

UP plans tax relief for EVs, public transport vehicles to save fuel

HT Correspondent

letters@htlive.com

LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh transport minister Dayashankar Singh on Friday directed officials to prepare a proposal for exemptions in road tax and registration fees for electric and public transport vehicles for the next 12 months, aiming to promote fuel conservation and reduce dependence on private vehicles.

The directions were issued following a meeting chaired by chief minister Yogi Adityanath on May 11, in view of the prevailing global and national economic conditions, according to an official statement issued on Friday.

The minister instructed the transport department to increase bus frequency during peak hours to discourage the use of private vehicles.

Officials with more than 500 employees will also be linked with special bus services through coordination between the transport department and the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC), he said.

Singh also ordered an audit of the "pool car" system and directed that the allocation of surplus vehicles to officials be withdrawn. Departments were asked to minimise the use of diesel and petrol as far as possible.

The minister further directed offices and depots to ensure electricity savings by switching off unnecessary lights, especially after 10 pm, and maintaining air-conditioner temperatures at 25-26 degrees Celsius.

Officials were also asked to study the "Chandauli model" of energy generation through biogas and explore its implementation at corporation depots and workshops. The transport corporation's canteens were directed to reduce the use of imported edible oils and encourage locally sourced products.

The minister said that the feasibility of mandatory PNG connections at depots and offi-

THE INSTRUCTIONS

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Fuel-saving gesture: UP min goes to work on bike

HT Correspondent

letters@htlive.com

LUCKNOW: In a symbolic move to promote energy conservation, Uttar Pradesh minister of state for minority welfare, Muslim waqf and Haj, Danish Azad Ansari, rode a motorcycle from his official residence to the state secretariat in Lucknow on Friday. The initiative comes in response to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for reducing petroleum consumption and conserving energy.

Chief minister Yogi Adityanath has directed all ministers, elected representatives, and officials to minimise the use of official vehicles and adopt judicious resource utilisation.

Ansari's decision to commute on a motorcycle instead of his official car sent a strong message of environmental responsibility.

ces will also be examined, while bio-bitumen will be prioritised in construction works wherever feasible.

He added that official foreign visits of department officers will



Danish Azad Ansari HT

ity and public participation in fuel conservation. The minister said the Prime Minister's appeal is not just a request but a national necessity. "If every citizen contributes through small savings, it will significantly benefit the country's economy and environment," he added.

remain suspended for the next six months, and virtual meetings will be preferred over physical meetings with officials posted outside the headquarters.

UPSRTC to bring 2,500 off-road buses back

Brajendra K Parashar

letters@hindustantimes.com

LUCKNOW: Anticipating a rise in passenger traffic following Prime Minister Narendra Modi and chief minister Yogi Adityanath's appeal to people to increasingly use public transport, the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) has decided to bring nearly 2,500 off-road buses back into operation, apart from expediting other decisions.

Officials in the know of things said UPSRTC managing director Prabhu Narain Singh on Thursday held a meeting on how to deal with the passenger demand, which is expected to increase after the PM and CM's appeal.

"Currently, UPSRTC's fleet comprises over 14,000 buses of which nearly 2500 are off roads. Now, it has been decided to bring all these buses back into operation, besides taking other measures in line with the CM's instructions for making public transport more popular," a senior UPSRTC official, who was part of the discussion, told HT.

The corporation is preparing to roll out 100 electric buses in the Noida region after signing an MoU with the Noida Authority for viability gap funding support.

Half a dozen routes (expandable to eight) have been identified for this purpose interconnecting Noida, Greater Noida, UPYEIDA and Jewar.

"We will soon sign an MoU in this regard with the Noida Authority, which will compensate for the viability gap expected to be around Rs 20 per km, the actual cost being Rs 130 per km," the official said.

The move is also being seen as an attempt by Uttar Pradesh to strengthen its presence in the NCR's fast-expanding electric public transport sector. People familiar with the matter said

THE DETAILS

The move follows PM, CM's appeal to people to increasingly use public transport. Corporation also plans e-bus rollout in Noida; rural operations to be fast-tracked.

UPSRTC earlier operated CNG buses in Noida, but the Delhi government has already deployed around 1,000 electric buses across Delhi and NCR, leaving Uttar Pradesh with virtually no electric bus presence in the region so far.

Officials said the proposed electric bus operations in Noida were expected to improve regional connectivity and modernise the corporation's fleet in line with the Centre's push for cleaner and more efficient public transport systems.

UPSRTC is also expediting operations by applying for permits on over 1500 newly formulated routes across the state. The corporation will operate its buses parallel to those of private operators on these new routes.

Also, with a view to improving connectivity between villages and blocks, as well as district headquarters, under a new scheme already cleared by the Cabinet recently, the corporation has decided to fast-track operations.

"We have already received over 900 applications from the operators willing to operate rural buses. We have decided to dispose of these applications quickly for early operations," the official said.

According to officials, UPSRTC buses already ferry around 18 to 20 lakh passengers daily across Uttar Pradesh, with women estimated to account for nearly 33% of the total ridership on government-run buses.