildersindia.com

+91 98711 22871

CONSUMER CONNECT

Violina Pegu

violina@coachbuildersindia.com

COACH BUILDERS INDIA

A86, Pocket 8, Kalkaji Extension,
New Delhi 110019

Ph: +91-8448229959

Email: coachbuildersindia@gmail.com

www.coachbuildersindia.com

EDITORIAL

Hello everyone,

Over the past few weeks, I've found myself reflecting on two very different sides of our industry.

On one hand, there is undeniable progress. New companies are emerging, operators are becoming more disciplined, and the overall conversation around quality, safety, and passenger experience is getting sharper. You can feel the overall intent to build better - stronger businesses, better buses, and a more structured ecosystem.

But on the other hand, there are moments that stop you in your tracks. Within the last 7 days, we lost close to 50 lives in bus-related accidents. And in moments like these, everything else fades into the background. Because beyond machines, margins, and market share, this industry is about people. Lives. Responsibility.

And perhaps that's where this issue finds its balance.

Our cover story features Synaty Automotive, a company that has, in a very short span of time, managed to achieve what many take decades to build. Their journey is not just about growth - it's about discipline. Structured processes, a clear focus on quality, and an early commitment to standards like AIS-153. In many ways, it reflects what the next generation of bus body building in India could look like.

We also bring you conversations with operators who have built their businesses the hard way - with consistency, clarity, and a long-term view. Swamy Ayyappa Travels stands out for its unwavering focus on service quality and operational discipline, while Go Tour Travels and Holidays shows how data, technology, and customer trust can come together to create a strong, sustainable brand.

There's a lot to learn from these stories. Because in an industry often driven by price pressures and short-term decisions, these are examples of what happens when you choose to build differently.

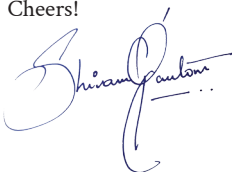
At the same time, we felt it was important to address the question of safety, not just from a structural standpoint, but from a human one. Mohit Garg of INALCO writes about something we don't talk about enough - the role of driver behaviour. Fatigue, pressure, training gaps, these are not abstract challenges. They are real, everyday risks that demand attention. And if we are serious about building a safer industry, this is where the conversation needs to deepen.

And finally, we look ahead. With Future Autotech Global Ventures achieving AIS certification for its electric bus, FUTURA 12M, it's clear that the shift towards safer, more sustainable mobility is already underway.

As I read through this issue, one thought stayed with me - progress in our industry is not just about how fast we grow, but how responsibly we move forward.

Here's to building better. And building responsibly.

Cheers!



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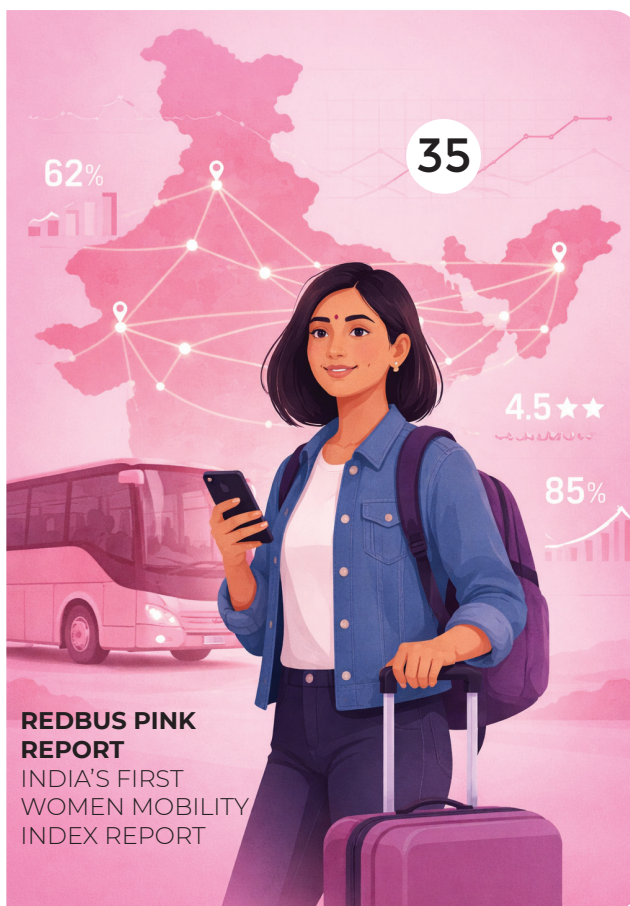
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KKR to Invest \$310 Million in India's E-Bus OEM PMI Electro & Allfleet

Global investment firm KKR has committed up to \$310 million to India's electric bus ecosystem through a strategic partnership with PMI Electro Mobility Solutions and its fleet platform Allfleet India. The transaction marks KKR's first investment in India under its Global Climate

Transition strategy and reflects rising investor confidence in the country's clean mobility sector.

Under the agreement, KKR will acquire a majority stake in Allfleet and a minority stake in PMI Electro. The capital infusion is expected to scale both manufacturing and operations, enabling a more integrated approach to electric bus deployment across Indian cities.

Allfleet, established as PMI's operating platform, focuses on developing and managing large-scale electric bus fleets under long-term contracts with state transport authorities. The platform is on track to deploy over 5,000 e-buses, positioning it among the leading fleet operators in India's emerging electric public transport market.

For PMI Electro, which has already deployed more than 3,000 buses across 30 cities, the investment will enhance production capacity and technological capabilities.

The deal comes at a time when India is accelerating electrification through large-scale programs such as the PM-eBus Sewa scheme. By combining manufacturing and fleet operations under a single investment framework, KKR is backing a vertically integrated model that could define the next phase of growth in India's electric bus industry.



Tata Motors Secures Orders for Over 5,000 Buses from Multiple STUs

Tata Motors has received orders for more than 5,000 buses and bus chassis from several State Transport Undertakings across India.

- Tata LPO 1618
- LPO 1622
- LPO 1822

The order came through competitive e-bidding processes under the government procurement system. Deployments will occur in phases as agreed with the respective STUs.

Deployments will proceed in phases, based on agreements with each STU. The buses aim to support operations across varied terrains and duty cycles.

The orders were awarded to Tata Motors by MSRTC, GSRTC, NWKRTC, TGSRTC, BSRTC, RSRTC, KSRTC, the Department of Road Transport in Haryana, and CTU.

Tata Motors provides these solutions to STUs, private fleet operators, and institutional customers nationwide. Its portfolio includes vehicles from 9-seaters to 55-seaters across multiple powertrains.

The orders cover both buses and bus chassis configured for intercity, long-haul, and intracity operations. These include:

- Tata Magna
- Tata Cityride
- Tata Starbus
- Tata Starbus Prime



The company supports operations through Sampoorna Seva 2.0, a vehicle lifecycle management programme. This covers maintenance, assured turnaround times, genuine spare parts, and breakdown assistance.

Switch Mobility Delivers First Electric Double-Decker Bus in New Delhi

Switch Mobility has delivered its first electric double-decker bus in New Delhi, marking a significant milestone in India's urban mobility evolution. The deployment introduces a high-capacity, zero-emission solution tailored for dense city corridors with heavy passenger demand.

Electric double-decker buses combine sustainability with efficiency by maximising passenger capacity without increasing road footprint. This makes them particularly suitable for cities like Delhi, where congestion and pollution remain major challenges.

The bus is equipped with advanced electric drivetrain technology, offering reduced noise levels, lower operating costs, and improved passenger comfort. Features such as air conditioning, modern interiors, and enhanced safety systems further elevate the commuting experience.

The introduction of this vehicle also reflects a growing trend of innovation in public transport design, where traditional formats are being reimaged using electric platforms. By electrifying the double-decker concept, Switch Mobility is addressing both capacity constraints and environmental concerns simultaneously.

For city transport authorities, such solutions provide an opportunity to optimise route efficiency while reducing emissions. As more cities explore similar deployments, electric double-deckers could become a viable option for high-density corridors.



GreenCell Mobility to Deploy 75 Electric Buses in Puducherry

GreenCell Mobility has deployed 75 electric buses in Puducherry, marking a notable addition to electric fleet adoption in smaller urban markets.

The fleet, supplied by EKA Mobility, includes 25 nine-metre and 50 twelve-metre air-conditioned buses operating from the Mettupalayam Bus Depot. The mix of vehicle sizes is aligned with Puducherry's route requirements, with mid-size buses deployed on feeder routes and larger buses catering to trunk corridors.

From an operational standpoint, the buses are equipped with Integrated Transport Management Systems (ITMS), real-time tracking, passenger information systems, and surveillance features including internal and reverse cameras. Accessibility provisions for differently-abled passengers have also been incorporated, in line with evolving regulatory expectations for public transport systems.

The deployment is being executed under GreenCell Mobility's Electric Mobility-as-a-Service (eMaaS) model, wherein the company manages end-to-end operations, including fleet deployment, charging infrastructure, and maintenance. This approach is gaining traction among state transport authorities seeking to adopt electric buses without upfront capital investment.

GreenCell currently operates over 1,200 electric buses across India, with ongoing contracts in states such as Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh. Its intercity brand, NueGo, further extends operations into long-distance electric coach services.

The Puducherry project underscores a broader industry trend, that of electrification expanding beyond metros into smaller markets.

Keto Motors Receives CMVR Approval for 9-Metre Urbanova KE9 Electric Bus

Key Specifications

Length: 9 meters
Range: Up to 225 km
Cruising range (IDC): 188 km
Motor power: 245 kW
Torque: 3000 Nm
Passenger capacity:
 31 seated + 11 standing
Top speed: 80 km/h
Gradability: 20%

Hyderabad-based Keto Motors has secured CMVR Type Approval for its Urbanova KE9 electric bus from the Global Automotive Research Centre (GARC). The certification confirms that the bus complies with the requirements of the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, covering structural integrity, passenger safety, operational reliability, and energy efficiency.

The Urbanova is 9-metre electric bus with a 225 km range, 245 kW motor, and capacity for 42 passengers. The bus has been developed with technology support from TRON, Taiwan's largest electric bus manufacturer.

Through the partnership, the bus incorporates:

- Patented liquid-cooled battery systems
- Proprietary battery management systems (BMS)
- Fleet management systems (FMS)
- Energy-efficient electric propulsion technology

Production of the Urbanova KE9 will take place at Keto Motors' 20-acre integrated manufacturing facility in Jadcherla, Telangana.

With the approval in place, Keto Motors has begun customer demonstrations and preparations for commercial deployment across multiple fleet segments.

The company plans to offer the Urbanova KE9 to State Transport Undertakings (STUs), employee transport operators, school transportation fleets, and urban mobility providers transitioning from diesel buses to electric platforms.

The company is also developing 12-metre and 6-metre electric bus platforms, which will expand its product portfolio for public transport and commercial fleet applications.



Tata Motors Announces Price Hike Across Commercial Vehicle Range

Tata Motors has announced a price increase of up to 1.5 percent across its commercial vehicle portfolio, effective April 2026. The revision comes in response to rising input costs, including raw materials and supply chain expenses, which continue to impact manufacturing margins.

Price adjustments of this nature are a recurring feature in the commercial vehicle industry, where fluctuations in commodity prices such as steel, aluminium, and rubber directly influence production costs. OEMs typically pass on a portion of these increases to customers to maintain financial stability while continuing to invest in product development.

For fleet operators and state transport undertakings, even modest price hikes can have a cumulative impact, particularly in large-scale procurement programs. However, demand

fundamentals remain relatively strong, supported by infrastructure development, fleet replacement cycles, and government-backed mobility initiatives.

The timing of the increase also reflects the industry's transition phase, as manufacturers allocate resources toward electrification and advanced technologies. Investments in EV platforms, digital systems, and emission compliance are adding to overall cost structures, making periodic price revisions necessary.



Despite these challenges, the commercial vehicle market continues to show resilience. OEMs like Tata Motors are balancing cost pressures with the need to remain competitive, ensuring that product offerings continue to meet evolving customer expectations in both conventional and electric segments.

Mahindra Trucks and Buses Expands Karnataka Footprint with New 3S Dealership in Hubli

Mahindra Trucks and Buses has expanded its network in Karnataka with the inauguration of a new 3S dealership in Hubli, strengthening its presence in a key commercial vehicle market. The facility offers integrated Sales, Service, and Spares support, aimed at enhancing customer experience and operational uptime.

Hubli's strategic location as a logistics and transport hub makes it an important market for commercial vehicles, particularly buses operating on intercity and regional routes. By establishing a full-service dealership in the region, Mahindra aims to improve accessibility for fleet operators and reduce turnaround time for maintenance and repairs.

The expansion reflects the company's broader strategy of deepening its service network, which is a critical differentiator in the commercial vehicle segment. Reliable after-sales support plays

a decisive role in purchase decisions, as fleet operators prioritise uptime and lifecycle costs.

In addition to servicing capabilities, the dealership is expected to support new vehicle sales and provide access to genuine spare parts, ensuring consistent performance and reliability. It will also contribute to local employment and skill development.

As competition intensifies in the bus segment, OEMs are increasingly focusing on strengthening their distribution and service infrastructure. Mahindra's latest expansion highlights the importance of proximity to customers and the role of service networks in sustaining long-term growth.



With continued investments in network expansion, the company is positioning itself to capture opportunities in both conventional and emerging segments, including electric buses and last-mile mobility solutions.

Ashok Leyland Breaks Ground for Battery Pack Manufacturing Facility in Tamil Nadu

Ashok Leyland has commenced construction of a dedicated battery pack manufacturing facility in Tamil Nadu, marking a significant step in its long-term electrification strategy. The move underscores the company's commitment to strengthening its electric vehicle ecosystem through greater localisation and vertical integration.

The upcoming facility will focus on assembling battery packs for electric buses and commercial vehicles, a critical component that directly influences cost, performance, and range. By bringing battery pack production closer to its manufacturing base, Ashok Leyland aims to improve supply chain efficiency while reducing dependency on imports.

This development comes at a time when battery systems account for a substantial share of electric vehicle costs.

Local manufacturing not only enhances cost competitiveness but also enables better control over quality, safety, and innovation. As demand for electric

buses grows under various government initiatives, ensuring a reliable battery supply will be essential for meeting delivery timelines.

The Tamil Nadu location further strengthens the state's position as a key hub for automotive and EV manufacturing. With supportive policies, established supplier networks, and skilled labour availability, the region continues to attract significant investments from leading OEMs.

From an industry perspective, the move reflects a broader shift toward localisation within India's EV ecosystem. Manufacturers are increasingly investing in critical components such as batteries, motors, and power electronics to build resilient and self-sufficient supply chains. Ashok Leyland's investment also aligns with national priorities under initiatives aimed at promoting domestic manufacturing and reducing import dependence. As electrification accelerates, such strategic infrastructure will play a pivotal role in shaping the competitiveness of Indian OEMs in both domestic and global markets.





PM-eBus Sewa Scheme 10,000 Electric Buses Sanctioned Across 116 Cities

The PM-eBus Sewa Scheme represents a landmark initiative in India's public transport landscape, with 10,000 electric buses sanctioned across 116 cities. Designed to enhance urban mobility while accelerating decarbonisation, the program places particular emphasis on Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, where organised public transport infrastructure is often limited.

The scheme adopts a public-private partnership model, with buses to be operated under Gross Cost Contracts (GCC). Under this structure, private operators procure, deploy, and maintain the buses, while government agencies oversee operations and service delivery. This approach helps balance operational efficiency with public accountability.

A key feature of the scheme is its integrated approach, which goes beyond vehicle procurement to include supporting infrastructure such as charging stations and depots. Ensuring the availability of reliable charging networks will be critical to the long-term

success of electric bus operations, particularly in smaller cities.

For the bus manufacturing ecosystem, the initiative represents a significant demand pipeline, offering opportunities for OEMs, component suppliers, and technology providers. It also creates a platform for scaling production, driving down costs, and accelerating innovation in electric mobility solutions.

At the same time, the scheme presents implementation challenges. Timely execution, financing structures, and coordination among multiple stakeholders will be crucial in ensuring that deployments meet expected timelines. Capacity building at the city level will also play a key role in managing operations effectively.

Overall, the PM-eBus Sewa Scheme signals a decisive shift toward sustainable public transport in India. By targeting a wide geographic spread, it has the potential to democratise access to clean mobility and reshape urban transportation across the country.

JSW Motors Partners with Dassault Systèmes to Drive Future Mobility in India with 3DEXPERIENCE Platform

JSW Motors Limited, the new energy passenger vehicle division of the JSW Group, has entered a long-term strategic partnership with France-based Dassault Systèmes to accelerate future mobility in India. Under this collaboration, JSW Motors will adopt Dassault Systèmes' 3DEXPERIENCE platform, including applications such as CATIA, ENOVIA, and DELMIA, as the digital backbone across its vehicle lifecycle—from design and engineering to manufacturing and validation.

The partnership focuses on modular and scalable vehicle architectures to support multiple New Energy Vehicle (NEV) platforms, enabling faster development cycles while maintaining high-quality standards. By integrating Manufacturing Operations Management (MOM) solutions through DELMIA, JSW Motors aims to optimize production efficiency, enhance resource utilization, and reduce its overall carbon footprint, promoting sustainable manufacturing.

JSW Motors' CEO, Ranjan Nayak, highlighted the company's vision of building a technology-led, India-engineered, world-class mobility ecosystem, while Dassault Systèmes' India Managing Director, Deepak NG, emphasized that 3DEXPERIENCE will help JSW Motors manage software-defined vehicle complexity, foster innovation, and achieve end-to-end integration across its value chain.

This collaboration also strengthens localization, supply chain resilience, and domestic value creation, positioning JSW Motors to deliver globally competitive, future-ready NEVs tailored to Indian market needs.



Michelin India Expands Pune Presence with Three New Tyres & Services Stores



Michelin, the global leader in tyre technology, has expanded its retail presence in Pune with the launch of three new Michelin Tyres & Services (MTS) stores in partnership with Darshan Tyres. The new stores, located in Hadapsar, Camp, and Chinchwad, are strategically positioned across key areas of the city to enhance customer accessibility and serve the growing base of premium vehicle owners. The facilities span 2,500 sq. ft., 1,500 sq. ft., and 2,500 sq. ft., respectively, and provide a full range of Michelin's premium passenger car tyres along with advanced services such as wheel alignment, balancing, tyre fitting, rotation, repair, and replacement using high-precision diagnostic equipment.

Michelin India Managing Director, Shantanu Deshpande, highlighted that Pune is one of India's fastest-growing automotive markets, and the expansion aligns with the company's strategy to bring its products and services closer to customers. The move also supports Michelin's plans to introduce Made-in-India passenger car tyres, reflecting its commitment to offering globally benchmarked products tailored to local needs.

The partnership with Darshan Tyres, a trusted player in Pune's automotive aftermarket for over 35 years, strengthens Michelin's retail network and service capabilities. With this expansion, Michelin and Darshan Tyres continue to reinforce their presence in the city, providing premium products and high-quality customer experiences.



EKA Mobility and GreenCell Mobility Win LOA to Deploy 915 Electric Buses in Hyderabad Under PM E-DRIVE

EKA Mobility, in consortium with GreenCell Mobility, has secured a Letter of Award (LOA) for the supply and deployment of 915 electric buses in Hyderabad under the Government of India's CESL-led PM E-DRIVE scheme.

The project will see the rollout of 100 nine-meter and 815 twelve-meter standard-floor non-AC electric buses, engineered for efficient, reliable, and passenger-friendly urban transit.

This initiative aligns with the government's vision of accelerating electric mobility, reducing urban emissions, and strengthening domestic EV manufacturing. The buses are fully electric, zero-emission, and designed to meet the operational requirements of a growing city like Hyderabad, ensuring high uptime and optimized energy efficiency.

Mr. Rohit Srivastava, Business Head & Chief Growth Officer, EKA Mobility, stated, "Securing this LOA for 915 buses validates our technology and execution capabilities. We are proud to support Hyderabad's transition toward cleaner, smarter urban transportation in line with PM E-DRIVE objectives."

The award builds on EKA Mobility's previous deployments under CESL's PM E-Bus Seva initiative across Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Puducherry, and Meghalaya, reinforcing the company's position as a key contributor to India's EV ecosystem.

With this project, EKA Mobility and GreenCell Mobility are poised to demonstrate scalable, high-performance electric bus solutions for large urban fleets, supporting India's shift toward sustainable public transport.

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Prawaas 5.0 Exhibition is the commercial and innovation engine of India's flagship multimodal transport platform. Designed as a high-impact B2B marketplace, the exhibition brings together vehicle manufacturers, mobility solution providers, technology companies, startups, financiers, and public authorities to showcase, connect and collaborate on the future of passenger transport in India.

Event Spectrum

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Conference

Workshops

Bharat Prawaas Awards

BOCI Dialogue

Startup Pitches

B2B Partnering

Networking Dinners

Event Highlights



36

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1500+

INDUSTRY DELEGATES



10000+

BUS & CAR OPERATORS



60+

EXPERT SPEAKERS



300+

LEADING EXHIBITORS



15000+

BUSINESS VISITORS

Host Association



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Raw Space	₹ 13000/-	\$ 175
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Plus 18% GST

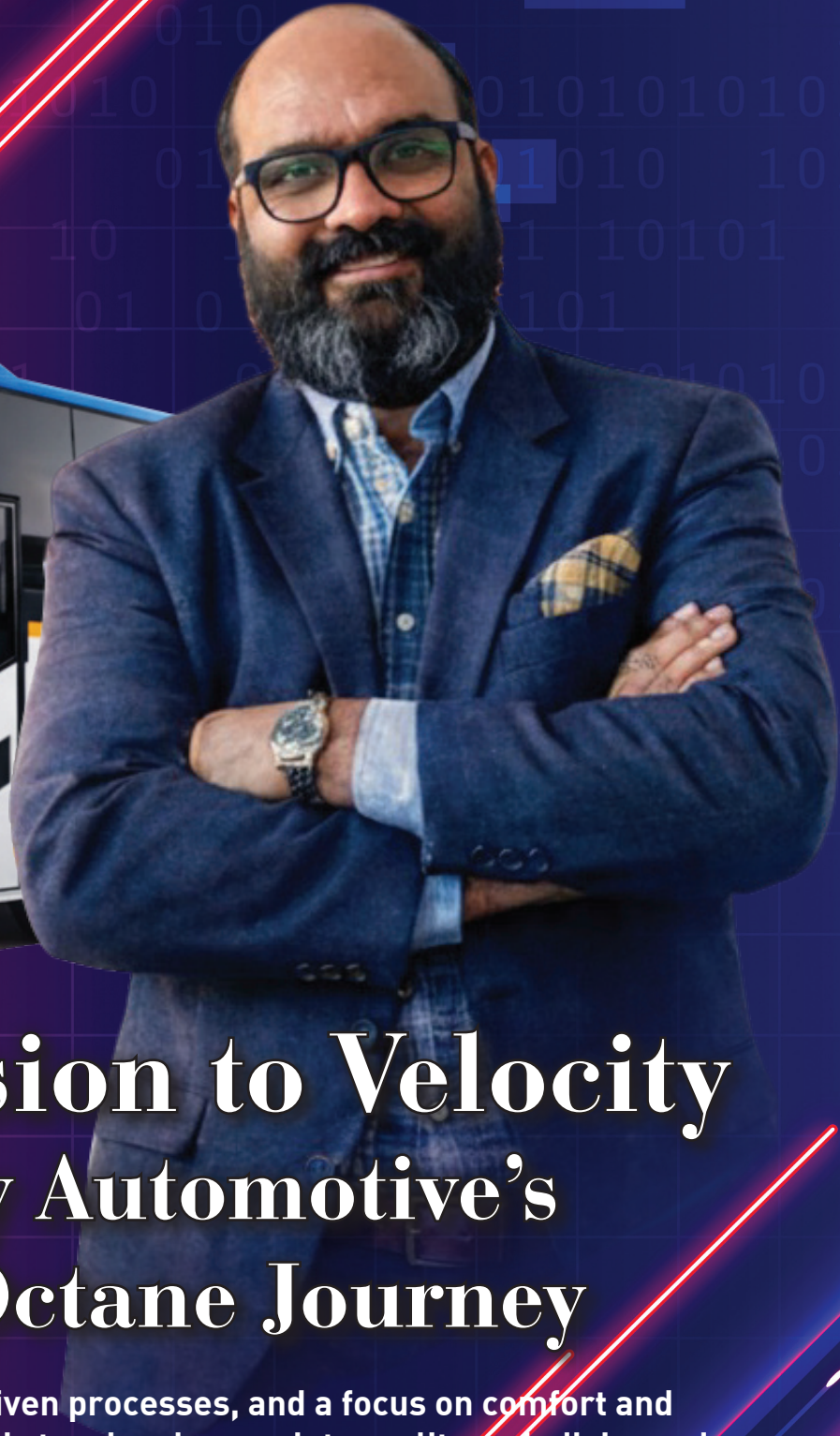
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COVER STORY



From Vision to Velocity Synaty Automotive's High-Octane Journey

Fast growth, system-driven processes, and a focus on comfort and quality - Synaty Automotive is turning dreams into reality on India's roads.

BY VIOLINA PEGU

The story of Synaty Automotive is, in many ways, one of the most distinctive to emerge from India's bus body building industry in recent years.

In a little over a year, the company has achieved what typically takes decades to build. Few players in the segment, if any, have witnessed this level of traction in such a short span. What sets Synaty apart is not just growth, but the pace at which it has scaled, the volumes it has reached, and the acceptance it has earned across the market.

While Synaty was founded in 2019, it entered the sleeper bus segment only in January 2025. Within a year, the company secured orders from some of India's most reputed bus operators, quickly becoming one of the most talked-about names in the bus body building industry.

The story becomes even more compelling when viewed through the lens of its founder. Naresh Yadav does not come from a traditional bus body building background. Raised in a small village, he began his journey in farming before spending over a decade as a tour guide and French interpreter. This exposure gave him a unique perspective on travel, both in India and globally, and shaped his understanding of what passengers truly value.

“

ACHIEVING AIS-153 CERTIFICATION IS A MAJOR MILESTONE FOR US. IT OFFICIALLY VALIDATES OUR SLEEPER BUS MODELS AND LAYOUTS, ENSURING THEY MEET THE HIGHEST SAFETY AND QUALITY STANDARDS. FOR SYNATY, IT'S NOT JUST ABOUT COMPLIANCE, IT'S ABOUT RAISING THE BAR AND SETTING NEW BENCHMARKS FOR THE ENTIRE INDUSTRY.

”

In an industry largely driven by legacy, this difference is significant. Synaty is not built on inheritance, but on intent. A simple yet powerful idea, *Modify Dreams to Reality*, became the guiding principle behind the company's approach.

What truly differentiates the company, however, is its way of working. The approach is structured and system-driven. Processes are clearly defined, from planning and material management to stage-wise quality checks and specialized teams at every level. This degree of operational discipline remains relatively rare, particularly in North India's bus body building ecosystem.





That intent has translated into tangible milestones. Synaty is among the first bus body builders in North India to secure AIS-153 certification for sleeper buses, an achievement that underscores both its seriousness and its ability to execute at a high level, even at an early stage.

In an exclusive interview, **Naresh Yadav, Founder & Managing Director**, shares insights into the vision, discipline, and execution driving Synaty Automotive's rapid growth.

Your journey from a small village to becoming the founder of a bus body manufacturing company is remarkable. What inspired you to enter this industry, and what was the defining moment that led to the creation of Synaty Automotive?

My journey began in a small village, where I started with farming and later spent about 14 years working as a tour guide and French interpreter. During that time, I had the opportunity to closely observe the travel and tourism industry in India and abroad.

I noticed significant room for improvement in comfort, design, and safety. That's when the idea struck me - why not build buses that meet international standards?

That vision became the cornerstone of Synaty Automotive. Our tagline, "*Modify Dreams to Reality*," isn't just words - it embodies the way I approach business, transforming ideas into real, high-quality buses that passengers can experience.

Synaty is relatively new to the sleeper bus segment, yet in just a year, you've secured orders from some of the top bus operators. What do you believe sets Synaty apart and has helped the company gain such prominence so quickly?

Synaty's edge comes down to three fundamentals - quality, commitment, and trust. From the very beginning, we set a clear mandate - every bus must meet premium standards and be delivered on time.

We don't compromise on design, comfort, or finishing. Operators notice the difference immediately, and that's what builds credibility. It is this approach that has earned us the trust of some of India's leading operators, many of whom have come back with repeat orders.

Everything at Synaty seems highly streamlined, with processes that appear very organized. How did you design these systems, and which processes have the biggest impact on efficiency in bus building?

At Synaty, every process is system-driven, not dependent on any individual. From the outset, we focused on creating structured workflows that ensure consistency and efficiency.

The key processes that keep our production smooth include:

- **Proper planning:** laying out each stage in advance to avoid bottlenecks
- **Material management:** ensuring the right materials are available at the right time
- **Stage-wise quality checks:** verifying standards at every step
- **Dedicated teams:** specialized teams handling specific stages of production

Of all these, the biggest difference comes from rigorous quality control and disciplined workflow management - the backbone that allows us to maintain high standards while scaling quickly.

Bus body workshops, especially in North India, largely operate in a traditional way. What prompted you to adopt such a professional and system-driven approach with Synaty? Was it planned, or did you notice a specific gap in the industry?

I noticed a clear gap in the industry; many workshops still operate in traditional ways, with professionalism often missing.

From the start, I was determined that Synaty would be different - an organized, process-driven manufacturing unit where every task follows a clear standard. This wasn't a coincidence - it was a deliberate strategy to build a brand that could stand out, earn trust, and last over the long term.



ELECTRIC MOBILITY IS CLEARLY THE FUTURE OF TRANSPORTATION IN INDIA. THE SHIFT IS INEVITABLE, AND THE INDUSTRY WILL INCREASINGLY MOVE TOWARD CLEANER, SMARTER SOLUTIONS.

From your perspective, what's changing in India's bus body building industry, and where do you see it heading in the next few years?

The bus body building industry in India is evolving rapidly. It's no longer just about constructing the body anymore. Today, design, passenger comfort, and safety standards are equally critical.

Looking ahead, the sector will become more organized, process-driven, and technology-led. Companies that embrace structured workflows and innovation will set the benchmarks.

What are some of the latest trends you've been noticing in bus body building, whether in design, materials, or technology, that are changing the way buses are made in India?

I'm seeing a clear shift in the industry driven by four key trends:

- **Lightweight materials:** making buses more efficient and performance-oriented.
- **Enhanced interiors and luxury features:** elevating the passenger experience.
- **Smart layouts:** optimizing space for comfort and functionality.
- **Stricter safety standards:** raising the bar for reliability and protection.

These trends are not just improving buses; they're transforming expectations for operators and passengers alike.





Synaty Automotive Private Limited

Neemrana, Rajasthan – 301705

Established

January 2019

Infrastructure Size

13,000 sq. meters

Latest Models

- La Vie (Premium Sleeper Model)
- La Couchette (Sleeper Coach)
- Destino, Umang Pro (Seater Buses)
- Seniorita, Himmel, Karamel (Mini Bus)

Top Clients

- Vivek Travels
- Goldline Bus
- Ambbay Tour & Travels
- Kavery Tourist
- Deep Tourist
- Shah Travels
- Ramdalal Holidays
- Maharani Travels
- Gk Travels

Electric buses are becoming a major focus in India. What's your perspective on them, and does Synaty have plans to venture into electric mobility?

Electric mobility is clearly the future of transportation in India. The shift is inevitable, and the industry will increasingly move toward cleaner, smarter solutions.

We're actively preparing to enter the EV segment, and our focus will remain the same as always: delivering innovation and uncompromising quality. For us, it's not just about being part of the trend; it's about setting the standard.

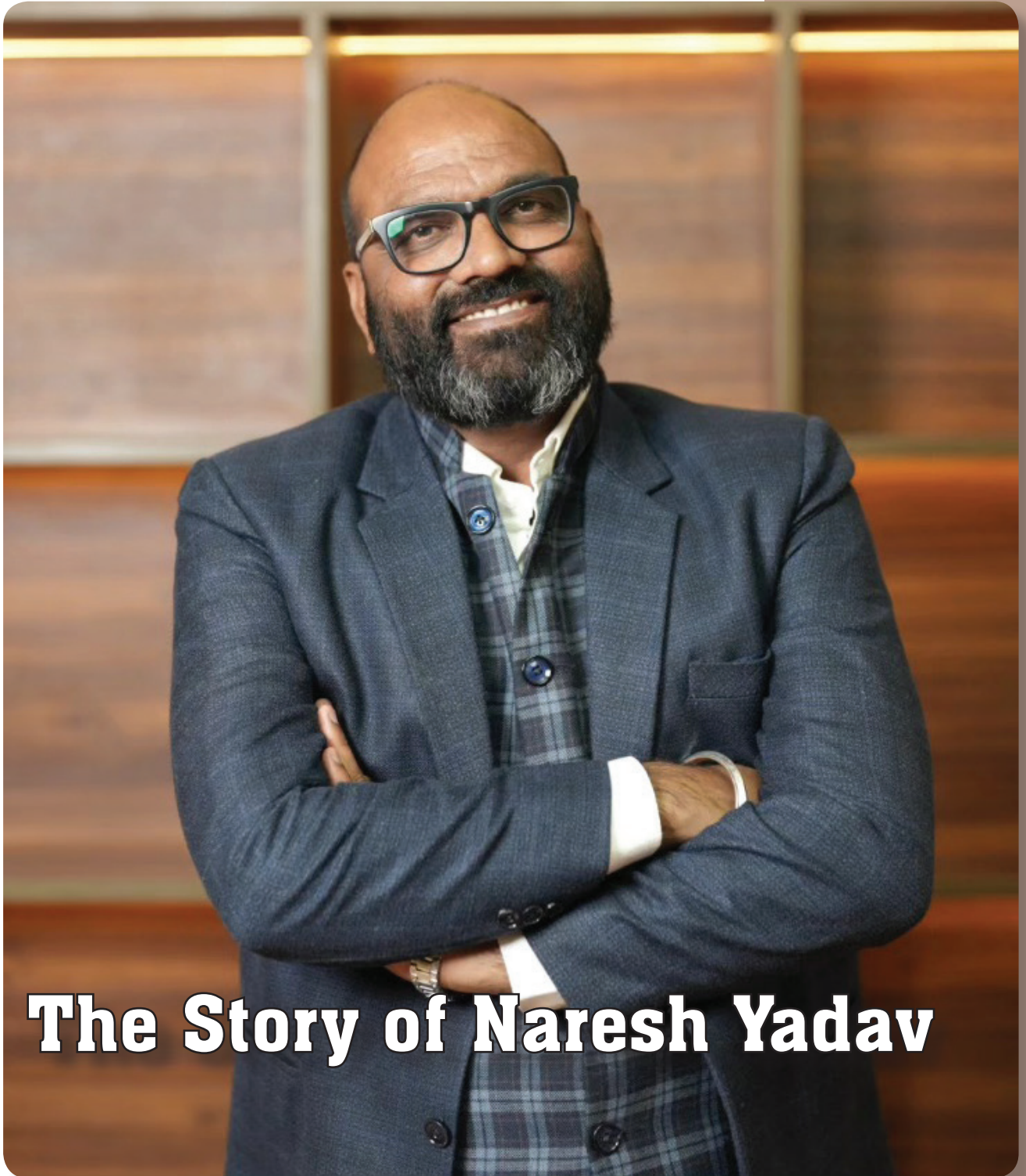
Looking ahead, what are your plans for Synaty? Are there any major goals or new directions you're particularly excited about?

Our overarching goal is to establish Synaty among India's leading bus body builders. To achieve this, we are focused on:

- Increasing production capacity
- Launching new models
- Meeting international standards

Ultimately, our vision is to deliver over 1,000 buses annually and earn recognition at a global level.

From Village Roots to Automotive Visionary



The Story of Naresh Yadav

MOBILITY INNOVATORS



Behind Synaty Automotive's rapid rise is the inspiring journey of Naresh Yadav, a founder whose vision, passion, and perseverance turned challenges into milestones. Born and raised in a small village on the Rajasthan-Haryana border, Naresh grew up helping his family with farming. His early experiences shaped a relentless work ethic and a unique understanding of people and journeys - a perspective that would later define Synaty's approach to passenger comfort and quality.

After earning his Bachelor of Arts in 2003, Naresh briefly pursued an MA in Political Science but chose a radically different path in 2005, traveling to Pondicherry to learn French. By 2006, he had completed a B2-level diploma and returned to Rajasthan, beginning a 14-year career as a tour guide and French interpreter. These years exposed him to travel and transportation standards worldwide, planting the seeds for his entrepreneurial vision.

In 2019, Naresh established Synaty Automotive with a small team to modify Tempo Travellers. Soon after, the COVID-19 pandemic temporarily halted operations. Through perseverance and strategic vision, Naresh, along with his wife Mrs. Rita Kumari, revived the business in 2022, scaling production from just 50 modified vehicles to over 1,600 by March 2025. Expansion continued with new plants and diversification into bus body building, Urbania modifications, and eventually sleeper buses, achieving 300+ buses by early 2025.

Naresh's goal is ambitious: 1,000+ buses annually, building a team of skilled craftsmen and professionals to redefine India's bus manufacturing landscape. His journey, from village roots to industrial leadership, exemplifies how vision, grit, and innovation can transform an industry.



Swamy Ayyappa Travels' Suresh Selvaraj on Long-Distance Luxury and Operational Discipline



Operating in one of India's most competitive and price-sensitive intercity bus markets, Swamy Ayyappa Travels has emerged as one of the most reputed premium bus brands in South India, built on a clear commitment to long-distance luxury operations and consistent service delivery. Headquartered in Salem, Tamil Nadu, the company has, since its establishment in 2014, steadily strengthened its presence across key southern corridors by prioritising reliability, passenger comfort, and disciplined operational practices.

Today, Swamy Ayyappa Travels operates a fleet of 75 buses across 26 intercity routes, connecting Tamil Nadu with Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Puducherry. Designed primarily for overnight and long-haul travel, the operator's services regularly clock over 700 kilometres per day on select routes underscoring a business model focused on endurance, operational consistency, and quality-led differentiation rather than short-haul volume-driven expansion.

In conversation with Coach Builders India, **Suresh Selvaraj, Managing Director**, explains how the company has deliberately stayed away from price-led competition, choosing instead to build a premium brand anchored in service differentiation, structured fleet maintenance, and data-driven route planning.

From value-added onboard offerings to long-term AMC-backed maintenance strategies, Selvaraj shares the operational philosophies that have enabled Swamy

Ayyappa Travels to sustain growth and credibility in a largely unorganised and cost-pressured industry.

Can you tell us about Swamy Ayyappa Travels, its origins, market presence, and how the brand has evolved over the years?

Established in 2014, Swamy Ayyappa Travels focuses exclusively on the luxury intercity segment, prioritizing long-distance routes to master extended operations and premium passenger experiences.

Today, we operate across Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Puducherry, specializing in high-demand south-south and south-central corridors. Our fleet averages 750 kilometers daily, and we previously operated routes as far as Mumbai (1,550 km). While currently suspended due to road diversions, we plan to reintroduce this service shortly with new Molitex low-floor luxury coaches.

Our growth is driven by service quality. We established market trust through premium offerings like complimentary meals, branded water, dedicated seating for women and passengers with disabilities, and trained onboard attendants.

Building on this, we recently launched our 'Captain Coach' sub-brand. This service ensures a superior travel experience through fresh-packed blankets, complimentary meals, and dedicated staff, reinforcing our commitment to cleanliness, comfort, and consistency.





The intercity bus segment is becoming increasingly competitive. How does Swamy Ayyappa Travels stay ahead without getting drawn into price wars?

We don't focus on tracking competitors; instead, we evaluate our own performance route by route. By operating a maximum of two services on most corridors, we can closely monitor occupancy, seat yield, and overall viability.

Our priority is maintaining a healthy average selling price (ASP). In today's environment, a minimum fare threshold is essential to offset rising fuel, maintenance, and manpower costs. Underpricing to match the competition isn't practical, as it eventually compromises service quality and vehicle upkeep.

We take a cautious, research-driven approach to route expansion, avoiding assumptions in favor of data. Before launching any service, we conduct month-long studies using online platforms and market data to assess existing services, occupancy, and actual demand.

We have consciously positioned ourselves as a premium operator, and our pricing reflects the level of service we deliver. Setting fares at a reasonable level allows us to invest in quality interiors and deliver a consistent onboard experience. Our customers accept this value proposition, choosing to pay a premium for reliability and well-maintained buses. Rather than chasing volume through discounting, we believe sustained growth comes from quality and disciplined pricing.

How important is fleet maintenance in long-distance operations, and what systems do you have in place to ensure reliability and performance?

For a long-distance operator, fleet maintenance is critical given the high daily mileage our vehicles cover. To manage this, we utilize customized in-house software that tracks every aspect of vehicle operations and upkeep.

Each morning, our team reviews digital job cards detailing scheduled services and maintenance histories. This allows us to prioritize preventive maintenance over reactive repairs. From the point of acquisition, we've secured five-year Annual Maintenance Contracts (AMC), ensuring 24/7 support. Currently, 99% of our servicing is handled at authorized dealer points to ensure the use of genuine parts and minimize breakdowns.



While we occasionally use local technicians for rare, remote emergencies, our software maintains a high standard of oversight by integrating fuel monitoring and staff tracking. This structured approach has significantly improved vehicle uptime and reduced unscheduled downtime, directly strengthening passenger confidence in our reliability.

When evaluating new routes for expansion, what key factors do you consider before launching a service?

We take a cautious, research-driven approach to route expansion, avoiding assumptions in favor of data. Before launching any service, we conduct month-long studies using online platforms and market data to assess existing services, occupancy, and actual demand.

Beyond simple metrics, we analyze the drivers of travel, such as education, healthcare, and industry. While high-visibility metro routes like Chennai-Coimbatore are attractive, we also prioritize Tier-2 city combinations where demand is stable and less saturated.

A key factor in our selection is train connectivity. We specifically target routes where rail frequency is limited or inconvenient, creating a clear opening for premium bus services. By identifying these gaps in

public transport and filling them with quality offerings, we ensure long-term sustainability rather than just chasing short-term volume.

What are the biggest challenges you face as a bus operator in today's market?

The industry's greatest challenge is the ongoing price war. New entrants often believe lowering fares is the fastest way to gain traction, but this is unsustainable. Modern passengers prioritize quality, reliability, and experience over price alone.

In the post-COVID era, expectations have shifted. Cleanliness, hygiene, punctual departures, and disciplined operations now matter more than marginal fare differences. Unfortunately, many operators enter the market without a grasp of these operational complexities; they disrupt routes with underpricing, only to exit shortly after, creating industry-wide instability.

Simultaneously, operating costs have surged. Since 2021, vehicle acquisition costs have risen by 30–40%, alongside higher tolls, wages, and maintenance expenses. Because ticket prices haven't increased proportionately, margins are under immense pressure. Navigating this imbalance between rising costs and static fares remains our most pressing hurdle.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

What emerging trends do you see shaping the bus fleet industry in the coming years?

The bus industry holds significant growth potential, particularly in the intercity segment, though it remains hindered by its largely unorganized nature. Low entry barriers encourage investment but often result in inconsistent quality and a lack of operational discipline.

Despite these hurdles, the industry has evolved. Modern luxury buses now offer ergonomics, technology, and sleeper configurations that rival or surpass other modes of transport. If effectively organized, the sector could become a formidable alternative to short- and medium-haul flights.

The path forward requires a shift from short-term pricing tactics to long-term, quality-driven models. As customer expectations rise, the industry's future depends on how well operators balance expansion with professionalism and consistency.

If you could suggest one policy change to the government to support the private bus industry, what would it be?

Taxation reform is the most impactful change needed in the private bus industry. While the central government introduced the All India Tourist Permit for a single-point taxation framework, implementation is inconsistent as several states have yet to align with it.

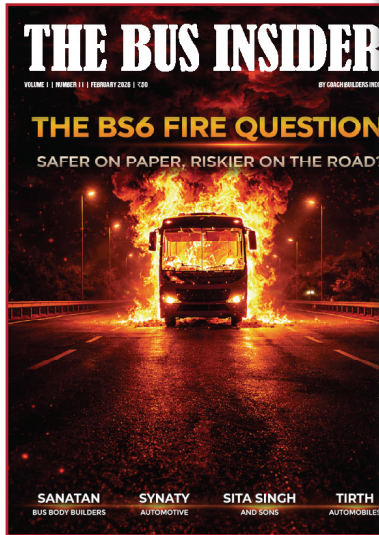
For seamless interstate operations, all states must uniformly recognize this system. Current variations in state-level taxes create unnecessary complexity and costs. Furthermore, tax rates vary wildly across borders; a standardized, transparent framework would reduce uncertainty and allow operators to plan investments more effectively.

As public transport is the backbone of mobility, coordinated action between central and state governments is vital. Aligning taxation and permits will not only support operators but also enhance service quality and accessibility for passengers nationwide.



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Future Autotech Secures CMVR Certification for FUTURA 12M Electric Bus



Bhopal-based electric bus OEM Future Autotech Global Ventures Pvt. Ltd. has secured CMVR certification for its debut 12-metre sleeper-seater electric bus, the FUTURA 12M, marking a key milestone in its entry into India's electric commercial vehicle segment.

The certification enables the company to commercially deploy the electric bus in compliance with Indian regulatory standards, reinforcing its focus on delivering safe, efficient, and sustainable mobility solutions.

Alongside CMVR approval, the company has also secured AIS 052, AIS 119, and AIS 153 certifications for its 12m platform, covering sleeper, seater, and hybrid configurations.

These certifications underscore adherence to stringent safety and design norms required for modern bus applications, particularly in the long-distance segment.

Future Autotech FUTURA 12M

The FUTURA 12M is a 12-meter electric bus powered by a 422

kWh battery pack, offering a claimed range of 350–370 km on a single charge. It also supports fast-charging capabilities, with a charging time of approximately 45–60 minutes, enabling higher vehicle uptime and improved operational efficiency for fleet operators.

The sleeper-seater configuration is aimed at enhancing passenger comfort for intercity and long-haul travel, an area seeing increasing electrification interest.

The development comes at a time when India's bus segment is witnessing a gradual shift towards electrification, driven by rising fuel costs, emission concerns, and policy support.

Electric buses are increasingly being seen as a viable alternative to conventional diesel-powered fleets, particularly for both public and private transport operators seeking to optimize operating costs while meeting sustainability targets.

Commenting on the milestone, Deepak Verma, Founder and CMD, said, "We envision a cleaner and

smarter India powered by electric mobility. By providing advanced EV buses, we aim to solve operational challenges for bus operators, reduce dependency on diesel, and contribute to the transformation of government and public transport infrastructure into a sustainable and innovative ecosystem."

As part of its growth strategy, Future Autotech Global Ventures Pvt. Ltd. plans to expand its product portfolio with 7–9 metre electric buses, targeting a wider range of applications across urban and intercity mobility. With regulatory approvals in place and expansion plans underway, the company is positioning itself to tap into the growing demand for electric buses in India.





Human Error at the Wheel **Why Driver Behaviour** **Remains the Biggest Risk** **in India's Bus Industry**

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



India's road transport sector witnessed one of its most alarming weeks in recent times. In just the past seven days, nearly 50 lives were lost in bus accidents across the country. It is a stark reminder that despite advancements in vehicle technology and infrastructure, safety challenges remain deeply rooted.

As a manufacturer supplying aluminium sheets and coils to the commercial vehicle ecosystem, safety is not just a responsibility for us - it is a commitment. At INALCO, we ensure that the materials we supply meet stringent quality standards and are reliable for use in bus bodies and components. However, while structural integrity and material quality are critical, the exterior alone does not define safety outcomes on the road.

Increasingly, it is evident that the human element, particularly driver behaviour, plays an equally, if not more, decisive role in determining safety.

According to the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), India recorded over 4.8 lakh road accidents and more than 1.72 lakh fatalities in 2023, with driver fault accounting for the majority of cases. This underscores the extent to which human behaviour continues to dominate road safety outcomes.

Overspeeding: The Dominant Risk Factor

Overspeeding remains the single largest contributor to road fatalities. According to MoRTH's data, overspeeding alone accounted for over 68% of total road accident deaths in 2023. In the context of bus operations, this risk is amplified. Tight schedules, competition among operators, and performance-linked incentives often push drivers to exceed safe speed limits. The result is reduced reaction time and significantly higher crash severity, particularly on highways.

Fatigue: A Hidden but Critical Threat

Driver fatigue is one of the most underreported yet dangerous causes of bus accidents. Long-distance routes, night operations, and irregular rest cycles severely impact driver alertness.

These risks are particularly pronounced on high-speed corridors, which are frequently traversed by long-distance buses. According to traffic analysis data reported by The Times of India, over 54% of accidents on the Agra–Lucknow Expressway were attributed to drivers falling asleep at the wheel, highlighting fatigue as a leading risk factor on high-speed corridors.

Despite its significance, fatigue-related accident data is not consistently captured in national databases, pointing to a major gap in policy and monitoring frameworks.

Skill Gaps and Training Deficiencies

India is facing a shortage of around 22 lakh skilled drivers, as highlighted by Nitin Gadkari during a recent Lok Sabha session. He also pointed out that a significant number of road accidents and fatalities can be attributed to inadequately trained drivers.

The gap is closely linked to the limited availability of structured driver training infrastructure, which continues to impact both driver quality and road safety outcomes. For the bus and commercial vehicle segment, this challenge is further compounded by the increasing complexity of modern vehicles and operating conditions.

In response, the Central Government has announced a ₹4,500 crore initiative to establish 1,600 driving training institutes across the country in a phased manner. The programme aims to strengthen the driver training ecosystem, improve skill levels, and address the long-standing shortage of qualified drivers.

Distraction and Inattention

Driver distraction is an emerging concern, particularly with increasing mobile phone usage. According to data compiled in road safety studies and hospital-based research, mobile phone usage is a growing contributor to road accidents in India, alongside speeding and fatigue. For bus drivers responsible for dozens of passengers, even a momentary distraction can lead to severe consequences.

TECHNOLOGY AS A SAFETY ENABLER

As the industry grapples with driver-related risks, technology is emerging as a critical enabler in improving safety outcomes. Increasingly, fleet operators are adopting Driver Monitoring Systems (DMS) that use AI-powered cameras and sensors to track driver behaviour in real time.

These systems can detect fatigue, drowsiness, distraction, and mobile phone usage, alerting drivers instantly and enabling fleet managers to intervene proactively. In high-risk operations such as long-distance and sleeper bus routes, such technologies are proving particularly valuable.

In addition, features such as Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), including lane departure warnings, forward collision alerts, and automatic emergency braking, are gradually making their way into commercial vehicles. While adoption in the bus segment is still evolving, these systems have the potential to significantly reduce dependency on human reflexes alone.

According to industry estimates and pilot deployments, fleets equipped with driver monitoring technologies have reported notable reductions in unsafe driving events and fatigue-related incidents.

Systemic Pressures Shaping Driver Behaviour

Driver error is often a reflection of broader systemic challenges. Across the industry, several factors influence behaviour:

- ▶ Unrealistic trip schedules
- ▶ Pressure to maximize daily runs
- ▶ Lack of adequate rest infrastructure
- ▶ Incentive structures linked to speed rather than safety

According to multiple accident analyses and transport studies, rule violations, inadequate training, and weak enforcement continue to be recurring themes in road crashes across India.

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.



The Industry Imperative

Improving safety outcomes requires a collective effort across the value chain. While manufacturers like us remain focused on delivering high-quality, reliable materials that contribute to structural safety, there is a growing need to address human-centric risks with equal urgency.

Key interventions include:

- ▶ Regulating driving hours and enforcing rest periods
- ▶ Strengthening driver training and certification systems
- ▶ Deploying fatigue detection and driver monitoring technologies
- ▶ Aligning operational incentives with safety outcomes

For OEMs, body builders, and material solution providers, integrating driver-centric design, such as ergonomic cabins and advanced driver-assist systems, can further help mitigate human error.

Conclusion

The loss of 50 lives in a single week is not just a statistic - it is a reflection of a deeper, systemic issue.

As industry stakeholders, we must recognize that safety is not defined by materials or machinery alone. While advancements in vehicle construction and material quality continue to play a vital role, the human factor remains the most critical variable in road safety.

For India's bus industry, addressing driver behaviour is no longer optional - it is central to building a safer, more reliable, and future-ready transport ecosystem.



Electric Bus Sales Volume in India in February 2026

BY VIOLINA PEGU

India's electric bus segment saw a notable surge in February 2026, with registrations rising sharply over the previous month. As per data from the Vahan Dashboard (updated March 12, 2026), total electric bus registrations stood at 578 units in February, compared to 391 units recorded in January.

This marks a month-on-month growth of 187 units, translating to a 48% increase in registrations.

In terms of manufacturer performance, Switch Mobility led the market, with JBM Electric securing the second position and PMI Electro Mobility ranking third.



MARKET INSIGHTS

Overall Market Performance

Category	Units
February 2026 Sales	578
January 2026 Sales	391
Difference	+187
MoM Change	+48%

Market Leadership: Clear Top Three Emerging

The competitive landscape is becoming sharper. A clear top three has now formed.

- **Switch Mobility** leads decisively
- **JBM Electric** holds a strong second
- **PMI Electro Mobility** consolidates third

Together, these three players control nearly 89% of the market.

Switch Mobility

Switch Mobility surged ahead in February 2026 with 280 units. This sharp jump of 180% over January has pushed its market share to 48.4%. The scale of this lead is significant. Nearly one out of every two electric buses registered during the month came from Switch Mobility.

JBM Electric

JBM Electric maintained a steady growth curve, clocking 151 units in February 2026. This reflects a 37.3% increase over the previous month and translates into a 26.1% market share.

PMI Electro Mobility

PMI Electro Mobility continued its upward movement, registering 83 units in February 2026. The company posted a 66% growth over January, taking its market share to 14.4%. It retains its third position in the market.

The Broader Market

Beyond the top three, we saw noticeable pressure in February 2026, reflecting uneven order flows and execution cycles. Aeroeagle Automobiles reported 20 units, marking a 31% decline compared to January. Olectra Greentech witnessed a sharper decline, with volumes dropping to 20 units, down 56.5%, suggesting a pause in large order fulfilments.

Tata Motors also saw a dip, recording 18 units in February, a decline of 30.8% month-on-month, as volumes remained relatively subdued in the electric bus segment. Meanwhile, Pinnacle Mobility experienced the steepest fall, registering just 2 units, down 92% from January, highlighting the impact of lumpy orders and limited execution visibility.



OEM-Wise Electric Bus Sales – February 2026

Rank	OEM	Feb-26	Jan-26	Difference	% Change	Market Share
1	Switch Mobility	280	100	+180	180%	48.4%
2	JBM Electric	151	110	+41	37.3%	26.1%
3	PMI Electro Mobility	83	50	+33	66%	14.4%
4	Aeroeagle Automobiles	20	29	-9	-31%	3%
5	Olectra Greentech	20	46	-26	-56.5%	3.5%
6	Tata Motors	18	26	-8	-30.8%	3.1%
7	VE Commercial Vehicles	4	5	-1	-20%	0.7%
8	Pinnacle Mobility	2	25	-23	-92%	0.3%

STUDY

redBus Pink Report

India's First Women Mobility Index Report



62%

4.5★ ★

85%

STUDY

Women are no longer a niche segment in India's intercity bus market. They are fast becoming its most decisive growth driver.

redBus recently released the "Pink Report" - India's first Women's Mobility Index, offering a data-backed view of how women are travelling across the country. Based on platform data from 2019 to 2025, the report tracks a fundamental shift in participation, behaviour, and decision-making.

Market Expansion: Women Driving Growth

Between 2019 and 2025, women travellers on the platform grew by 136%, compared to 72% overall market growth. Women's share of bus travellers increased from 23% in 2019 to 33% in 2025.

This shows that women are not only participating in intercity bus travel in larger numbers but are also becoming a key driver of demand.

The implication for operators is clear. The rising share of women travellers presents a strong opportunity for future growth in the intercity segment.

Growth Across All Regions

Although South India still leads in the proportion of women bus passengers, the increase in female

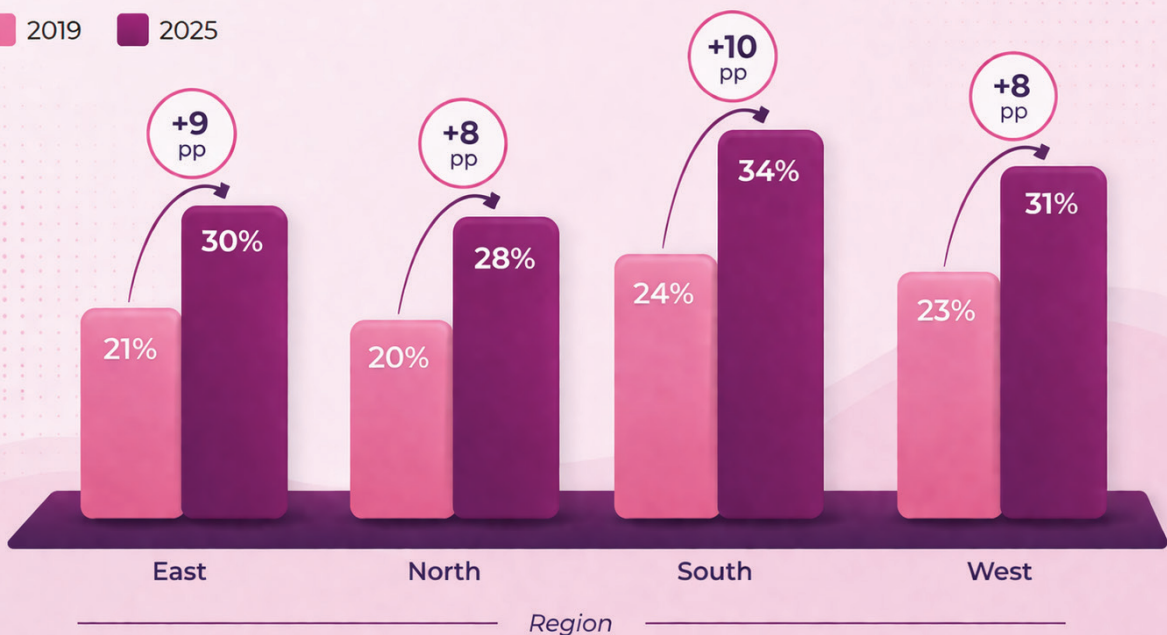
travellers is now evident across the entire country. From 2019 to 2025, every region, North, East, West, and South, has experienced consistent growth in women taking intercity buses.

While gains vary, the trend is consistent across geographies, confirming that this is a pan-India shift.



Increase in the Share of Women Travellers Across All Four Regions

2019 2025



EAST: Andaman And Nicobar Islands, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Nepal, Orissa, Sikkim, Tripura, West Bengal

NORTH: Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand

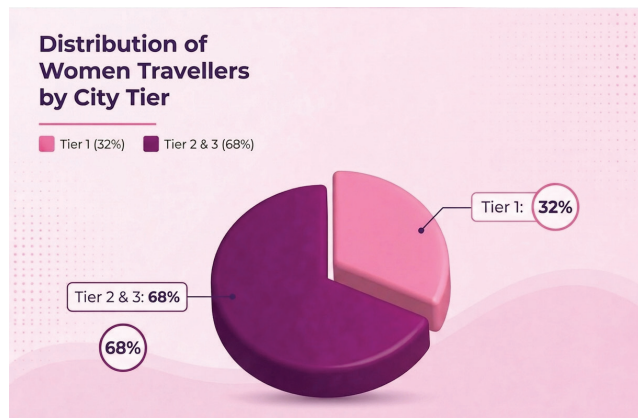
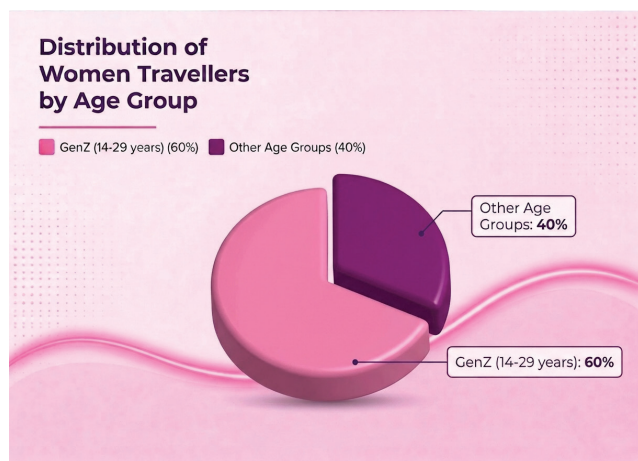
SOUTH: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Pondicherry, Tamil Nadu

WEST: Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Telangana

Gen Z and Solo Travel: A Structural Shift

A new generation is redefining intercity travel in India. Women aged 14–29 account for 60% of all women passengers, making Gen Z the dominant segment in the market.

At the same time, solo travel is rising sharply. Nearly 2 in 5 trips by women are now taken alone, with Gen Z accounting for 68% of these journeys.



Tier-2 and Tier-3 Markets Are Driving Demand

The report highlights a critical shift in origin markets:

- 68% of women travellers originate from Tier-2 and Tier-3 towns
- Only 32% come from metro cities

This indicates that demand is concentrated in non-metro corridors, where bus connectivity remains the primary mode of intercity travel.

Trust Signals Are Driving Bookings

Women travellers display more structured and deliberate booking patterns. A majority book tickets at least one day in advance (62%), compared to 48% of men.

More importantly, decision-making is shaped by trust signals rather than price alone:

- Presence of other women passengers (33%)
- Bus ratings from women travellers (47%)

This clearly indicates that safety perception is no longer abstract. It is data-driven and socially validated. Hence, visibility of these signals is becoming a key lever for conversion.

Experience Depends on Execution

Booking is only the first step. Retention is built on execution. The report highlights four key factors shaping the onboard experience:

- **Staff behaviour** (50%)
- **Live tracking** (48%)
- **Rest stop hygiene** (36%)
- **Boarding point safety** (29%)

This exposes a critical gap in the industry. While digital platforms have improved discovery and booking, on-ground service consistency remains uneven. For operators, this is where brand differentiation will be won.

Women’s Mobility Index: State-Level Insights

The report introduces a Women’s Mobility Index, ranking states based on:

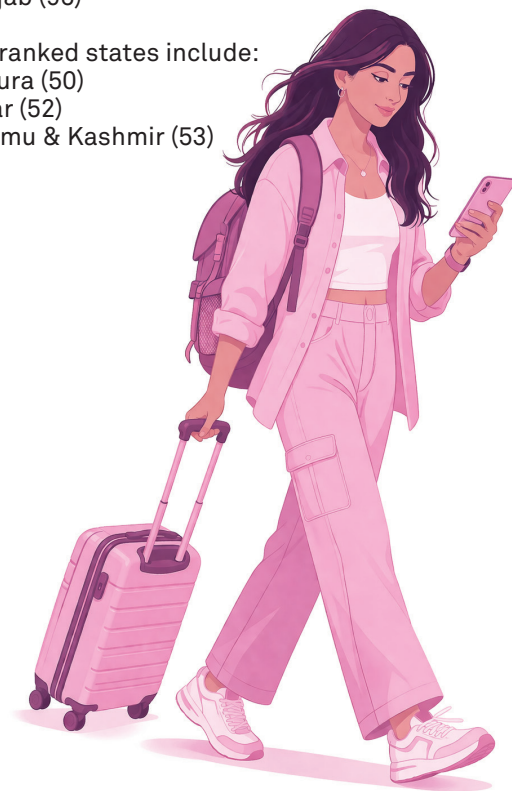
- Women’s share of travel
- Solo travel proportion
- Long-distance travel participation

Top-performing states include:

- Assam (100)
- Andhra Pradesh (97)
- Punjab (95)

Lowest-ranked states include:

- Tripura (50)
- Bihar (52)
- Jammu & Kashmir (53)



Beyond the Fleet: Why Modern Strategy and Tech Are the New Fuel for Go Tour Travels



“It’s no longer just about the number of buses; it’s about the intelligence behind the network and the loyalty of the passenger,” says Narendra V., Managing Partner, Go Tour Travels and Holidays.

OPERATOR SPOTLIGHT

The intercity travel landscape in India is undergoing a seismic shift. In an era of cut-throat competition and rising operational costs, the traditional "buy and run" model is fading. For Narendra V. and Vamsi Krishna M., the leadership behind Go Tour Travels and Holidays, the future isn't just about expansion, it's about a sophisticated, tech-driven approach to service and scale.

From an IT background to managing a fleet of 52 premium AC coaches, the founders understand that staying ahead requires more than just engines. It requires an analytical mindset and a commitment to quality.

In this exclusive conversation, Narendra V., Managing Partner, Go Tour Travels and Holidays, reveals the strategic blueprint that has powered Go Tour's growth since 2016.

Can you tell us about your journey? How did Go Tour establish its market presence?

Our foundation is built on passion rather than just profit. I came from an IT background, but my heart was always in the bus industry. We didn't start big; we started smart in 2016 with four leased buses.

By focusing on a "service-first" philosophy, we transitioned into a full-scale operation. Today, we command a fleet of 52 buses, defined by our 100% air-conditioned service and a reputation for reliability in the South Indian market.

In a hyper-competitive market, what is your "Smart Strategy" for staying ahead?

Competition is inevitable, but we don't engage in price wars. Instead, we invest in building a "loyalty ecosystem". Our customers choose Go Tour not just for the destination, but for the consistency of the experience.

By staying true to our core service standards, we've created a barrier to entry for others that only quality can build.

“

IT'S NO LONGER JUST ABOUT THE NUMBER OF BUSES; IT'S ABOUT THE INTELLIGENCE BEHIND THE NETWORK AND THE LOYALTY OF THE PASSENGER.”



TOURS & TRIPS

OPERATOR SPOTLIGHT



How do you leverage technology and professional maintenance to ensure fleet performance?

Modern fleet management demands high-tech oversight. We ensure the longevity and safety of our fleet through Annual Maintenance Contracts (AMC) directly with the OEM's.

This ensures that our tech stays updated and our buses are serviced by the people who built them, minimizing downtime and maximizing safety.

What is your process for adding new routes to the Go Tour network?

We never guess; we survey. Our expansion is preceded by a personal route audit where we analyze the "Premium Potential" of a corridor. Since we exclusively operate AC coaches, we look for routes where passengers value comfort and are willing to pay for a superior travel environment.

Full Name of Company
Go Tour Travels and Holidays

Headquartered at
Bangalore, Karnataka

Established on
2016

Fleet size
52 Premium Coaches

Operational Footprint
26 Routes

Geographic Reach
Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh,
Telangana, and Maharashtra



What are the primary hurdles currently facing the bus fleet industry?

Running a modern fleet is a complex balancing act. Our top five challenges include:

1. **Taxation Complexity:** The need for more streamlined interstate tax structures.
2. **Regulatory Hurdles:** Navigating permit policies.
3. **Market Discipline:** Combating unhealthy competition and predatory pricing.
4. **Talent Acquisition:** Sourcing professional, disciplined drivers.
5. **Crew Retention:** Maintaining a motivated and loyal workforce.

What "Smart Trends" do you believe will define the future of this industry?

The integration of sophisticated technology is the defining trend. However, we must be cautious that the rise of complex electronics and wiring in modern vehicles requires a much higher level of technical literacy and maintenance discipline than in the past.

What is your primary request to the government for the betterment of this sector?

We need "Industry Status". Go Tour alone employs over 300 people, and the sector as a whole is a massive economic engine. Granting industry status would unlock better financial structures and provide the regulatory respect a sector of this size deserves.

What are the common pitfalls you see new operators making?

The biggest mistake is lacking confidence in your own service. New operators often panic and engage in "unhealthy competition" or "underpricing seat fares". These are short-term tactics that destroy long-term brand value.

What is your core advice for those looking to scale a sustainable bus business?

Focus on healthy competition and fair pricing. If you provide a service that is genuinely superior, the market will reward you with a fair price. Growth is a marathon: build your brand on trust, maintain your fleet with precision, and the scale will follow.



25.6 M & 300 Passengers

Volvo Launches 7800 Electric Bi-Articulated Bus in Mexico

Volvo Buses has launched the Volvo 7800 Electric, the first electric articulated and bi-articulated bus manufactured in Mexico. The buses, built on Volvo Buses’ global Volvo BZR electromobility platform, are aimed at enhancing Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems in the country.

The announcement was made in March 2026. The new vehicles will support higher passenger capacities while reducing emissions in urban transport networks.

The bi-articulated Volvo 7800 Electric measures 25.6 metres in length and can carry up to 300 passengers.

The articulated version accommodates up to 191 passengers. Both models feature a 250 kWh charging capacity and come with maintenance contracts, spare parts access, and timely service support to ensure uninterrupted operations.

The buses also include Volvo Buses’ latest active safety systems, enhancing protection for pedestrians and cyclists. In addition, a connectivity and circularity model will be offered, claimed to be unique in the Mexican market.

“With the launch of the new Volvo 7800 Electric here in Mexico, we are taking a solid step in our transition towards electromobility in the country, ensuring cleaner, safer, and more sustainable and reliable transport solutions for the BRT systems,” said Rafael Kisel, President of Volvo Group Mexico.

Both the articulated and bi-articulated models will be manufactured at Volvo Buses’ Mexico plant, with first deliveries expected in 2026. The BZR platform allows adaptation to various operational needs, supporting flexible deployment in public transport systems.

Specification	Volvo 7800 Electric (Articulated)	Volvo 7800 Electric (Bi-Articulated)
Length	18.0 metres	25.6 metres
Height	3.43 meters	3.43 meters
Width	2.5 meters	2.5 meters
Permitted GVW	34,000 kg	47,000 kg
Energy Storage	540 kWh or 630 kWh	540 kWh, 630 kWh or 720 kWh
Passenger Capacity	191 passengers	300 passengers
Charging Power	250 kWh	250 kWh
Safety Features	Volvo active safety systems	Volvo active safety systems
Platform	Volvo BZR electromobility platform	Volvo BZR electromobility platform
Maintenance	Full maintenance contract + spare parts	Full maintenance contract + spare parts





Solaris Showcases Urbino 10.5 Electric Midibus with Modular Drive at Mobility Move 2026

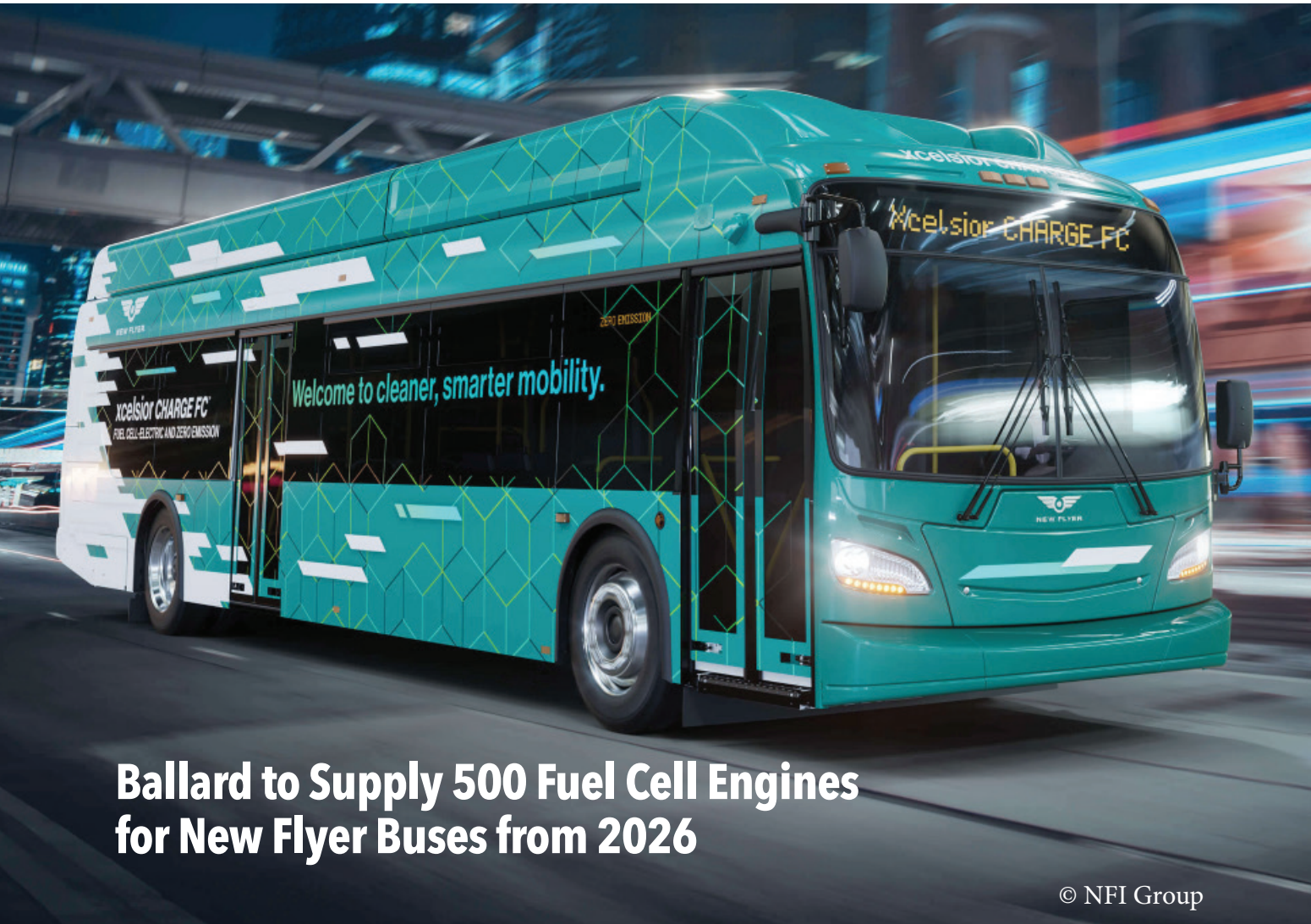
Solaris Bus & Coach introduced the Solaris Urbino 10.5 electric at Mobility Move 2026, one of Europe's key trade fair shows dedicated to sustainable public transport.. The 10.5-metre platform addresses a clear operational gap between full-size 12-metre buses and smaller shuttle vehicles—an increasingly relevant segment for dense European cities.

For operators, the Urbino 10.5 offers a balance of maneuverability and capacity, enabling deployment on routes with tighter turning radii or fluctuating passenger demand

without compromising zero-emission targets. This is particularly valuable as transit agencies shift toward network optimisation and demand-responsive planning.

A standout feature is Solaris' modular drive architecture. Operators can configure battery capacity, drivetrain layout, and energy systems according to route-specific requirements to optimise for range, passenger load, or lifecycle cost. This marks a broader OEM shift away from one-size-fits-all platforms toward adaptable vehicle ecosystems.

The model also integrates advanced energy management systems, regenerative braking, and enhanced battery packaging. Together, these features aim to improve efficiency and reduce total cost of ownership, which are key decision metrics for fleet managers navigating electrification transitions. As cities accelerate decarbonisation policies, midibuses like the Urbino 10.5 are gaining traction as flexible assets within mixed fleets. Solaris' approach signals where the industry is headed: modular, scalable platforms designed to meet diverse and rapidly changing urban mobility needs.



Ballard to Supply 500 Fuel Cell Engines for New Flyer Buses from 2026

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Ballard Power Systems has secured a major supply agreement with New Flyer for 500 hydrogen fuel cell engines, with deliveries set to commence in the later part of 2026. The order will support the continued rollout of hydrogen-powered transit solutions across North America, particularly within New Flyer's zero-emission platforms such as the New Flyer Xcelsior CHARGE H2.

For transit operators, the deal underscores growing confidence in hydrogen as a complementary technology to battery-electric buses. While battery-electric models remain dominant in urban deployments, hydrogen fuel cell buses are increasingly being evaluated for high-utilisation routes, longer distances, and operations where downtime for charging is a constraint. Faster refuelling cycles and extended range profiles position hydrogen as a viable solution for demanding duty cycles.

Ballard's fuel cell modules are engineered for durability, high efficiency, and consistent performance

across varying climates. These are critical factors for fleet operators managing diverse service conditions. The integration of these modules into New Flyer's platforms will enable agencies to expand zero-emission fleets while maintaining operational flexibility.

From an industry perspective, this order highlights a broader diversification in propulsion strategies. OEMs and suppliers are moving toward multi-technology portfolios, allowing transit agencies to align vehicle choice with route-specific requirements and infrastructure readiness.

The partnership also reflects the importance of collaboration across the value chain, as governments and operators accelerate decarbonisation targets. Hydrogen, alongside battery-electric technology, is expected to play a key role in achieving long-term emissions reduction goals in heavy-duty transport.

Wrightbus Wins Order to Deliver 55 Electric Buses to Manchester

Wrightbus has secured a contract to supply 55 battery-electric buses to Transport for Greater Manchester, reinforcing its foothold in the UK's fast-scaling zero-emission bus market. The order forms part of Greater Manchester's wider strategy to decarbonise public transport and accelerate the transition toward a fully integrated, low-emission network.

The vehicles, expected to include models from the Wrightbus StreetDeck Electroliner and Wrightbus GB Kite Electroliner ranges, will be deployed across high-demand urban corridors. Their introduction is aligned with the region's push to modernise fleet operations while meeting increasingly stringent emissions targets set at both local and national levels.

For operators, the deal highlights the growing maturity of battery-electric technology. Improvements in battery density, charging strategies, and energy management systems have made electric buses more viable for intensive urban duty cycles. Wrightbus' Electroliner platform, in particular, is designed to deliver operational efficiency, extended range, and reduced total cost of ownership, key considerations for large-scale fleet procurement.

The Manchester order also reflects increasing

confidence among transport authorities in the reliability of zero-emission solutions. As infrastructure rollouts, such as depot charging and grid upgrades, gain pace, cities are moving beyond pilot projects toward full network electrification. In this context, OEMs capable of delivering scalable, proven platforms are gaining a competitive edge.

Beyond emissions reduction, electric buses are reshaping the passenger experience. Lower noise levels, smoother acceleration, and enhanced onboard design contribute to improved comfort and accessibility, supporting broader modal shift objectives.

For Wrightbus, the contract signals continued commercial momentum in a competitive European landscape, where manufacturers are vying for large municipal tenders. The company's dual portfolio, spanning both battery-electric and hydrogen fuel cell offerings, including the Wrightbus Hydroliner, positions it to address diverse operational requirements across different cities.

As Greater Manchester advances its sustainability roadmap, the deployment of these vehicles will serve as a key milestone, both in reducing urban emissions and in setting a benchmark for scalable electrification strategies across the UK bus sector.





IVECO BUS Strengthens School Mobility in Brazil with New Batch of School Buses

IVECO BUS continues to strengthen school mobility in Brazil through the delivery of a new batch of vehicles under the federal Caminho da Escola programme, which aims to provide over 14,000 school buses by the end of 2026. As part of this initiative, IVECO BUS handed over more than 150 units of the 15-210 ORE 3 model during an official ceremony at its Sete Lagoas industrial facility in Minas Gerais.

This delivery is part of a total 2,000 vehicles scheduled for the programme in 2026, adding to the over 12,000 buses already supplied by the company since joining the initiative.

IVECO BUS has been actively supporting Caminho da Escola for over 15 years, designing and manufacturing buses locally to meet the specific requirements of Brazilian school transport. Its 10-190 ORE 2 and 15-210 ORE 3 models are engineered for safety, operational efficiency, and accessibility, featuring mobile seating systems for passengers with reduced mobility. The 15-210 ORE 3 model accommodates up to 59 students plus the driver, combining robustness with comfort for long-distance and rural transport.

All vehicles are produced at IVECO BUS's Sete Lagoas plant, contributing to the growth of Brazil's industrial ecosystem while supporting public policies aimed at expanding access to education nationwide. Through this programme, IVECO BUS continues to deliver reliable, locally tailored mobility solutions that advance both social and industrial objectives.



Alexander Dennis to Supply 164 Additional Buses to Arriva UK

Alexander Dennis has secured an order from Arriva UK Bus for 164 additional low-emission buses, comprising 113 Enviro200 single-deckers and 51 Enviro400 double-deckers. This brings the total of recent deployments to 221 vehicles, marking the largest single order Arriva has placed with Alexander Dennis to date.

The new buses will be allocated across 15 depots in England and Wales, with deliveries scheduled throughout summer and autumn 2026. Among the Enviro200 models, 97 will measure 11.8 metres with heavy-duty six-cylinder engines, while smaller 10.8 metre and 8.9 metre variants will feature four-cylinder engines. The Enviro400 double-deckers are 10.5 metres long and 4.2 metres high. All vehicles incorporate Alexander Dennis' SmartPack efficiency technology to reduce emissions, improve fuel economy, and qualify for Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) incentives.

Martijn Gilbert, Managing Director of Arriva UK Bus, highlighted that the order supports local manufacturing in the North of England while expanding Arriva's low-emission fleet across the UK. This follows previous deliveries, including 57 Enviro200 and Enviro400 buses earlier in 2026 and 30 next-generation Enviro400EV electric double-deckers for London. With these investments, Arriva continues to modernise its operations, enhance service quality, and reinforce its long-standing partnership with Alexander Dennis in delivering sustainable, high-performance urban transport solutions.



Mercedes-Benz to Deliver 50 eCitaro Buses to Brussels

Mercedes-Benz is set to deliver 50 eCitaro battery-electric buses to Brussels, supporting the city's ongoing transition toward zero-emission public transport. The buses will be deployed by MIVB/STIB, with the first units already in passenger service since late January 2026. The remaining standard buses are expected to be rolled out across key routes by the end of March, while articulated variants will follow later in the year.

The new eCitaro buses will operate on routes including 47, 56, 58, and 83, using depot-based charging systems. Future articulated units will serve additional routes such as 46, 53, 87, and 89, supported by charging infrastructure at Pannenhuis and Westland-Moortebeek. With this deployment, MIVB/STIB's zero-emission fleet will expand to approximately 140 buses.

Prior to this addition, the operator's fleet comprised 93 battery-electric buses, alongside 400 hybrid and 357 diesel vehicles. Since the start of its electrification programme, the electric fleet has collectively covered over 8 million kilometres, contributing to a reduction of more than 9,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions based on Belgium's energy mix.

The delivery is part of a larger 2023 order for 100 eCitaro buses. Looking ahead, MIVB/STIB plans to procure around 300 additional electric buses to replace a significant portion of its diesel fleet. The operator has set a target to transition to a fully electric bus fleet by 2035, reinforcing Brussels' commitment to sustainable and low-emission urban mobility.



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info@georgianinfotech.com
www.georgianinfotech.com