



# ARPAN SOCIETY

(Association for Research on People And Nature)

Ref: **ARPAN/ Sec/ 008/2009/**

5<sup>th</sup> February 2016

**To**

The Secretary

Department of Transport, Govt of Tripura

New Capital Complex, Agartala

**Sub:** *Regarding enhancement of city bus service in Agartala thereof;*

Dear Sir,

This is in reference to the discussion held at your chamber with the undersigned today regarding better Public Transport System in Agartala Municipal Corporation area; I would like to point out the following issues for your kind consideration and implementation for larger interest.

1. While appreciating your effort to introduce more city bus around Agartala for better connectivity, we still feel there are some areas, which needs your thoughtful intervention. Urban Transport Corporation Ltd has been leasing out the buses to private parties but it doesn't help the movement within city nor reduces the growth of small and personal vehicles on the street as well.
2. After increase the bus fleets under JNNURM with other sub-divisions like Bishalgarh, Mohanpur and Champaknagar, the facilities for the population residing in those areas substantially increased but the movement of the people in city area like Pratapgarh, Dhaleswar, Indranagar, Abhoynagar, Banamalipur, Ramnagar, Krishnanagar and in new capital complex has remained same; rather become worst. Still people of the city are solely dependent on auto rickshaw or paddle rickshaw (now become motor rickshaw). As a result, mobility of the people residing the main city and surrounding are facing trouble in movement within the city that encouraged them to buy a car or motor bike.
3. It is also fact; private parties are less interested to run the bus in the main city extended up to new capital complex, Tripura University, Jogendranagar Railway station and Bodhjunnagar industrial estate despite being most lucrative for business. The reason is very simple: nobody is ready to fight with the regimented auto rickshaws and paddle (motorised) rickshaws on these routes. Instead, they prefer to take the bus for longer routes to avoid fights and stay away from discipline and punctual movement. Since capital investment of those buses are borne by the government, the private parties are not bothering it's maintenance, cleaning and retaining the aesthetic beauty of these buses. It is quite evident, if you look at the first phase buses of JNNURM – no gentleman is encouraged to board in it because of dirty seats and inside, no punctuality in movement etc.

Unfortunately, none of the officer of the department or traffic police paid any attention to improve the situation rather allowed them to do as their wish. Its pain us, when we see electronic display is shuttered by badly written texts, A/C bus is turned into a simple carrier and destroying all the public funded buses only due to non-regulation of the government.



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4. At the beginning, we have been contemplating against the system of private operation of bus without any monitoring. We have been fighting for scheduled, dedicated, comfortable, clean and affordable bus service in the city (not in other towns) covering 10 km radius at 10 minutes interval between 6 am and 10 pm to increase the mobility of Agartala, thereby, to arrest the menace of auto and rickshaws, growth of personalised vehicle and traffic congestion in the main city. However, still it is not happened.
5. **At this stage, ARPAN suggests you to run at least 15 buses from three city terminating points – Chandrapur, Nagerjala and Lichubagan by TUTCL management (either by hiring staff or by bringing deputation from potential units of the government) covering Agartala airport, Tripura University, Bodhjungle touching upon all important roads of the city spread over Pratapgarh, Dhaleswar, Indranagar, Abhoynagar, Banamalipur, Ramnagar, Krishnanagar and in new capital complex. These 15 buses should ply in dedicated manner from 6 am to 10 pm at 10 minutes interval touching all chowmuhani and these must be cleaned, punctual and air conditioned. The fare is not an issue for the people of Agartala now. The service should be prestigious and dignified; one should feel honoured and satisfied by boarding in the buses. Otherwise, the problem will not be solved and further complicated.**
6. Monitoring of the movement of all JNNURM buses should be stringent and effective, as these are national wealth. Transport department and Traffic police must pay due attention to the bus service too. **Traffic enforcement is largely misguided and concentrated on the two-wheelers.** The traffic personnel have to look at the issues of illegal stoppage of vehicles including auto rickshaw on the street during and collection of excess fare and overloading. When Agartala is moving ahead of smart city, the administration, police and citizen has to be smart for betterment not to compromise otherwise, we shall be late further.
7. Transport department in coordination with AMC and traffic police must take **initiative to demarcate safe pedestrian stiffs, cycle track and parking areas immediately in consultation with the civil society organisations.** Alone administration or police or AMC can't do anything except disarray one after another. We have a complete plan of action submitted to your department several times earlier too but there is a negligible improvement in the mobility issue.

We hope you will ponder over thought in the proposals made herein above and may consider these for implementation to ensure a better city life. ARPAN Society is ready to extend fullest support and help at the best of our ability to make it happen, if required.

Your positive action is highly solicited.

Sincerely,

[Biswendu Bhattacharjee]

Cc: The Managing Director, TUTCL, City Centre, Agartala for information