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# Reduced BMTC fares can boost ridership, reduce losses: Study



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BMTC bus (DH Photo)

A reduction in BMTC bus fares can trigger an increase in ridership, reduce revenue losses, boost the environment and ease of movement through reduced greenhouse gas emissions and private

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FoV had analysed the possible implications of a 10% fare cut on the finances of the Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), the effects on the environment and the ease of movement. The research team comprised Yashwin Iddya, Srinidhi Santosh, Suruchi Soren and Bharath M Palavalli.

Four scenarios were considered for the study. In Scenario 1, FoV considered a 10% reduction in the BMTC's average fares. The conclusion was that it would possibly lead to a 33% increase in ridership for the BMTC. The second scenario was a 10% reduction in the BMTC's average fares. The study found that it would lead to a possible 20% increase in ridership.

The fourth scenario, where it was considered that the BMTC would increase the fares by 10%, led to a drop in ridership. "We notice an increase in losses, greater emissions and congestion on roads due to modal shift which result in a higher number of private vehicles on the road," the team explained.

Citing the rise in Bengaluru's population, FoV recommended that the capacity and fleet of the BMTC be increased proportionately. "In 2018-19, the BMTC had a fleet size of 0.5 buses per 1,000 population, which is lower than India's average of 1.2 buses per 1,000 population."

For Bengaluru, the study noted, "The BMTC would require a fleet of 14,952 buses in order for it to reach India's average of 1.2 buses per 1,000 population."

FoV recommended a further in-depth analysis to help develop strategies that could increase the modal share of BMTC buses. This could help the city move towards a sustainable transport option.

To ensure that public transport options such as buses continue to remain effective and adopted more, FoV suggested strategies such as viability gap funding, allocation of funding for infrastructure cost and cost of operations, subsidised fares through state and central schemes, and employee bus passes sponsored by employers.

These strategies, it said, should be employed in conjunction with the promotion of non-motorised transport, improved walkability and last-mile connectivity.

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