

PUNE AIR ACTION HUB

11th August, 2023

Shri Vikram Kumar,
Pune Municipal Commissioner,
Pune Municipal Corporation,
Shivajinagar,
Pune 411 005

Shri Shekhar Singh,
Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Commissioner,
PCMC, 4th Floor, Main Building,
Pimpri 411018

Dear Sir,

Declaration of 7th September as a Free Bus Day

On the occasion of the **International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies**, we would like to make a compelling request for the support and cooperation of both PMC and PCMC in enabling the Pune Mahanagar Parivahan Mahamandal Limited (PMPML) to declare the 7th of September as a Free Bus day. This joint effort will require both the Corporations to compensate and contribute to the revenue equivalent to the ticket collection, and acknowledge that the benefits and positive outcomes far outweigh the financial investment.

Firstly, declaring the 7th of September as a free bus day demonstrates the PMC and PCMC's commitment to environmental sustainability and clean air. Neither of the two cities meet the National Air Quality Standards, and both the cities are implementing the air action plans which focus on public transport. Going by the recently conducted events at both the cities, it is refreshing that as Commissioners, both of you are vocally supporting public transport and looking for various initiatives to do so. By supporting this effort, both entities will be actively contributing to the reduction of air pollution in our cities. As leaders in the community, your support will inspire others to take necessary steps towards a greener future and promote the use of public transportation as a viable alternative to private vehicles.

Moreover, a free bus day will alleviate the financial burden on residents who rely on public transportation. The Pune Metropolitan area population includes people from various socio-economic backgrounds, and for some, the cost of daily commuting can be a significant expense. By offering free bus services on this specific day, we provide relief to those who find it challenging to access public transportation regularly due to financial constraints. It is an opportunity for the PMC and PCMC to demonstrate their commitment to inclusivity and accessibility for all residents.

Additionally, a free bus day will lead to increased ridership, benefiting the PMPML in the long run. Public transportation plays a vital role in reducing traffic congestion and improving overall city mobility. By enabling the PMPML to declare a free bus day, we can encourage

individuals who have never used or considered public transportation to give it a try. Experiencing the convenience and efficiency of bus travel may change their perception, resulting in continued use of public transportation beyond this specific day. This increased ridership can generate additional revenue for the PMPML in the future, offsetting the costs incurred on the free bus day.

Furthermore, the collaboration between the PMC, PCMC, and the PMPML on a free bus day will foster a sense of unity and cooperation among the governing bodies. It demonstrates a joint effort to address a common concern and work towards a common goal. By supporting the PMPML in this initiative, both entities showcase their commitment to collaborative governance and their dedication to the welfare and benefit of the residents they serve.

Lastly, in addition to declaring this a Free Bus Day the cities should also look at other ways to curb the use of private vehicles ,by taking on different initiatives like declaring some areas car free for a portion of the day, etc. Now that the Metro is also launched, citizens can use a combination of bus/Metro to avoid the use of their personal vehicles.

In conclusion, supporting and enabling the PMPML to declare the 7th of September as a free bus day is a strong statement of the PMC and PCMC's commitment to environmental sustainability, inclusivity, and the betterment of our cities. By compensating and contributing to the ticket collection, both entities will play a pivotal role in reducing air pollution and promoting the benefits of public transportation. This joint effort will alleviate financial burdens for residents and encourage increased ridership, benefiting the PMPML in the long run. Let us come together, united and determined, to make a positive impact on our cities and pave the way for a greener, more sustainable future.

The PMPML is more than willing to support this initiative provided their day's revenue can be compensated. We would be happy to meet to discuss any concerns you may have regarding the proposal.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. R. Deo." with a horizontal line underneath.

Sharmila Deo

On behalf of the Pune Air Action Hub

Pune Air Action Hub is a network of organisations, researchers and individuals in Pune who are concerned about the air quality and working towards its improvement through advocacy and outreach