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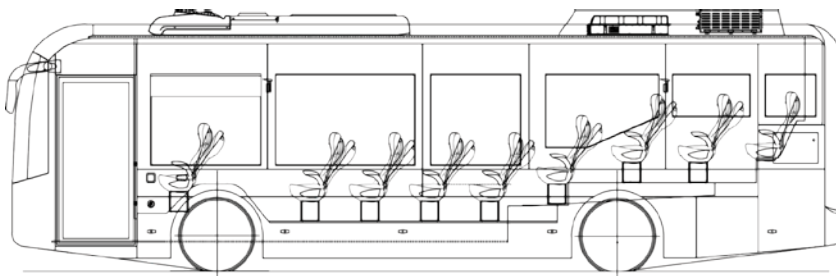
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## TOTAL PASSENGER



**\*DEPENDS ON REQUIREMENT**  
**21 - 37 SEATER**

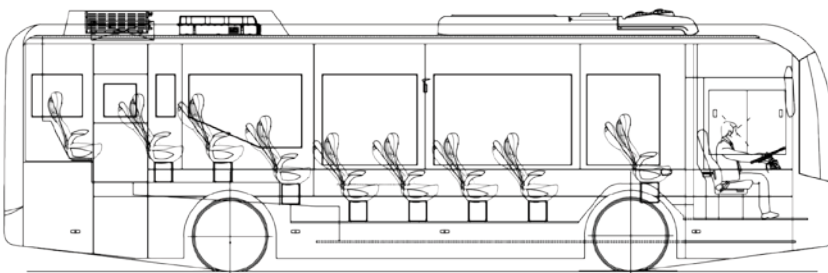
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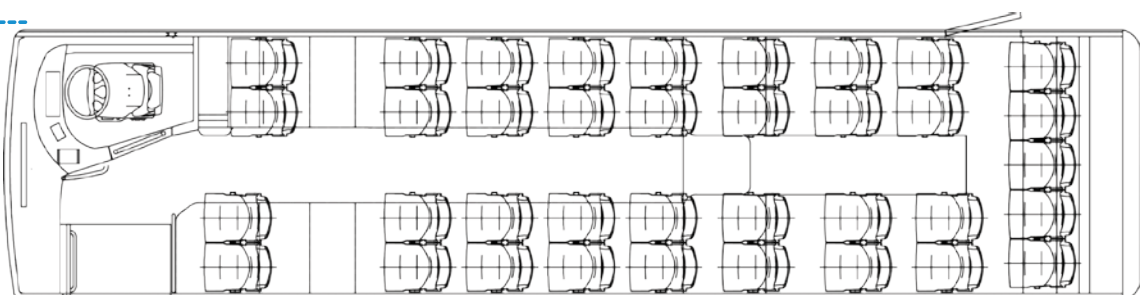
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# Providing Access, Enabling Business

**W**hen we start working on the magazines, we oftentimes don't know what the full content of it will be. While we collect the material, a theme usually emerges. As it turns out, this issue of Asian Buses is all about accessibility. When I am pointing that out, there are many factettes to it.

Take the cover story: thanks to CAM Malaysia I had access to one of their vehicles for a week. This afforded me to get familiar with the minibus, and more importantly, better understand how it could be used by various businesses as their money-generating asset. The Sarawak Tour with CAM CO-STAR allows gave access to six more journalists, who tagged along. Being a participant on the tour, some were given access to places, towns and sights in the state of Sarawak. Some had never been to Sarawak.

The flexibility and agility of the minibus allowed for access to very specific and interesting places. For example, Niah caves, which I visited while driving from Bintulu to Miri. This would not have been possible, had I taken a flight to get from one place to the other. Being on board with six other travellers has giving myself a way to access information these journalists imparted during the tour.

Scania's Digital Services, as per this issue's feature story is about giving transport owners access to insights and data to better manage their fleets. Having information readily available at their fingertips allows them to make better, smarter, and more profitable decisions. Thanks to IoT, we now have the possibility to give access in real time to those depending on it. It now appears that the vehicle, the hardware, is becoming an enabler to provide transporters with information.

One of the cornerstones of public transport is accessibility. The best, newest vehicles are not of much use if commuters cannot get to them. The Rapid On Demand service addresses this issue and we take a closer look at this offering. Again, using smaller vehicles, this service is all about granting access to those needing to move about.

Allegiance, thanks to their foresight in sourcing useful assets, is now providing access to a service that could save operators a good amount of money. Thanks to their test bench, provided by Cojali, they are able to access the depths of electronics used in instrument clusters. Assessing the systems, they are able to diagnose any faulty instrument cluster and thus repairing it with pinpoint accuracy.

Meanwhile, Volvo is making their latest chassis option with EURO V emission technology accessible to their customers in Thailand. This will enable them to run their operation in a more environmentally friendly and sustainable way. It is always great to be able to access customers to find out first-hand about their experiences, which is why events are so important for us as journalists.

No matter what level or kind of access has been granted, all of the above is ultimately about business. When sharing information and using shared information, business grows. Without any of those I work with providing me access to their companies, businesses and people, I wouldn't even be able to produce this magazine you are about to read.

Stay Safe, Stay Accessible,

Stefan Pertz  
Editor, Asian Buses





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# Automation: MAN is Working Consistently on Driverless Buses



**M**AN Truck & Bus has been working on driverless buses for years with the aim of playing a key role in shaping the future of urban bus mobility and offering public transport companies emission-free, connected and automated buses. A fully automated MAN vehicle is scheduled to be launched on the market in 2030. To gain experience and harness innovative technologies, MAN is focusing on collaborations with technology leaders and pilot projects. These include the MINGA research project. As part of this project, an electric bus is being automated and tested in real-life conditions.

Automated driving functions have also already been tested in the @City initiative together with 14 partners, and MAN is working on the BelIntelli 'explanatory bus' to bring an intelligent transport system with automated vehicles to life. "Autonomous buses could help to address this issue and further improve connections in cities, conurbations and rural areas," says Michael Roth, Head of Product Strategy Bus at MAN Truck & Bus.

MINGA brings automated MAN Lion's City E to Munich's streets. Since 2023, MAN has been part of the MINGA research project (Munich's automated local transport with ride pooling, solo buses and bus platoons), which is supported by around a dozen partners from administration, research and industry. As the commercial vehicle partner of the operating company MVG and its parent company Stadtwerke München (SWM), MAN is providing an automated and fully electric Lion's City E equipped with an Automated Driving System (ADS). Pilot operations are scheduled to start in 2026, when the bus will be tested in real-life conditions. A safety driver will be on board. "For us, key parts of the MINGA project are the development of the complex interface between the vehicle and the ADS and the integration of the systems into our electronic architecture," says Roth. The new electronic platform introduced in the 2024 model year facilitates this integration.

MINGA builds on earlier projects such as @CITY ('Automated Cars and Intelligent Traffic in the City'). This BMWK-funded project focused on approaching bus stops – one of the most bus-specific driving manoeuvres. Together with 14 partners, MAN spent four years developing automated driving functions and demonstrated the results at the Aldenhoven Testing Centre in 2022.

BelIntelli 'explanatory bus' brings autonomous driving to life. Another project is 'BelIntelli,' which is being implemented in collaboration with the DAI Laboratory at TU Berlin and IAV GmbH Ingenieurgesellschaft Auto und Verkehr. The aim is to bring an intelligent transport system with automated vehicles to life. An automated MAN electric bus equipped with an Automated Driving System (ADS) from ZEKI | Centre for Experiential AI and Digitalisation is currently undergoing test operations in Berlin city centre with safety drivers. The test area extends from the Brandenburg

Gate to Adenauerplatz and is equipped with state-of-the-art sensor technology and digital infrastructure. The so-called 'explanatory bus' has 60 sensors (including cameras, radar and 3D lidar) as well as screens and other communication components so that driving skills, decisions and technologies can be visualised and explained to passengers. MAN's focus in the project is on actuator technology – in particular electric steering – and the integration of ADS hardware and software into the vehicles.

Goal: Fully automated MAN city bus from 2030. The projects provide MAN experts with valuable insights for future development. "The MINGA research project in particular is a significant step for us in terms of proving the concept on the road," says Michael Roth. Once the concept phase is complete, field trials with customers are set to begin. Transport companies are showing great interest in autonomous buses. MAN therefore wants to test vehicles in various markets and application scenarios. The development of a fully automated vehicle (SAE Level 4) places special demands on its safety technology. All safety-relevant systems – from ADS to brakes and steering to communication – must be redundantly secured. "Once we have achieved this, we will be able to drive in defined operating areas without safety drivers," says Roth.





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# Yutong Debuts New Generation Battery Electric Intercity Bus IC12E

*Debuting new solutions at UITP Summit Hamburg 2025, Yutong was showcasing Electrification Innovation*



Yutong Bus showcased its green public transport innovations under the theme “Think Eco, Move Green” at the UITP Summit 2025, held from June 15-18 in Hamburg Germany. The flagship models included the battery electric intercity bus IC12E and the premium city bus U12.

Yutong Debuts New Generation Battery Electric Intercity Bus IC12E at UITP Summit Hamburg 2025, Showcasing Electrification Innovation

Jack Li, CEO of Yutong Central & Northern Europe, delivered a speech at the summit, “Yutong remains convinced that the future of public mobility lies in providing sustainable transportation solutions for our customers. We will accelerate our electrification journey with greater resolve, building a greener world through eco-friendly solutions.”

Yutong offers Europe a full range of electric products, delivering safe and reliable public mobility solutions tailored to various road conditions across European countries. At this exhibition, Yutong unveiled two customised models: the IC12E, a new-generation battery electric intercity bus – specifically designed for the European market – and the U12, a premium battery electric bus engineered for main urban routes.

The IC12E is specifically engineered for high-frequency intercity operations, featuring outstanding reliability,

enhanced safety, and intelligent comfort. With a maximum range of 610 km under SORT2 conditions, it delivers robust power performance and a 20% maximum gradeability.

Jack, CEO of Yutong Western Europe, delivered a keynote speech addressing the key pain points of traditional European intercity buses—including cost-efficiency and environmental adaptability—along with industry trends and market demands. He emphasized the challenge of balancing critical requirements such as high uptime, powertrain performance, spaciousness, and range in intercity transportation. As the solution to these challenges, Yutong’s new generation battery electric intercity bus, the IC12E, marks a fresh starting point.

Starting June 19, the IC12E will undergo a three-day, 1 200 km comprehensive road test across four European countries.



The U12, winner of the Busworld Design Label, features a 12-metre body capable of carrying up to 95 passengers, while incorporating a high-strength, robust closed-ring body structure and YESS battery safety system, combining safety, efficiency, comfort, and intelligent management.

Germany, the birthplace of the automotive industry and home to one of the world’s most competitive and influential automotive sectors, provided the perfect stage for Yutong’s remarkable showcase at the UITP Summit 2025 in Hamburg. This appearance not only demonstrated Yutong’s achievements in deepening its presence across European markets, but also comprehensively highlighted the company’s profound commitment to new energy technologies and environmental sustainability. Moreover, the event provided Yutong with a pivotal platform to engage with global industry leaders and refine its competitive edge.

Moving forward, Yutong will continue to create greater value for customers and enhance public travel experiences with green, safe and comfortable mobility solutions. 🚐





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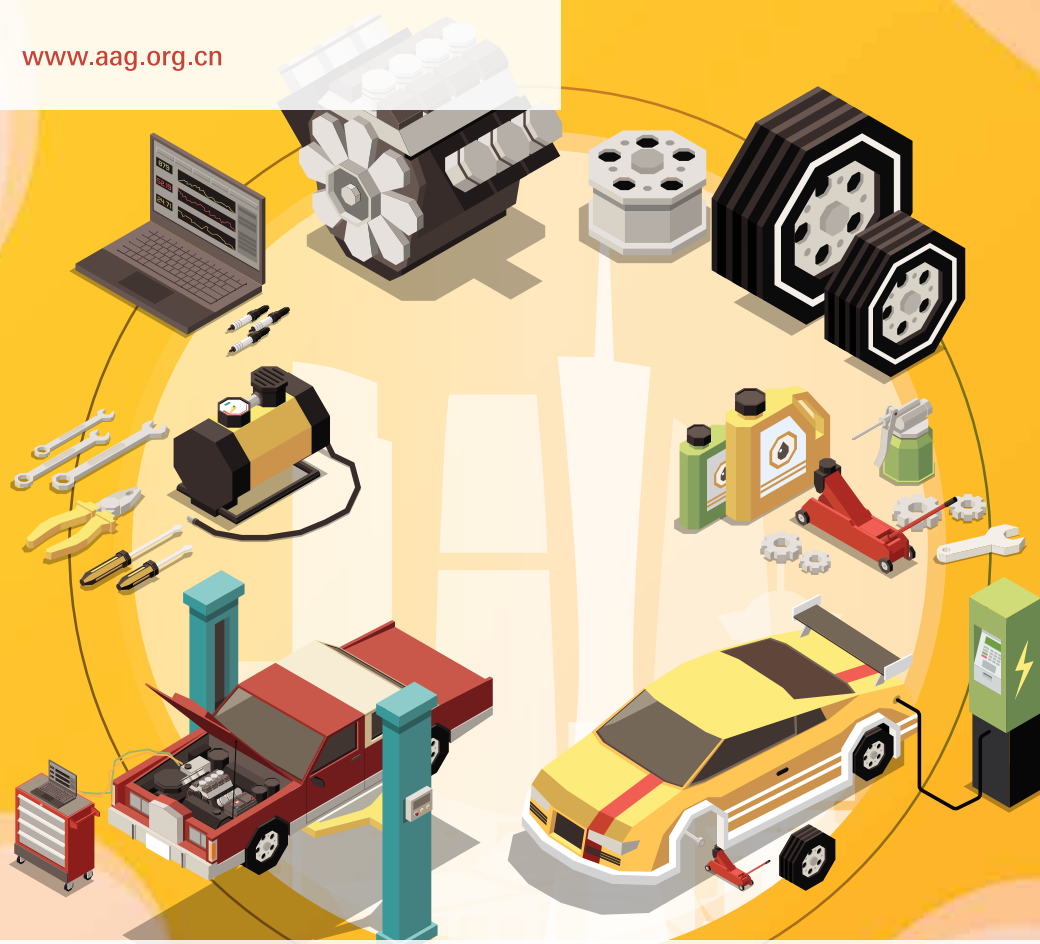
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## When Public Transport Comes to You

Imagine a public transport system that works around your daily routine, rather than forcing you to adjust to it. That is exactly what Rapid KL is aiming for with its On-Demand van service, currently operating in selected neighbourhoods across Petaling Jaya and Subang Jaya. Operated by Rapid Bus under Prasarana Malaysia Berhad, the service is designed to improve first- and last-mile connectivity, especially in places where traditional bus routes may not be practical.

### A Smarter, Smaller Ride

Unlike fixed-route buses that run on set schedules, these compact vans offer something different. Passengers book rides via mobile apps, are picked up closer to home, and travel based on real-time demand. With a promotional fare of just RM1 per trip, it is an affordable and flexible option for daily travel.

“The On-Demand service currently operates daily from 6.00 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. across all active zones,” said Ms Suria Ningseh Kamilan, Bus Communications representative from the Group Communication & Stakeholder Engagement division at Prasarana Malaysia Berhad. “Users can make bookings through one of four mobile apps depending on their location: MOBI, KUMMUTE, TREK RIDES or Rapid On-Demand.”

The service is entirely cashless, accepting payment via cards, e-wallets, DuitNow QR and Touch 'n Go.

### Where to Catch a Ride

The On-Demand vans currently serve the following areas within PJ and Subang:

- MRT Kwasa Sentral to Subang Bestari and Subang Skypark Terminal
- LRT Alam Megah to the Alam Megah area
- LRT Taman Bahagia to SS6
- LRT Taman Paramount to Kampung Baiduri
- Saujana Utama and Elmina via Jalan Kuala Selangor
- LRT USJ 21 to One City
- PJ Sentral covering Sections 7 and 17
- Sungai Way to LRT Taman Paramount

These zones have been selected for their suitability to smaller vehicles, which can navigate residential streets and areas where passenger numbers may not justify the use of larger buses.

“By using smaller vehicles and digital booking platforms, we are able to offer more flexible service to areas that are not easily served by regular bus routes,” Ms Suria added.

### Moving with the Times

As mobile apps become more integrated into daily life, it makes sense that public transport follows suit. Rapid KL's On-Demand approach represents a more responsive, user-centred model that adapts to shifting travel patterns. There is no need for large-scale infrastructure or new stations — just smaller vehicles, a booking app, and the right timing.

To find out more about the service or check which app covers your area, visit: <https://myrapid.com.my/bus-train/rapid-kl/on-demand>







## Ready for e-buses: New sales and service location in Würzburg

**D**aimler Truck has expanded the Mercedes-Benz Würzburg commercial vehicle centre. A new section of the building was officially opened last week in the presence of customers, representatives of the construction companies involved and the site's workforce. The site is now even better equipped for trucks and buses with battery and fuel cell technology.

The expansion is a clear commitment to the mobility of the future: the new workshop hall complements the existing range of maintenance and repair services for trucks and buses with specialised services for battery electric and hydrogen powered commercial vehicles. Covering an area of around 250 square meters, the new building now offers additional space for specialised high voltage workstations – for example, for professional servicing of models such as the Mercedes Benz eActros 600, eEconic, the FUSO eCanter and the Mercedes Benz eCitaro electric city bus. Around 90 employees work at the site, which is now also prepared for the requirements of new drive technologies thanks to the expansion.

### **Flexibility and Efficiency when Working on Vehicles**


Special features of the new hall section include a ceiling crane and a permanently installed, height adjustable roof workstation. The crane allows components such as high voltage batteries to be efficiently removed directly from the vehicle and placed in a protected high voltage transport

box without having to move the vehicle out of the hall. The roof workstation enables work to be carried out safely and comfortably on the vehicle roof, for example on the eCitaro, where the batteries are installed there. Würzburg is now the third Group owned site in Germany with this technical equipment, alongside Haan near Wuppertal and Stuttgart Feuerbach.

### **Preparation for Hydrogen Operation**

The new hall is already prepared for the installation of the necessary sensor technology, a fully equipped gas workstation, and an automatic extraction system for future use of hydrogen technology. In front of the hall, a so called evaluation area will be set up in the future to enable the safe discharge of hydrogen and initial basic refuelling after workshop visits.

### **Charging Infrastructure for Customers and Employees**

Electric charging stations have been planned for the site: a total of three charging stations with six charging points are available for employee and customer cars. For trucks and buses, a charging station with two charging points for charging currents of up to 300 kilowatts is available for the time being, where customer vehicles can be charged after leaving the service centre and CharterWay rental vehicles can be charged. This charging station is accessible to the public around the clock, seven days a week. 



## Automechanika Ho Chi Minh City reflects Vietnam's Ambitions to Advance Automotive Sector

**A**utomechanika Ho Chi Minh City 2025 showcased the future of the automotive value chain while highlighting the industry's culture. Hosting 401 exhibitors from 16 countries and regions, the exhibition covered 22 600 sqm of the Saigon Exhibition and Convention Center from 19 to 21 June. The combination of interactive activities, product showcases, and knowledge sharing in this space aimed to connect Vietnam's thriving market with international opportunities. Totalling 17,075 from participants from 48 countries and regions gained insights to the latest advancements in AI, digitalisation, electrification, and other technologies driving the future development of OEMs and the aftermarket in the automotive industry. Part of the event were 11 fringe events and activities (eight by organisers, three by industry associations and organisations)


Ms Fiona Chiew, General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, echoed this sentiment, stating: "Automechanika Ho Chi Minh City is a significant regional platform that reflects Vietnam's rising status as a favoured investment destination for foreign companies. A key factor behind this transformation is the shift in the automotive industry, driven by new energy adoption and the establishment of supply chains. These developments play a crucial role in nurturing Vietnam's economic growth, technological advancement, lifestyle needs, and job creation. This week, the event will showcase the strengths and future prospects of this vital sector."

Among the exhibitors, a number of Malaysian brands took the opportunity to showcase their products and services. Best Parts Trading Sdn Bhd, with their young team of energetic team members was excited about their participation as it was their first foray into an overseas market.

The event's specialised zones catered to the wide variety of automotive expertise. One such area was the Automotive Mobility Solutions Zone, which aimed to address emerging trends in energy transition, new energy vehicles (NEVs), logistics, manufacturing advancements, AI and automation, and more.

Additionally, the Collision Repair Training Workshop provided an innovative space for hands-on demonstrations for ICE vehicles, NEVs, and the development of the Modern Workshop. The latest technologies, skills, and tools for repair will be showcased and demonstrated by companies and organisations such as Autoverse, Launch, OTO-HUI, SmartSafe, and Vast Group, among others, in a one-of-a-kind offering.

Overall, it could be observed that those exhibitors involved in the electrification of transport are taking up increasingly more space with more sophisticated, specialised solutions. This is inline with Vietnam's governments ambition as per "Vietnam: Recommendations to the National Roadmap and Action Plan for the Electric-Mobility Transition". It envisions that half of urban vehicles in Việt Nam, along with all buses and taxis, will be powered by electricity by 2030.

By 2050, the goal is to completely shift all road transportation to electric or green energy. This transition is projected to reduce CO2 emissions by 5.3 million tonnes, equivalent to 8 per cent of Việt Nam's emission reduction target by 2030, and by 226 million tonnes, or 60 per cent of the target, by 2050. 





# Events & Exhibitions

## Quality Bus Conference

**Date** : 23 – 25 September 2025

**Venue** : The Guildhall, Portsmouth, England

**Contact** : <https://www.buscentreofexcellence.org.uk/events/quality-bus-conference>

This Conference will bring together local authorities, operators, consultancy and service providers to share best practice across the bus sector. The Quality Bus Conference will take place in Portsmouth on 23 and 24 of September 2025.

Exhibiting at this conference provides organisations with direct access to budget-holding decision makers working across the bus industry including local authorities, combined authorities, national government, bus operators large and small, product and services providers and lots more.

## Busworld Europe

**Date** : 4 – 9 October 2025

**Venue** : Brussels Expo

**Contact** : <https://www.busworldeurope.org/>

Since 1971 Busworld organizes events for the bus and coach industry around the world. From live exhibitions and conferences to online events where we bring bus people together to network, do business, exchange knowledge, and not to forget: have fun. At Busworld, business and pleasure go hand in hand. It's the platform where the latest innovations and trends in the world of bus and coach are being revealed, displayed and discussed from leading global brands to local start-ups.

Busworld Europe 2025 is the world's leading international bus and coach trade show, taking place in Brussels. It's a biennial event that brings together industry professionals, including manufacturers, suppliers, operators, and other stakeholders, to showcase the latest innovations and trends in the bus and coach sector.



## Japan Mobility Show

**Date** : 30 October – 9 November 2025

**Venue** : Tokyo Big Sight

**Contact** : <https://www.japan-mobility-show.com/app/en/contact/>

The Japan Mobility Show was launched in 2023 as the successor to the 70-year-old Tokyo Motor Show to spotlight the comprehensive transformation taking place in the sector and bring together companies across industries to pursue innovative visions for future mobility. Japan Mobility Show 2025 will showcase wide-ranging advances that expand and enhance mobility from multiple perspectives, enabling visitors of all generations to experience and enjoy a new and exciting world of mobility

## International Bus & Coach Exhibition, test drive and Moscow Transport Show

**Date** : 19 – 22 August 2025

**Venue** : Crocus Expo (Moscow)

**Contact** : <https://autobus-expo.ru/main-eng>

AutoBusExpo is a response to the challenges of the transport market, trends and industry trends: the organizers have created a unique specialized bus exhibition that will solve the entire range of business problems of companies on one site in a short time. The exhibition will present the latest developments and solutions, establish business contacts between manufacturers, suppliers and carriers, and discuss current issues and development prospects within the framework of the business program.

The cherry on the cake will be the only Moscow Transport Show in Russia that will reveal all the beauty and power of technology, creating a unique atmosphere for professionals and connoisseurs of commercial transport.

The growing interest of participants and visitors in the passenger transport exposition at the COMvex exhibition inspired the organizers to create the first specialized bus exhibition in Russia. Now manufacturers will be able to effectively showcase their products to a wide audience, focusing specifically on buses and public transport technologies.

# Banking on Digital Services for Profitability in Transportation

*The buzzwords in the industry are digitalisation and servitisation. Asian Trucker finds out just what that means for the Malaysian transport industry*

Never has the saying “you manage what you measure” been more important than today. It implies that to effectively manage something, you need to track its progress and performance through metrics and data. This allows you to see trends, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions about how to optimise the process or system.

Over the years, Asian Buses has met with countless bus fleet managers who oversee the entire bus fleet operation. Their job is to ensure efficiency, safety, and compliance. These responsibilities oftentimes include vehicle acquisition, maintenance, monitoring fuel consumption, and driver training, all while aiming to minimise costs and maximise productivity. They also manage scheduling, dispatching, and route optimisation for the buses. All of these functions can now be managed by way of deploying online systems. Both, OEM-provided and third-party solutions are available.

It can be observed that most bus manufacturers offer fleet management systems. Evaluating what is being

communicated, one may feel that in particular Scania has moved beyond that. Scania’s approach is more than just data dashboards, it’s a holistic support system for the modern transporter. With all the options available, an in-depth review, is to unearth all the benefits that the solutions offered by Scania bring to the table.

Previously, Asian Buses reported extensively about Scania’s Ecolution. In Malaysia, Scania is likely spearheading the servitisation in the transportation industry through such value-added services that transcend the provision of hardware. With this shift, the attention shifts towards the notion of having solutions rather than just “a bus”. By offering tools that go beyond the delivery of physical items, both truck and data, are forming the assets of a transport owner. Today, the offering by Scania has expanded, which made us curious as to how far Scania Digital Services can take a fleet manager

## To Maximise Profit

A fleet manager could be the owner of a transport company, or it could be an entire department if the company has a

large fleet of vehicles. In either case, a business owner would naturally aim to maximise profit and brand reputation.

With the cost of most items needed to run a bus fleet known and fairly homogeneous, the only way left to improve the bottom line is to apply smart thinking on how to best run the fleet. Route planning, scheduling, and smart thinking like preventive predictive maintenance all prepare a fleet for success. Those asking where there is money wasted are strongly advised to look at modern technology to help them identify areas where money is wasted. It may be the only way to sustain a business and to be profitable. Certain quarters believe that this is the only way forward.

## Servitisation of Transportation

This review draws attention to how Scania is pioneering servitisation—providing not just vehicles, but integrated digital services that drive value. In a recent report by Frost & Sullivan, the strategic use of servitisation in road transport was discussed. Servitisation is transforming the business landscape by shifting manufacturers’ focus from selling purely hardware, i.e. products to





providing value-added services that improve customer connections and operational efficiencies. The transformation allows OEMs to go beyond typical sales cycles by providing full, recurring solutions, such as fleet management, predictive maintenance, telematics, flexible ownership models, and data-driven insights.

Servitisation, fuelled by developments in the internet of things, digital connectivity, and shifting customer expectations, enables OEMs to generate predictable revenue streams, enhance customer retention, and build resilience against market swings. Servitisation is being driven by trends in sustainability, electrification, and the requirement for optimal fleet operations, all of which necessitate long-term OEM collaborations.

### What's in a Scania?

In order for servitisation to work, large volumes of data are required. Every Scania bus made is full of smart technology, advanced sensors and wireless connectivity. This means that Scania has hundreds of thousands of constantly connected vehicles and engines in use all over the world today – providing data that does not only improve their engineering but lets an OEM create services which can provide transport owners with direct business value.

The question then becomes how the data is being used in improving a fleet's performance. Anything from lowering fuel consumption to reducing wear and maintenance needs, all the way to automating tedious administrative work is possible. Today, it also does not matter if one operates a mixed, or one-brand fleet. Scania focuses on the data, so fleet owners and managers can keep their focus on running your business.

Scania lets operators focus on the data, so they can focus on the road. It can be summarised that Scania divides data driven services into three categories, to make it easier for transporters to find which services might best benefit your specific organisation and operation.

### My Scania in Detail

Labelled "My Scania", these IoT tools comprise your all-in-one digital platform designed to streamline operations, boost profitability, and enhance transport efficiency. With real-time access to vehicle positions, driver evaluation scores, performance tracking, and environmental reports, managing your fleet has never been easier. Powered by data from hundreds of thousands of connected vehicles worldwide, Scania's smart and safe solutions, spanning hardware, services, and digital tools, help secure fleet owners' efficiency and business growth.

*More visibility on drivers' own performance, more digital training and coaching for drivers to improve their performance, more fun!*



As Scania drives the shift towards a sustainable transport future, they continue to deliver the same premium quality that has defined Scania for over 130 years. When collecting a number of services and apps in one place, you have just that – a collection. But when you connect them together, that's when you get an ecosystem. By interconnecting them and allowing data sharing between apps and services, they empower one another, and you get something that's much more than the sum of its parts. Thus, My Scania, as one digital ecosystem consists of the

- Scania Driver app • Scania Driver Evaluation • Scania Control Package • Scania Monitoring Package • Scania Data Access • Scania Zone • Scania Vehicle Performance • Scania Fleet Positioning • Scania Check Before Drive • Service Planning • Scania BEV Control and • Scania Environmental Report.

Out of all the total and holistic suite of digital services, Scania Driver app and ProDriver gamification feature are game-changers – no pun intended. This puts the same data that transport operators have, into the hands of their drivers except it is more. As this provides more visibility on the drivers' own performance, more digital training and coaching for drivers to improve their performance can be tailored and administered. The net result will be that the drivers themselves will have a higher level of job satisfaction.

### Scania Fleet Management System: New Age of Data-driven Logistics

Now that it has been established that data is crucial for a transport business, the hard part is figuring out which solution will best work for you. Although Scania's offering is rather comprehensive, working in partnership with their customers, the Swedish marque implements the right technology to get the right data and offer a fleet manager a suite of data-driven services. The idea is to provide the tools that would help improve operating efficiency, boost productivity and make better, more informed and profitable fleet management decisions.

Analysing the offering, it can be said that the Scania Fleet Management System gives transporters a lot more of both information and insights than the free monitoring reports. From core necessities like real time positioning, via

vehicle performance, environmental reports tracking a fleet's CO2 emissions, service planning and defect reporting all the way to driver evaluation which helps to quickly identify potential vehicle usage improvements that could be achieved via driver training and coaching.

### Essential

As a net result, it can be said that the more you know, the more you understand. The fundamental prerequisite of smart decision making is the availability of the essential information and data itself. Core metrics that give operators high level overviews of fleet perspective on a per vehicle basis, and streamlined functionality to make sure e.g. the required daily tachograph data (specific markets use this) is automatically integrated into your day-to-day workflow. And for those running a third-party fleet management system, Scania can provide full API-connectivity to your fleets data to help that system understand the data generated by Scania vehicles.

### Insights Gained

Getting from information to insights requires a level of analysis. Part of this is something companies can contextualise in-house. However, smart algorithms built by expert engineers and logistics experts within Scania can demonstrate how to create or add business value based on vehicle and driving data. Working with transportation operations for more than a century has helped Scania uncover what is core to both the day-to-day and the long-term perspective. Scania aims to have this presented simply, so the data does not get in the way of running fleet operations, but rather enhances it.

### Action

With reliable insights, there's definitely a lot you can do yourself to make your operation run more efficiently. There are however core aspects where Scania can help to leverage those insights into much higher business value. Knowledge and experience in Scania does not just span more than a century of logistics and transport operations, it is also based on real-life vehicle data from literally hundreds of millions of driving hours. Combined, that culminates in uniquely qualified perspectives to help transporters get the most out of their operation. For example, even with the very best drivers, one can optimize how they use Scania vehicles to maximise fuel efficiency. Further, one can reduce wear and maintenance needs and make sure the business potential of every Scania vehicle is taken to its fullest. Both on a short and long-term scale.

If these tools are able to assist fleet managers in better managing their fleet, one can question what could be a reason why operators resist. Discussions with operators revealed that there is no resistance except some being cautious. The strong support of the initiatives called A Good Driver and A Good Company are testament to strong support from the market. Meanwhile, some of Scania's customers are testing a wide range of systems while others are still exploring and have been asking Scania to advice. As Scania Digital Services are already very comprehensive today, they are highly cost-effective, offering a total setup.

### Scania Fleet app

The Scania Fleet app is supposed to bring drivers and administrative staff closer together in the day-to-day operation, with features that benefit both. For example, sending reports on issues or vehicle defects to the office staff, including reference photos, to communicating with other drivers and colleagues via messaging functionality.

The driver evaluation feature lets the drivers themselves see how they could improve driving efficiency, and all driver and vehicle data – including live position – is available via an easy map overview showing your geographical operational area.

Putting it all together, vehicle, system, fleet/operation managers and drivers all need to be interconnected to be successful in today's ultra-competitive environment. Partnerships are the new way of doing business and no one is without the other, especially when it comes to digital-based collaboration.

### A Good Driver' competition 2025

The Scania Ecolution's 'A Good Driver' Competition 2025 is currently open again. Scania invites customers to join them in their mission to reduce carbon emissions and vie for the coveted title of the best driver. Showcasing a driver with the most



significant CO2 reductions, making a positive impact on the environment while claiming a place as an industry leader is the ambition behind this competition. The competition is simple: Drive one of the Scania Ecolution vehicles throughout the competition period (1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025). These vehicles must display Scania Ecolution stickers and are part of the partnership. Then they drive consistently in a safe, fuel-efficient and environmentally friendly manner throughout the duration of the competition. To qualify, driving must result in the best average percentage of km/l improvement throughout the duration. The use of Scania Fleet Management System and other Scania Digital Services products is mandatory, and the result will be compared to previous years to identify the best improvement. Scania will identify the best vehicle in each company based on the above criteria.

### Putting it into Practice

A weekly summary of core metrics from Scania vehicles is always available in a web browser. A periodic update of vehicle data could be the first step in realising what business value can be added by knowing more about the vehicles' real-world performance, as well as an insight into just how much more information could be available at your fingertips.

### Data services

One may have specific business needs that Scania services alone are not able to satisfy. That does not mean that connected Scania vehicles should be left out. With Scania's data access service all established third party fleet management systems can talk to Scania vehicles, getting all the vital data into the same big picture.



**Features and benefits**

- Standardised vehicle data format
- Compatible with all major third-party FMS-services
- All modern Scania vehicles have all required hardware
- Fully compatible and compliant with remote-FMS (rFMS) standards

**Driver training**

Driver training is a driving masterclass beyond teaching how to drive a bus. It is rather how to really make the absolute most out of a Scania vehicle and is aimed to address specific operations and routes. Here it does not matter if it is heavy-duty intercity buses or a bus full of passengers on their daily commute.

Scania's certified driver trainers leverage the latest in coaching and training methodologies, resulting in an average 10 percent reduction in fuel consumption based on data from over 50 000 trained drivers.

**Digital Vehicle Health Check**

Unpredictable conditions can significantly impact a transport business. Breakdowns may lead to unplanned downtime, affecting operational cost and efficiency. Adapting and planning for uncertainty becomes essential for a resilient business.

Scania's Digital Vehicle Health Check enables Scania to execute a comprehensive vehicle health check efficiently and effectively in just 30 minutes. With this, transport owners can enjoy more hassle-free uptime without compromising on quality service. It is customised and designed to identify any deviations found on the vehicle, propose preventative renewals, and allow us to share with the customer a clear picture of what work will and needs to be performed on the vehicle.

Performed using fully connected digital devices, all findings are reported back to the team of customer service advisors in real time, allowing for timely updates with the customer.

*Harnessing the power of data and putting it in the hands of fleet managers and their drivers can make everyone take the right actions.*

**Some Call it Simplicity, Scania Calls it Scania Driver.**

The Scania Driver app is the driver's main contact point into the My Scania digital ecosystem. It was developed with the drivers' perspectives and features in focus, integrated with all of the relevant services of the fleet.

With these tools at your disposal, transporters can ditch the paperwork: pre-departure checks are now done in just a few taps. Now, transporters can complete their vehicle inspections effortlessly on mobile devices anytime, anywhere. There is no more missing paperwork, no more manual tracking as the results of the inspections are stored digitally. With the instantaneous availability of the data, this is just a smarter, faster way to ensure buses are road-ready, all within the app.

*Given the strict laws, fierce competition among operators, and overall economic framework, Scania Digital Services are a way to find extra money in the business.*

By streamlining the drivers' administrative tasks with a digital tool, it also benefits the fleet management by simplifying workflows, storage of checklists and defect report handling.

Scania's ProDriver does more than inspire individual improvement, it drives fleet-wide results. Lower fuel costs, and enhanced driver engagement contribute to a culture of efficiency that benefits the entire operation with reduction of fuel costs of up to five percent.

**Ecolution for ESG**

It can be argued that sustainability and profit go hand-in-hand. This tailored ESG solution can enhance fleet's fuel efficiency while lowering CO2 emissions. Aligning with the respective sustainability goals a company has, the use of

Scania's tools and services will put everything needed within easy reach for businesses.

The best results come from a partnership, combining Scania's vehicle expertise with one's own operational knowledge to uncover small improvements that drive big impact. In a Kaizen manner, this is making businesses stronger and better at what they do. Every day, every month and every year, small, continuous improvements drive significant fuel savings. Scania Ecolution, specifically designed to address ambitions set out in ESG goals, boosts margins, reduces environmental impact, and ensures lasting sustainability, benefiting both, business and the environment, now and in the long term.

As every company is unique, they require unique approaches to their digitisation. Those managers in Malaysia wondering how to go about starting their digital solutions journey can call Scania now. Scania vows to stand ready to advise them on how they can set it up. As an analogy, the "control tower" of yesterday is today only a laptop/tablet and a mobile phone with subscription. This is illustrating how easy it is going to be to ramp up the connected services one can use.

In conclusion, it can be emphasised that whatever benefit transport operators are getting from a Scania today will be increased even more with Scania Digital Services. Harnessing the power of data and putting it in the hands of fleet managers and their drivers can make everyone take the right actions. Faster. Maintaining safety, maintaining uptime, increasing performance & productivity, increasing fuel-efficiency and profitability and reducing CO2 emissions; all can be exponential.

Given the strict laws, fierce competition among operators, overall economic framework, Scania Digital Services are a way to find extra money in the business. Concluding this analysis, digitalisation is the way forward as it makes processes more efficient and if done right, more effective. This is especially so when there is enough data to make better decisions and faster actions because of it. The availability of technology is a chance to get more value out of valuable assets in your operations: the buses, and the driver behind it. ■



## The Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR

*With the Visit Malaysia Year 2026 campaign promoting the country as a tourist destination, what better way could there be than to explore places, sights and scenes by minibus?*

The promotion for “Visit Malaysia Year 2026” has started. The country is aiming to raise the number of tourists arriving to 35 million. This is fantastic news for everyone in the tourism and (people) transportation sectors. While the Ministry of Tourism promotes the general idea, will those offering bus services capitalise on the incredible amount of promotion that could land them millions of rides?

Obviously, getting around in Malaysia by bus is easy. Having flown from Bintulu to Kuching recently, I was considering the bus too. On a vacation, one could make Kuching the base, then use the bus to stop in Bintulu, Sibu, and Miri. There are many interesting sights to be seen along that route. For instance, the cultural village north of Kuching, home of the Rainforest Festival. Closer to Miri, the Niah Caves are another highlight, easily reached by bus.

City buses are also a great way to move about. Many places are well connected by bus. When travelling in a group, this could be a cost-effective way to not only transfer from point to point, but also get to see more of the place. Oftentimes, bus drivers also double up as tour guides. We all know that Malaysians are an extremely hospitable people and when asked, the bus captain would certainly be more than happy to share his knowledge about the sights along the route.

### The Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR

The Sarawak Roadtour with CAM Co-Star was a curated experience designed for journalists, influencers, and content creators to uncover the rich tapestry of this Malaysian state by bus. Navigating to most captivating sites, providing participants

with the opportunity to craft compelling narratives enriched by vivid visuals and human-interest stories, it is to highlight the beauty and versatility of bus travel. Beyond the tourism angle, the tour captured insights on how buses can and are being used in other applications and businesses as well. The musings were about how the CO-STAR could be creatively used as a money-generating asset.

*“We realise that there is a lot of potential in East Malaysia. This activity is an excellent opportunity for us to boost our brand to support our local partners” – Gwee Chin Li*

The Sarawak Roadtour with CAM Co-Star was organised by Asian Trucker Media, a pivotal communication platform for Southeast Asia’s commercial vehicle sector and CAM Malaysia, renowned for their excellence in transportation. This initiative was to be more than a sightseeing trip; it’s a platform for the bus industry to showcase their flexibility and role in the transportation sector, especially with an eye on the tourism industry. The Sarawak Roadtour with CAM Co-Star aims to be a showcase for how buses can become instrumental in making a visit to Malaysia the most



pleasurable experience. The tour, with its content created along the way is captured in a dedicated website, which can be viewed via [www.asianbuses-roadtour.com](http://www.asianbuses-roadtour.com)

### Flag off at CAM Day

The Sarawak Roadtour was officially send on its way from Kuching to Miri on the 25th June 2025. During the flag-off event, held at the Roxy Hotel Kuching, CAM Malaysia also hosted a customer experience day.

Chin Li, Head of Business Development at CAM Malaysia, noted: "We've built a strong reputation among tour operators, and East Malaysia offers us new opportunities. This road tour is about boosting awareness, engaging local operators, and gathering feedback to continuously improve our vehicles."

Officiating the event was Dato Sri Haji Abdul Karim Rahman Hamzah, Minister for Tourism, Creative Industry & Performing Arts. In his speech, he revealed a new vision for tourism in Sarawak. According to him, the Ministry plans to work with local councils to develop motorhome parks along the Pan Borneo Highway, positioning the state to attract self-driven, nature-focused travellers. This is in line with an emerging trend in Malaysia, whereby this mode of tourism is gaining a lot of attention recently.

"It used to be very difficult for us to travel from Kuching to Miri, but now, with the Pan Borneo Highway completed, we're creating new interest," he said, adding that with support from the private sector, including brands like CAM Malaysia, motorhome or caravan tourism could be a game-changer for Sarawak's rural and eco-tourism agenda.

He cited destinations such as Kapit and Niah, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, as having great potential for flexible travel, adding that motorhome tourism is a cost-effective and scalable alternative to high-end tourism products like Mulu.

*"This is not just for tourists—it's a new opportunity for local businesses in transport, hospitality, and crafts. It reflects our broader aim to diversify Sarawak's offerings while encouraging exploration at one's own pace." - Dato Sri Abdul Karim*

The Co-Star Sarawak Road Tour set off on its next leg to Sibu and then on to Bintulu and Miri covering about 1 000kms in four days.



### CAM Vans an Advantage for Ambulances

One of the many possible applications the CAM vans and minibuses can be used for are ambulances. In operation with the Malaysia Red Crescent, Kuching, they are best suited for the narrow roads in the city. Present at the CAM Day 2025, Mr Chin Ye Hong explained that this is a government project, offering their service to all hospitals in areas which do not have enough of ambulance service.

Having started this service in March of this year, the ambulance he showcased is their recent addition to the fleet, marking it the third such vehicle in their service. "These vehicles solve a very specific problem. Ambulances come in all sorts of sizes and shapes, but we need to consider the environment we operate in. When we drive into small villages, the roads may not be suitable for larger ambulances."

One of the challenges he and his colleagues are facing is the availability of specialist equipment used in the medical field. "That said, we are very happy with this vehicle. We found that it offers great ride comfort, which is extremely important when we move patients." Chin opined that this may be the best feature of the vehicle overall. He too hoped that more tourists would visit the state to experience which he called "truly multicultural". His ambulance being a signifier for the readiness to deal with even unpleasant experiences tourists may experience, he stated that he and his colleagues stand ready with their CAM-supplied ambulances to deal with any situation.



### Touring Sarawak in CAM Buses

On display at the CAM Day in Kuching were colourful vehicles from Khaimal Borneo, a local tour operator. Making a case for CAM's buses to be used in a similar way than what the Sarawak Roadtour set out to do, Mr Mohamad Fikri Bin Zainol Majid, Managing Director, spoke to Asian Buses about the way his company is using CAM's buses. "Our business involves tourism and transportation. We are based in Kuching, but for operations, we operate from Kuching to Miri. We take passengers across the whole of Sarawak." The typical customers, according to him, are tourist groups, both locally from Malaysia and overseas. The latter being mostly Chinese tourists.

Being the most important asset for his business, he picked CAM buses for a number of reasons. "First of all, the seats on board the CAM buses are very comfortable". Secondly, Fikri said that the buses supplied by CAM have an outstanding value for the price he pays. Praising the after sales service, he emphasised that in his line of business, any breakdown or unscheduled downtime is a heavy burden in terms of lost reputation and thus, he depends on CAM's service network as a reliable partner for service and maintenance.

The technology built into the CAM buses is of interest to him, as there have been very few technical issues thus far. In particular, Fikri praised the engine technology CAM is using. "Thanks to EURO 5 emission technology, the vehicles also support our ambitions for a sustainable approach to our business." Sarawak is emphasising a green agenda, and he feels that it is the responsibility of every business in the state to contribute to it.

With the ongoing Visit Malaysia Year 2026 campaign, Fikri hopes the efforts of the Malaysian government will yield positive results in the form of more tourist arrivals in the state. "After COVID, the tourism sector is still struggling, and many are still rebuilding their businesses." Hoping to increase the number of buses in his fleet, he is optimistic about the future as there has been an increase of tourist arrivals in the state in recent months. He recommended that one go to Mulu caves in his opinion, this is the best tourist attraction in Sarawak right now. "Just make sure to use our services to get there," he said with a smile.

### Snapshot of Sarawak's Automotive Market

Sharing his insights into the automotive market, Penghulu Teo Nging Poh met with the participants of the Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR in Sib. In his

role as President of The Federation of Automotive Workshop Owners' Association of Malaysia he has a deep involvement in the industry. "Our core mission is to unite, support, and elevate automotive repair professionals and workshops across Malaysia. We are dedicated to creating a well-regulated, high-standard, and future-ready automotive repair industry," he told Asian Buses.

As the President by elect, he would like to transform the automotive industry in whole Malaysia, charging into the future: the transition to electric vehicles and also hydrogen powered engine vehicle that are available in East Malaysia. One of the biggest issues he and his colleagues have identified is the lack of skilled labour available. To address this issue, the association is taking proactive steps. "I'm currently looking for partnership with vocational institution to provide related education to our members in order to qualify them as certified repairers in Malaysia. We also hope that our government will support by granting "grants" to our members," Teo said.

To better understand the East Malaysian market he emphasized on four major differences between East Malaysia and Peninsular Malaysia:

### Market Size and Vehicle Density

Peninsular Malaysia has a significantly larger population and higher vehicle density, particularly in urban centres like the Klang Valley, Johor Bahru, and Penang.

East Malaysia has lower population density and fewer vehicles per capita. However, vehicle ownership is still essential due to limited public transport, especially in rural and semi-urban areas.





### Vehicle Types and Usage Patterns

In East Malaysia, 4x4s, pick-up trucks, and SUVs dominate due to rugged terrain, rural road conditions, and commercial use (e.g., plantations, construction) as commercial vehicles.

### After Sales, Repair, and Maintenance Industry

Peninsular Malaysia benefits from a more mature network of workshops, authorized service centres, parts distributors, and technical colleges.

East Malaysia often faces challenges in parts availability, logistics delays, and skilled labour shortages. Workshops may take longer to source OEM parts, and some rely more on reconditioned or parallel-import components. "I sincerely hope that there would be encouragement of preventive maintenance among logistic operators in order to keep everyone safe," Teo added.

### Infrastructure and Accessibility

Peninsular Malaysia has better-developed road infrastructure, making transportation and distribution of auto parts more efficient.

East Malaysia, particularly in interior regions, deals with poor road access, which affects not just vehicle performance but also the supply chain for workshops.

We are having serious challenges in term of parts availability, logistics delays, and skilled labour shortages in East Malaysia which make the repairment work more expensive especially we need extra transportation to ship the parts from West Malaysia over to Island of Borneo.

### Addressing Labour Shortage

Technicians and mechanics in Sarawak are mostly experience based. As the President, I can only encourage them to take up vocational recognition training in order to make sure they are well certified. However, we do not have any enforcement in Malaysia yet on this.

In contrast, in China, if you are not certified under the government act, none of the workshops are able to hire technicians or mechanics because China's government is emphasizing on safety on every single vehicle under repairment. Hence, his Federation is currently forming a partnership with Sarawak Skills, the provider of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) supported by Sarawak Government to craft out a suitable training syllabus for the repairers in Sarawak in order to get them certified and recognized.

### Sarawak-Level Initiatives and Autonomy

Sarawak, in particular, has pioneered hydrogen adoption through its state-owned company Sarawak Energy and has introduced hydrogen-powered buses in Kuching—the first of their kind in Malaysia. The Sarawak government has invested in a hydrogen production plant and refuelling station in collaboration with global partners.

These developments reflect greater policy flexibility and political will at the state level compared to the federal system in Peninsular Malaysia.

### Green Energy Advantage

Sarawak is rich in renewable energy sources, particularly hydropower, which provides a clean and stable grid—ideal for supporting EV infrastructure.

This gives Sarawak a strategic advantage in building a low-emission transport system with cleaner electricity compared to coal-heavy grids elsewhere.

### Urban Planning and Public Transport Revamps

Cities like Kuching is actively revamping their public transport systems, making them ideal candidates for deploying EV or hydrogen buses. Since these cities are smaller than Klang Valley, pilot programs are easier to manage and scale.

With all the points stated above, Teo strongly believes that Sarawak's development in adoption of Hydrogen / EV trucks and buses would overtake a lot of the cities in Malaysia soon.





### Blazing a Trail with the CAM CO-STAR

Sending off the vehicle to East Malaysia, Ms Gwee Chin Li, Head of Business Development, CAM Malaysia, was clearly excited about the Sarawak Tour with CAM CO-STAR. Adorned with the custom livery for the trip, the vehicle is not just the co-star, but the actual main protagonist.

The tour itself is somewhat unusual; however, Chin Li has good reasons to put effort into the campaign. Having built a reputation among tour bus operators, she wanted to give the brand a further boost. "We realise that there is a lot of potential in East Malaysia. This activity is an excellent opportunity for us to boost our brand to support our local partners," she says.

The initiative is to inspire people to consider road transport, by bus, and Chin Li hopes that the tour will be an eye opener for the market. According to her, bus travel is very popular in peninsular Malaysia, however the market is not fully developed in East Malaysia. This is because previously, cities in East Malaysia lacked connectivity via suitable highways. Now that the Pan Borneo Highway is completed, the situation is changing. "Now we have opportunities we can exploit."

With an international reach of this campaign, Chin Li hopes that there will be an increased demand from tourists to not only flock to East Malaysia, who make buses their preferred way of moving about. Having several other models in the portfolio, the CO-STAR is yet another vehicle local transporters can consider for their operations. With 12-seater vans to 28-seater minibuses in the product line up, a suitable model will surely be available from CAM Malaysia. As a use case, Chin Li said that she can envision that families may take up the idea of renting a 20-seater to go on vacation. Other applications include mobile libraries, serving local, remote communities, and ambulances.

During the customer event on 25th June, CAM Malaysia had the entire range of vehicles on display. Placer-X, Co-Star and Kingo with manual and automatic transmission were featured. "At the event, those interested in the buses and vans we offer could hop on and go for a test drive." Besides, she points out that the participants of the Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR were present, talking about the driving experience thus far.

A highlight during the customer event were special promotions to be up for grabs on that day. Part of a nation-wide spare parts campaign, this promotional campaign is to excite potential clients about the CAM CO-STAR. In order to gather invaluable feedback on the vehicles, CAM Malaysia understands that one will have to get involved directly with clients, where they operate and in real-life conditions. "This is a multi-layered campaign that addresses several aspects of the tourism industry, transportation, local needs for buses and new ways of thinking."

### All Aboard the CO-STAR

The CAM CO-STAR, distributed by R&A Marketing Sdn Bhd – CAM Malaysia, is a 20-Seater that best suited to address the needs of tour operators, park operators, factories having to shuttle workers, it is also a highly versatile vehicle that can be modified into Motorhomes. With this nimble vehicle, powered by a 2.9L / 150 Hp engine, it is an ideal vehicle for inner city tours as well as overland rides.

Putting it through the paces, the Sarawak Tour with CAM CO-STAR was also a test drive to assess the capabilities of the minibus to serve as a suitable vehicle for tours like the one organised for the participating journalists.

Having driven it for 1 000 kilometres, a few things stood out with the ability to get it parked in a normal lot maybe being the most commented-on feature. The turning circle and rear-view camera make the CO-STAR highly manoeuvrable, easily slotting it into a parking space in a city. Care should be given when driving, as the vehicle is almost three meters high, although almost driving like a car. Thanks to modern engine technology, the minibus is very economical when driving in the city. It gets a little bit thirstier on the highway, which can be expected considering that there are up to 20 people on board, adding weight that has to be moved. If one were to drive mostly long distances, a bigger tank could be a welcome option.

Visibility from the cockpit is very good; the instrument cluster is easy to read while plenty of mirrors ensure that the driver is aware of the surroundings. With seat belts already installed, the CAM CO-STAR will already be compliant with upcoming legislation, adding another plus point to the evaluation. Another



feature worth mentioning is the air conditioning, which provided a pleasant climate throughout the journey, quickly cooling the cabin after each stop in the furnace-like heat at some of the stops. Adding a fridge, the vehicle makes for perfect excursions.

Even novices to the vehicle will quickly adapt to the functions, finding the driver's seat to be very comfortable. Considering the tour's route, taking some of the roads less travelled and therefore not as well developed, the suspension needs to be applauded too. Cruising, the CO-STAR makes for a comfortable ride.



### Fresh Infrastructure Opportunities

East Malaysia's transport infrastructure is still being expanded. Recently, the completion of the Pan Borneo Highway has made the news. Once having driven on this particular highway, one will understand the significance of the completion of this project. Previously, the road was a single lane carriageway, making it extremely difficult to overtake slower vehicles. And dangerous. Talking to Asian Buses, business owners operating between the cities visited have stated that, thanks to the Pan Borneo Highway, travel times have now been cut in half. This may not sound like much; however, it means that one can reach Bintulu in four hours from Miri instead of driving eight.

A realisation the participants of the tour had, is that the expansion of the Pan Borneo Highway is not just about prestige, but about road safety. Overtaking, when necessary, is now safer as one will have two lanes to manoeuvre. Meanwhile, the truncated travel times can reduce the impact of fatigue.

This new connectivity also creates opportunities to design EV/hydrogen-ready systems from the ground up. Charging stations, depots, and maintenance hubs can be planned and build without the retrofitting challenges of older urban centres. Sprinkled between the suburbs of Kuching for instance, one will already find a number of stations ready to receive hydrogen-powered vehicles. These newly

built stations are also ready to service trucks, featuring high roofs and ample space between the rows of pumps.

The aforementioned motorhome parks are just one of the many business opportunities that the Pan Borneo Highway will now create. In particular, bus travel between the cities of Sarawak has become much more attractive as the travel times have been shortened, now competing with flights in some cases.

### Where Reliability Matters. As Does Having a Dependable Supplier

When it comes to operating a fleet of tour buses, reliability is key. With a reputation at stake, those offering tourists a good time exploring Sarawak, operators cannot afford any breakdown or unscheduled downtime. This is where quality spare parts make the difference.

With an even more demanding environment than Peninsular Malaysia, Sarawak's bus operators have good reason to insist on genuine, high-quality spare parts. "Our clients in East Malaysia understand that the anger over a sub-standard part will outlast the joy of having closed a deal on cheap parts," Poh Hong Law, General Manager, Diamond Technique (Dtec) said. According to him, his clientele in East Malaysia value the peace of mind that the products offered by Diamond Technique offer them.

With a considerably sparser service network, parts availability is another issue that transport owners have to be concerned about. Here again, Diamond Technique's promise to the market is to ensure that the spare parts are available





when needed and in the right quantity. "Although the Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR is a relatively short trip in the huge state of Sarawak, it will give participants a feeling for why spare parts play such an important role," Poh commented further.

Covering a good 1000 Kilometres, this showcase road tour will be giving participants the opportunity to explore the subject of uptime and dependability of vehicles. "Trust in the vehicle is paramount as we cannot afford to have any breakdown happen on this tour, considering the involvement of the participants and authorities," said Stefan Pertz, Editor of Asian Buses.

Dtec-parts was founded 1996 in Kuala Lumpur with proven excellent track records in distribution of comprehensive range of automotive spare parts for a wide range of trucks, buses and other commercial vehicles.

#### **Sustainable Travel**

The idea of the Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR was met with a lot of excitement by local hotel operators. Many hotels integrate buses into their operations. Offering insights, Andy Pian Lemulun, Executive Assistant Manager at Pullman Miri Waterfront, mentioned that the hotel has many contact points with bus operators. "We help our guests to organise visits to the Niah Caves for instance. Such excursions are done

by bus as they are the best suited means of transportation to get there." As the weekend approaches, his teams will ready the bus parking lots in preparation for larger groups of visitors from Brunei.

With Miri being a business centre for the oil and gas industry, companies oftentimes host their corporate events in the hotel. Again, buses play a pivotal role in shuttling these visitors between airport and the property. Beyond that, he added that public transport in Sarawak is highly attractive as a way for tourists to explore the cities. If not entirely free of charge, like in Miri, a bus ride may only cost RM 1 (Sibu) and thus being favoured by locals and tourists alike.

#### **Miri: Business Gateway**

At the final stop, in Miri, the Sarawak Roadtour with CAM CO-STAR was met by Mr Donald Pang Kang Leung, who is the Sarawak Car Dealer Association's President. He told Asian Buses that associations play a vital role in supporting and representing vehicle dealers' interests in discussions with government authorities involving regulations, taxes or policies. "Representing the whole of Sarawak, the association aims to ensure standard operating procedures and ethical business practices among our members," he said. He too, would like to encourage members to be heavily involved in workshops or training related to sales, after-sales service or changes in automotive laws.

#### **Cross-border Business**

With Miri bordering Brunei, there is a lot of cross-border business conducted. Pang sees a lot of opportunities. "Being close to Brunei, Miri can act as logistic hub for the movement of goods and services between the two countries," he said. With the high demand for commercial vehicles, such as trucks and vans, it would be supporting goods transportation, cross-border delivery services and construction material movement. Ultimately, with all these demands, it could boost sales and maintenance for commercial vehicle dealers in Miri.

Regulatory hurdles such as differences in vehicle standards, road tax, insurance and licensing may complicate cross-border fleet operations. Consequently, some businesses operate dual fleets, both Malaysian and Bruneian-registered. This is, however, increasing costs and complexity. Pang welcomed harmonization initiatives under ASEAN agreements, which have helped reduce some of these barriers.







### Shift Toward Sustainability

Brunei's interest in green technology is slowly influencing demand for low-emission or electric commercial vehicles in the region. Miri-based suppliers and dealers might thus need to prepare for eco-friendly fleet demands, especially if more sustainable policies come into play in Brunei. In his conclusion, Miri is positioned as a strategic auto-commercial centre in northern Sarawak and a key node in the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA).

### Increased Demand for Ground Transportation

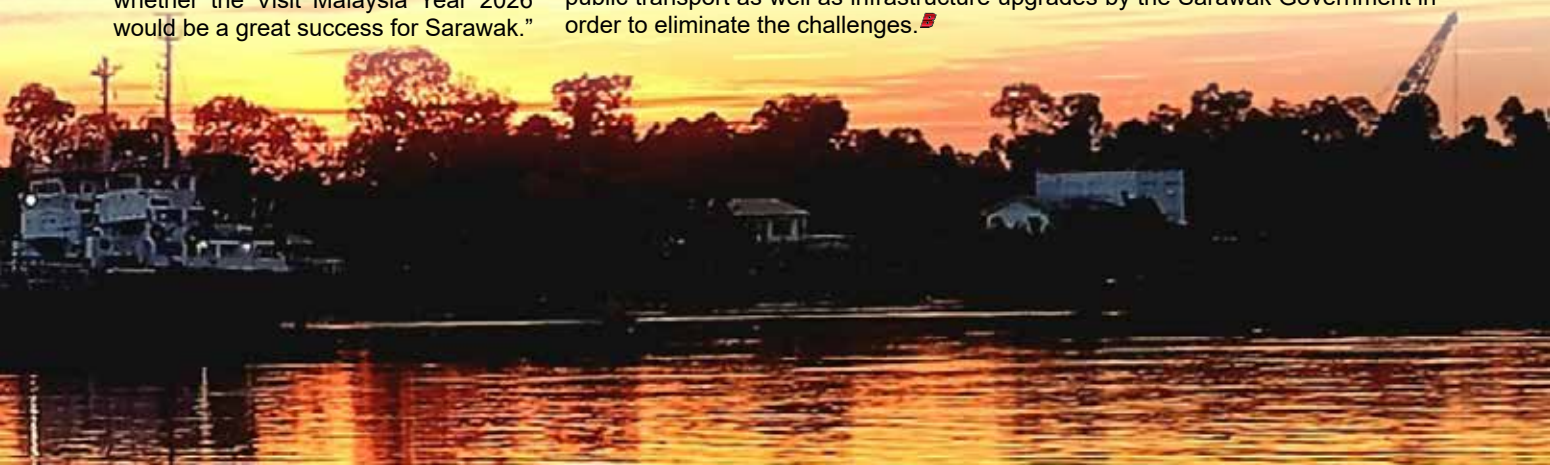
With Malaysia targeting 35.6 million visitors and an estimated RM147.1 billion in tourism revenue, the demand for road-based services, using buses like the CO-STAR, is expected to surge. This uptick will likely lead to higher revenues for operators but may also result in congestion and longer travel times, particularly in popular tourist destinations. Pang said that "The cross-border collaboration with attractive packages for tourists between Indonesia, Brunei and Sarawak Government would be critical to decide whether the Visit Malaysia Year 2026 would be a great success for Sarawak."



### Promotion of Sustainable and Integrated Transport

The Malaysian government is encouraging the use of Electric Vehicle in order to reduce pollution. A policy will be introduced to incentivize industries to transition to transport for transporting goods, thereby decreasing the pollution of the environment. This initiative aligns with the broader goal of promoting sustainable tourism and reducing the environmental impact of transportation.

However, with the increased of tourists, Sarawakian cities might be facing traffic congestion and pressure on infrastructure where we would need to promote more public transport as well as infrastructure upgrades by the Sarawak Government in order to eliminate the challenges. 🚧





## BYD: Driving Asia's Electric Future

**F**ounded in February 1995 by engineer and entrepreneur Wang Chuanfu, BYD Company Limited (Build Your Dreams) began as a rechargeable battery manufacturer and has since evolved into a global powerhouse in electric vehicles (EVs), energy storage, electronics, and urban rail transport. Headquartered in Shenzhen, China, the company is publicly listed on the Hong Kong and Shenzhen stock exchanges.

### Core Business Segments

- **Automotive:** BYD Auto manufactures battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), sold under BYD and its sub-brands including Denza, Yangwang, and Fangchengbao. In 2024, BYD became the world's largest EV maker by volume, delivering over 4.3 million vehicles.
- **Energy Solutions:** Through its solar power and battery storage solutions, BYD supports the transition to clean energy.
- **Electronics:** The company produces components for smartphones and laptops, including lithium-ion batteries.
- **Rail Transport:** BYD develops monorail and light rail systems (SkyRail and SkyShuttle) for urban mobility.

### Innovations

- **Blade Battery:** BYD's proprietary lithium iron phosphate (LFP) battery offers greater thermal stability and higher space efficiency.
- **DiSus Suspension System:** A next-generation suspension featured in BYD's luxury Yangwang line for enhanced performance and safety.
- **God's Eye® Driver Assistance System:** Combines radar, lidar, and AI for advanced semi-autonomous driving capabilities.

### Global Reach

With a presence in over 80 countries, BYD is rapidly expanding across Southeast Asia — especially in Thailand, Malaysia, and Singapore — and has opened EV manufacturing plants in Brazil, Hungary, and Thailand. The brand is also gaining ground in Europe and Latin America as countries push for cleaner transport alternatives.

### On BYD's Global Ambition

"It is time for Chinese carmakers to upend the order of the global automotive industry and chart a course into a new vast territory," stated Wang at the ceremony celebrating BYD's five-millionth new energy vehicle (*South China Morning Post*, 9 August 2023)

### On Technological Leadership

"The key to winning in business is to have core technology. The transformation of new energy vehicles is a technological revolution, and only companies with core technologies can survive," Wang said during a company strategy speech in 2023 (*Pandaily*, July 2023)

**End of the Line – or Just the Beginning?**  
BYD's transformation from battery producer to EV industry leader is a story of foresight, relentless innovation, and strategic leadership. With deep in-house technology, a rapidly expanding global presence, and a sharp focus on sustainable mobility, BYD is uniquely positioned to shape the future of transport; not only in Asia, but across the world. 🚀



# Leadership on the Move: MAN Malaysia's New MD Brings Vision for Growth and Innovation



**N**ewly-appointed Managing Director for MAN Truck & Bus (M) Sdn Bhd (MAN Malaysia) Marc Appelt has a simple message for all current and future customers of the illustrious German heavy commercial vehicle brand.

"If you are playing the long game, MAN is the reliable partner for you. We have the right products and set-up to support and grow with your business," said the 1.91 metre-tall Appelt, who hails from the historic salt-mining town of Lüneburg in northern Germany.

The Economics graduate has spent the past 20 years at MAN and brings with him a wealth of experience in revamping workshop operations and enhancing productivity.

As a member of the Commercial Board at MAN, he was in charge of driving sales and commercial activities all over the world. His stint as Finance Director based in MAN's Bangkok office back in 2012 and 2013 meant that he is familiar with the market and culture in the ASEAN region, having visited Kuala Lumpur regularly when the Malaysian operations were still in Rawang. His last position was as Head of Human Resources for Sales and Marketing based at the headquarters in Munich.

Appelt takes over from Andrew O'Brooks, who has moved on to helm the MAN operations in Greater China after a successful five-and-half year stint. He said that the rapid transformation of the three-decade old MAN operations in Malaysia over the last four years and a strong presence in social media have generated much goodwill and heightened respect of the brand in the market.

"My predecessor has done an amazing job in building a skilled, experienced and motivated team that is consistently delivering quality aftersales service and uptime demanded by customers. The current MAN set-up and network is extremely professional, which makes my task of growing the business easier," he said. Appelt's immediate priority is to expand the MAN network with new dealerships across the country in his mission to make MAN the preferred brand for fleet owners.

"As the first heavy truck with Euro V engines as standard in Malaysia, we have the most experience in helping transporters achieve fuel efficiency, reduce emissions and lower total cost of ownership (TCO). Our Euro V MAN Trucks are proven and reliable solutions, having been operating here in real-world conditions since 2021. Currently, we also have a very strong and growing order book for our Euro V MAN Coach Chassis. I am convinced that MAN will capture a large share of the growing bus-coach segment in Malaysia," said Appelt, who stressed that MAN was not just selling a truck or bus but offering itself as a reliable partner to players in the transport sector.

Despite the challenges presented by cheaper Chinese brands and heavy discounting by competitors, Appelt firmly believes in MAN's value proposition and remains optimistic about the growth potential for the brand. "We are simplifying business with a very compelling and comprehensive customer-focused solution. With our easy in-house financing, owning a MAN is now more affordable than ever with no heavy upfront capital outlay.

Our service and repair contracts ensure fixed costs and better cashflow management with no surprises. A highly digitised back-end that includes online service booking and contactless check-in at MAN service centres that operate until 2.30 am means minimal downtime. Send your vehicle in after work and it will be ready the next morning.

MAN Genuine Parts, be it brand new or remanufactured, are competitively priced and come with a two-year unlimited mileage warranty. All these mean that your MAN vehicle, which is built to last, will continue to be a revenue-generating asset for years to come," he pointed out.

Meanwhile, Appelt will start traversing up and down the country to personally get to know loyal customers in the steadily growing MAN family. ■



## Volvo Bus Launches Euro v Emission Standard Bus Chassis in Thailand



In alignment with the Volvo Group's core values—Safety, Quality, and Environmental Care—Volvo Buses remains dedicated to sustainability and corporate responsibility. Our ongoing commitment to developing products and services that exceed customer expectations is a cornerstone of our contribution to advancing the global commercial vehicle industry. stated:

"Thailand is an important market with high potential within the Asia Pacific region. The introduction of our Euro V bus chassis reflects our commitment to addressing customer needs and fostering business growth in the region. Our goal is to support its continued business growth by offering innovative products and forging strong partnerships with our customers, driving the industry towards greater sustainability," says Ms Marishya Wilhelmina, Volvo Buses, Director APAC Central.

**O**n April 3rd, Volvo Bus Thailand is proud to announce the launch of its new bus chassis engineered to meet the Euro V emission standard—an internationally recognized benchmark for environmental excellence. The newly developed chassis delivers outstanding performance in fuel efficiency, durability, and safety. Equipped with an advanced exhaust control system, it reduces emissions by up to 80 percent compared to previous Euro III standards.

The chassis incorporates state-of-the-art technology to optimize engine performance and lower maintenance costs. Scheduled for release in Thailand in early 2025, Volvo Bus Thailand is fully prepared to meet market demand through robust production, efficient delivery capabilities, and a nationwide network of over 20 service centers providing genuine parts, trained technician and expert engineer support.







Volvo Buses extends their sincere gratitude to their loyal customers, whose support over the past 30 years has been instrumental in driving their continuous

**Mr Thana Lestviboonchai**, Country General Manager, Volvo Bus Thailand, added:

"In today's rapidly changing economic environment, we are committed to enhancing our customers' competitiveness through comprehensive services, cutting-edge products that deliver optimal operational value and environmental benefits. We also offer a completed bus solution from Volvo authorised body builder partners for customers' confidence in enhanced quality standards.

Volvo Bus Thailand views the launch of the Euro V bus chassis as a pivotal step in elevating public transportation standards and advancing sustainable development in the industry. 🚐







## Quality pays off for Cosmic Express



**D**ato' Abu Hassan Awang believes that investing in top quality always pays off in the end. The owner of Cosmic Express has built a fleet of 70 coaches with only top Continental brands. He insists on using high quality diesel from a single trusted multinational brand. For every new coach he adds to his fleet, he would spend days at the bodybuilder to meticulously design the exterior and interior.

The results of his efforts and personal touches are clearly evident. Cosmic Express coaches can easily be distinguished by their classy colours and motifs – striking but never loud. While the interior designs of some express buses can be an assault on the senses the moment you step onboard, Cosmic Express coaches are always warm and welcoming. Plush fabric seats, finished in darker shades with subtle graphics, cosset you throughout the entire journey.

"The best compliments from my passengers are when they tell me that they often fall asleep at the start of the journey and wake up only upon reaching their destinations. This has been happening quite often since we added 10 units of MAN double-deck coaches for the first time to our fleet in 2020. MAN has managed to engineer a chassis that delivers an extremely comfortable and smooth ride. MAN's power on straight roads and uphill stretches is legendary while it can safely tackle downhills with controlled descents.

Our current fleet of Euro III-specification MAN coaches has also proven to be very fuel efficient, providing substantial fuel savings," said Dato' Abu Hassan.

The fuel economy and reliability have vindicated the decision to invest in MAN Coaches, which required a massive leap of faith after having entrusted his fleet to just one other European brand previously.

### Eye-opening Moment

"It was at the Busworld Exhibition in Brussels in 2019 that I first saw how big a brand MAN really was. Most of the bus operators I met there said they use MAN. I was impressed and did more research back in Malaysia. There was only one local express bus company that operated MAN coaches then and it was struggling. Everyone told me not to buy them.



To the surprise of my peers, I went ahead to buy 10 units to try and have not looked back since. In fact, I have just signed up for 40 units of Euro V-specification MAN RR5 double-deck coach chassis as part of my fleet renewal plan. The good news is some who were sceptical have since followed suit and bought MAN Coaches," he added.

The low-emission Euro V-specification MAN Coaches are timely acquisitions as Cosmic Express recently received the green light to expand its route to Singapore. The quick approval from the Singapore authorities was a pleasant surprise, although not totally unexpected.

"Going to Singapore means serving an international clientele that expects high standards. We are more than ready to deliver as that has always been what we strive for at Cosmic Express," he said.

The lucrative Singapore route would certainly help the company, which has experienced so many ups and downs over the years, achieve the next level of growth.

#### **A Test of Resilience**

When Dato' Abu Hassan took over what was then a travel and tour agency back in 2000, it was mired in debt. He restructured the company and managed to pay off the debt in three years.

When the bird flu pandemic in 2008 hit the tourism sector hard, he decided to pivot to the express bus service to survive. Cosmic Express enjoyed seven continuous years of profitability before the Covid 19 pandemic slam on the brakes once again.

"This business is really a test of our resilience. We have to stay strong and look at the bigger picture. We always have to remind ourselves that it is an essential service to the public, especially to students who need to travel from their hometowns for tertiary education. We have to run on schedule, even with only three passengers on board," he said.

Challenges are aplenty – highly-regulated fares, increasingly congested highways, high capital expenditures for fleet renewal and soaring repair and maintenance and other operating costs.

#### **Transitioning to EURO V**

How does Cosmic Express plan to manage the cost of transitioning to Euro V-specification coaches?



"There is no denying that the transport industry is one of the highest contributors to carbon emissions. We must play our part to reduce our carbon footprint. But it will certainly mean higher operating costs, especially with the use of AdBlue diesel exhaust fluid to reduce nitrogen oxide emissions. That is why we have to invest smartly.

MAN is one of Europe's leading heavy commercial vehicle manufacturers with proven products that are the preferred choice of bus operators all over the world. MAN Coaches are competitively priced and proven to be highly durable and reliable. The significant cost savings in fuel and the minimal downtime can help balance the extra costs. Furthermore, they can be deployed for our new Kuala Lumpur – Singapore and Alor Setar – Singapore routes as they more than meet the stringent requirements of the Singapore road transport authorities," he said.

#### **What next for Cosmic Express?**

"Once we have built up the necessary capacity, we hope to expand our services to Thailand as I believe there is a large untapped market," said Dato' Abu Hassan.

Meanwhile, there is plenty on his plate as the newly-elected Chairman of Persatuan Pengusaha Bas Ekspres Melayu Semenanjung Malaysia (PEMBAWA).

"We need to work closely with the Government to tackle a host of issues, especially on road safety. For example, the syllabus in driving schools is outdated, which has created lousy drivers. They should be made to undergo refresher courses annually to ensure their competency. There is also not enough surveillance and enforcement on the road which has led to instances of lorries overtaking express buses.

On my part, I always remind my drivers that stern action will be taken immediately if they commit any wrongdoing. Laws must be followed because if you don't, you are only disrespecting yourself. It must have worked as we have not received a single AES summon in 2025," he said.

#### **New Life for Ageing Coaches**

With some of Cosmic Express' MAN coaches reaching their fifth year, what fate awaits the ageing vehicles?

"We normally redeploy them to shorter instead of long-haul routes. As we are very big into football sponsorship, we plan to assign them, complete with the appropriate livery, to ferry the Kedah and Police football teams to matches in total comfort and safety," said Dato' Abu Hassan.

Such sponsorship provides invaluable exposure to the Cosmic Express brand. It is yet another smart move by the intrepid businessman whose true passion is not even in football. It is hockey. ■

# Turning the page on Transportation



## *Taking a bold step, Siang Yun adds their first electric bus to their fleet*

**K**nown for his pro-active and oftentimes unusual approach, this transport owner takes matters in his own hands. Literally. As he arrived at Gemilang Coachwork on 31 May 2025 to pick up his latest addition to the fleet, he was dropped off by his colleague. Mr. Tan Kim Siang, Director, Siang Yun Transportation Sdn Bhd, is excited to drive his first electric bus home by himself.

Based in Johor, Siang Yun Transportation's business is to provide transportation services to tourists, businesses shuttling their workers and students. Their routes cover all of peninsula Malaysia, reaching into Thailand and commuting into Singapore.

"We are trying this unit as we need to understand how electric buses can help us to become more environmentally friendly," Tan told Asian Buses. According to him, more and more clients are asking for greener solutions, and he would like to be pro-active in making the transition to electric vehicles. To fully understand how the new technology works, he took it upon himself to collect the vehicle, driving it back to his yard. Built onto a CRRC chassis, the vehicle is painted in his custom blue, which is slightly different to the colour code originally mandated for buses servicing factories to ferry their workers.

Gemilang Coachwork Sdn Bhd is the body builder of choice for Tan. This particular chassis was recommended by Gemilang Coachwork as it was best suited to be build up as a bus with seating-only specifications, whereby Tan insisted on high levels of comfort for passengers. "This was an opportunity, whereby I wanted to explore how we can use electric buses in our operation and Gemilang had stock available with a very short lead time," Tan said. Sitting up to 36 passengers, the bus features reclining seats, making it suitable to be used for different missions.

The production process took six months. During this time, Tan also readied his depot for the arrival of their first electric bus by adding charging infrastructure. According to Tan, careful consideration had to be given to that, being the biggest challenge in the implementation of the new technology. Solar panels had already been installed in the depot, easing the burden of cost of charging the vehicle. Being a trial, the bus will be serving routes of around 25 kilometres within Johor Bahru first. Gemilang is very confident that the bus will serve Siang Yun Transportation well as it is a tried and tested chassis. It was learned that there are four buses using the CRRC chassis in operation in Kuching.

Tan further said that he puts his confidence in Gemilang Coachwork as the company has already gained a reputation for being able to deliver high-quality electric buses. Seeing how Gemilang Coachwork is exporting to countries that place a strong emphasis on ESG, the body builder has since established itself as a supplier of choice. Tan observed that "Our customers here in Malaysia are now also starting to demand us to make more efforts to work towards reducing emissions and to implement ESG goals." Additionally, Tan pointed out that the cost of Diesel continues to be an issue for many transporters and he hopes that by using electric vehicles, this dependency changes to some degree.

Even as a kid, Tan has always been fascinated by buses. Helping his father in his workshop, he already developed a passion for buses. Running his own business, he has always admired Gemilang's design, seeing buses being made in their previous Tampoi factory. "Now, receiving this particular vehicle from Gemilang Coachwork is like a dream come true." Although not having driven it for any longer distances, Tan already pointed out that the electric bus drives very comfortable and quiet, which in his view should make this particular bus a favourite among his clients. ■



# GEMILANG COACHWORK



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transportation Sdn Bhd







# Fixing Instrument Clusters

*A faulty instrument cluster is a safety concern first and foremost. Having it repaired has numerous benefits over replacing them right away.*

The instrument cluster is the command centre for any commercial vehicle. It is a critical component that provides the driver with real-time information on the vehicle's performance and efficiency, safety and productivity. All the information is presented in an easy, one-glance format using gauges, indicator lights and in some cases additional data to assist in vehicle maintenance routines. Should instruments fail to work properly, the driver may not be able to operate the vehicle any longer. Allegiance Malaysia is able to identify and repair issues with instrument clusters. Jason Soyza, Assistant GM-TE Division at Allegiance explains the process.

## Making Problems Visible

"Typically, gauges will fail or over a period become lose their accuracy. Another common problem is the failure of warning or indicator lights resulting in the driver not being aware of serious issues that may arise during a trip," he says. For commercial vehicles, these are serious issues that need to be handled accordingly.

A malfunctioning instrument cluster can, first and foremost, pose a serious safety issue. Further vehicle performance issues, and also compliance with regulations can be problems. In terms of safety, a malfunctioning air pressure gauge for example, would be a serious safety concern: the driver would not be aware if there is enough supply to the pneumatic brakes on the vehicle and trailer. Failure of indicators or gauges can also blindside a driver on serious issues on the vehicle. Engine performance and service intervals are communicated in the instrument cluster. Also, if the speedometer is not accurate or malfunctioning, the driver will not be aware if the vehicle has exceeded the legal speed limit. This could lead to hefty fines and regulatory problems with the authorities.

## Diagnosing Issues in Instrument Clusters

For instrument cluster we can directly connect the unit to our test bench simulator. We do not need the vehicle in this case as all the signals to the cluster can be

simulated and we are able to test the function and accuracy of gauges and indicators. As the input signals to the cluster are fixed and defined, compared to the physical result on the cluster, any variations from the expected will indicate a faulty or mis-calibrated instrument cluster.





Using a specialised simulator test bench, Allegiance is able to identify problems relatively quickly, in some cases within an hour. Depending on the outcome of the test, repairs or re-calibrations can be as fast as two to three hours for minor issues. Usually after testing, Soyza and his team can estimate the time it would take to fix the problem and inform the customer of time required and cost of repairs.

Once a problem has been noticed, it can be addressed. Fixing any problem in an instrument cluster would very much depend on the results of test simulations. In most cases, it would require disassembling the cluster to access the micro circuitry for individual component testing and replacement. Once completed, the cluster will be re-tested and calibrated to ensure its accuracy before re-assembly and another round of simulation testing to concluded it is working and accurate to specification.

Instrument clusters have become a key component in a commercial vehicle, even more so in the newer generation of vehicles. This means a vast majority of these components are now paired or serial-locked to vehicles. Replacing one will not only be costly but will have the added cost of having to program and serial lock-it back to the vehicle. "By identifying the problem, repairing and, or re-calibrating it's accuracy, we able



to reduce the cost of purchase for a new unit. Programming is not necessary as no changes are done to the internal software of the unit. In most cases this can amount to up to 50 percent savings from the cost of replacement and programming," Soyza explained

#### **A Practical Solution**

Unfortunately, when the cluster is removed from the vehicle it is not advisable for the vehicle to be driven as it would be a serious safety issue since important information would not be available to the driver. To get around this downtime, vehicle owners may utilise any older compatible clusters which are marked as faulty. Allegiance could repair those after evaluation. If the units are repairable, this gives the owner the option of having swing units available on standby. This way, they can replace the current faulty unit with it and reduce the downtime significantly. As an added bonus, this practice can avoid e-waste as the units will be given a second life.

The process sounds straightforward and easy to perform. "Can anyone do this? What is the equipment needed? Do you need training? It is not as simple as it sound. For starters, you need the testing equipment, which is costly and requires training." While it is relatively easy to remove a cluster from the vehicle, disassembly and repairs require specialised knowledge and training in the use of the equipment for testing and calibration. Calibration of a repaired unit is of utmost importance as an uncalibrated cluster will report the wrong information to the driver. This in turn can lead to some serious violations of safety regulations and compliance. Breaking speed limits and exceeding permissible emission outputs are the most obvious, and in a worst-case scenario accidents and injury may occur.

#### **Benefits of Repairing Instrument Clusters**

There are a few key benefits to repairing instrument clusters as opposed to swapping them for brand new units. The main benefit is in terms of cost, as in a lot of cases this can result in up to 50 percent cost savings. It has the added benefit of reducing electronic waste and it increases the lifespan of the component. Secondary to that, there is the benefit of reducing the downtime of the vehicle as sourcing for a new unit can take weeks and in some cases months and the vehicle cannot be used during this time. 🚗





# Speed Limiters a Standard for MAN for a Long Time

In the wake of a number of tragic accidents involving buses, demands by the public have been made to make buses safer. Reacting to this, the Ministry of Transportation of Malaysia has pushed ahead with the implementation of speed limiters for commercial vehicles.

On a bus, several Electronic Control Units (ECU) are responsible to manage the various functions of the vehicle. Programming one of these ECUs on board a bus, the maximum speed the vehicle can go can be set. In doing so, the speed limit can be set to any top speed, however odd it may seem.

Asian Buses spoke to MAN Truck & Bus Malaysia (MAN) to find out more about the issue of using speed limiters. It was learned that the German marque has been using this approach to limit the maximum speed for almost a decade. “MAN has taken responsibility for this for a long time. Every vehicle we are delivering to our clients has been prepared accordingly,” said Thayalan Subramaniam, General Manager, MAN Truck & Bus Malaysia.

According to him, the setting is to be 89 Km/h as factory setting. “One would have to allow for some tolerance. There are some considerations we have to make in defining the top speed we set, for instance the fact that the vehicle’s speed is also not measured with an absolute 100 percent accuracy.” In accordance with the Malaysian laws, the speed limit for buses is 80 Km/h, while MAN has carefully calculated the top speed to be set for their vehicles.

The immediate question that one may have is to investigate if the ECUs on board of a commercial vehicle can be re-programmed to circumvent the factory-set speed limit. Subramaniam said that this is indeed possible, however it is neither easy nor cheap. “The equipment needed to read out the data of an ECU is a specialist piece of equipment, which also requires in-depth programming knowledge. In anticipation of tampering attempts, MAN is fortifying their ECUs with security patches and advanced cybersecurity tools.

In case of vehicle inspections, it is difficult for the service provider to detect if the ECUs have been tampered with. This, according to Subramaniam can only be analysed and detected when the vehicle is being serviced in the official MAN workshops. “Unscrupulous parties may try to tamper with them,” he said. In turn,

he said that if any of the newer MAN buses is seen exceeding 90 Km/h of speed, it is likely to have been manipulated. Explaining further, he said that ABS and EBS are invaluable systems that every operator should consider, however, the most effective way to improve safety is to stay within the speed limit.

“We take responsibility for the passengers on board of vehicles using our chassis. This is why MAN has long since insisted on setting the speed limit by way of the electronics on board of our buses,” he added. In addition to the speed limiters, he urged fleet operators to utilise Telematics to manage the speeds of fleets. Modern Telematics systems allow for a range of parameters to be set with alerts given whenever an instance occurs. For example, the fleet manager can be notified in real time whenever a vehicle exceeds the legal speed limit. One can then investigate as to why the driver broke through the speed limit.

Stressing again that MAN has been practicing the delivery with speed limits in place as factory settings, Subramaniam emphasised that the safety of passengers is of utmost importance and that tampering with the ECUs on board a commercial vehicle may cause serious harm. ■



# Minibuses offer Accessibility

Road transport, with the invention of the motorcar, has been an incredible enabler for many businesses and private households. What could have been an impossible task prior to having a tool to move goods and people has now become something we don't give much thought to. Buses in particular enable us to have access to places and people. Minibuses might be some of the most fascinating enablers among them, despite their name suggesting that they are standing in the shadow of their bigger brethren, being "mini".

Because of their size, minibuses can access certain roads or areas that bigger coaches cannot enter. Rural roads for example may not be suitable for triple-axle, double-deck buses. However, some places may require connectivity via road. In Borneo, small communities exist many hours of driving away from major cities. There may not be a lot of passengers though, however, they may still need to travel. A minibus may just be the right-sized vehicle in terms its capacity and actual size. One aspect my colleague pointed out is that a minibus could be a relief for those with medical conditions. Plane travel may be convenient for many of us, but others may suffer from conditions that could make it even impossible to use this mode of transport. The journey from Kuching to Sarawak may take longer by bus, but if it helps to alleviate a medical condition, it is a great enabler.

Along the same lines of thought, purpose-built minibuses can serve those in wheelchairs for example. I can even see this as a private vehicle, offering a family ample space to move all family members while having the ability to accommodate someone with special needs. Modified cars exist, but they may actually be more expensive and harder to come by as minibuses are, typically, customised.

With minibuses serving commuters, they also grant access to the larger vehicles. Oftentimes, minibuses ply routes in neighbourhoods, taking passengers to nearby train stations or transportation hubs. Here, minibuses are great enablers to access to the transport systems with more capacity. They are easy to deploy in urban neighbourhoods. On-Demand services are also interesting businesses within the SME ecosystem.

A route may not require a lot of capacity; however, the quality of passengers may be an aspect to consider. For instance, a tourist attraction could be served by



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a shuttle bus, moving a dozen people at a time. Tourists are important people for any country as they hopefully return to talk about their wonderful experiences while sightseeing. Making sights and scenes easily accessible to them can be done by way of having minibuses in service. Bus drivers on any route have told me that they typically end up being guides as well, dispensing useful information (making information accessible).

As a teenager, living in a small town, I gained access to the bigger city by using a minibus that was running only on weekend evenings. This allowed for commuters to have their night out without having to worry about getting home by car. Oftentimes, I would be meeting friends in the bus; it enabled my access to and with them while serving the obvious purpose of providing transportation. I often think about these trips and believe we should have many more minibuses on the roads. To allow all of us more access. ■

# Introduction to Molead Cling Carbon Dioxide Air Conditioner

Currently, most automobile air conditioners still use Freon refrigerant. However, the chemical production of Freon will consume a lot of energy and increase carbon dioxide emissions.

Molead Cling's integrated battery thermal management air conditioner is an efficient and intelligent air conditioner that integrates the cooling and thermal management functions of the vehicle battery pack and the passenger area. It has the characteristics of compact structure, high integration, high energy efficiency, lightweight, and intelligence. The product spectrum covers all meter segments of 6m~12m for buses. The center height of our carbon dioxide air conditioning is lower, and the compressor, high-voltage electric box and DC-DC are integrated inside the air conditioner. The whole system can be hoisted in an integrated manner without the need to draw power from

the low-voltage power supply of the whole vehicle. In terms of function, the integrated battery liquid cooling function can be selected to take into account the cooling of the cabin and the battery

The air conditioner uses ultra-low temperature CO2 heat pump technology with dual heat sources of air source and battery waste heat source. Through advanced adjustment methods such as PWM and PID, the energy efficiency is improved by 30% compared with the same R410a heat pump system; the low-temperature heating energy efficiency of CO2 heat pump is improved by more than 50% compared with ordinary heat pumps, which can effectively solve the low-temperature power consumption



and endurance problems of electric buses, improve economy, and reduce carbon emissions.

Using natural CO2 refrigerant, refrigerant ODP = 0, GWP value = 1, air conditioning zero carbon emissions, meet the EU's future refrigerant environmental protection regulations. ■

## HIGER FENCER F1 Shines at UITP: Driving Green Mobility in Europe



achievements and strong capabilities of Chinese new energy buses in the field of public transportation. This display injected vibrant energy into the global development of green transportation.

The FENCER F1 Integral EV electric bus showcased by Higer Bus at the event is a star model in Higer's pure electric lineup. It made its global debut at the 2023 Busworld Expo in Belgium and was showcased once again at this UITP Global Public Transport Summit.

Inspired by the famous sport of fencing, the vehicle combines elegant movements with flexible tactics, embodying a spirit of striving and impact. It represents passion, bravery, wisdom, and success. Equipped with Higer's self-developed G4 modular high-end chassis, the FENCER F1 showcases Higer Bus's technological accumulation and manufacturing standards in the new energy era. ■

On June 15, 2025, the highly anticipated UITP Global Public Transport Summit and Exhibition opened grandly in Hamburg, Germany. As a pioneer in China buses industry, Higer Bus showcased its high-end zero-carbon sub-brand FENCER F1 Integral EV electric bus, dazzling the world with the brilliant



# Giti Emphasises Lower RRC Truck and Bus Tires with EVO Launches

**G**iti Tire has launched the Giti GSR237EVO and the Giti GDR675EVO, the first in a series of new truck and bus tyres to carry the EVO name which signifies energy saving solutions through vastly improved Rolling Resistance Coefficient (RRC).

The Giti GSR237EVO steer tyre delivers a B-grade RRC result – up from a C-grade on the Giti GSR237 – and is currently offered in sizes 315/70R22.5, 385/55R22.5 and 385/65R22.5.


The Giti GDR675EVO drive tyre has achieved a C-grade RRC result – one better than the Giti GDR675 – with size 315/70R22.5 available now. Both products receive an A-grade in exterior noise and are part of Giti's Combi Road portfolio, signifying regional application usage.

The results have been achieved through new internal compounds with lower hysteresis and advanced tyre curing technology which significantly lowers

hysteresis generation to improve the RRC and reduce fuel consumption.

They also feature an advanced profile concept to ensure even wear as well as improved robustness and retreadability. The tyres are also among the first products to arrive into Europe carrying an RFID chip in the sidewall, which allows whole tyre life monitoring.

The system allows identification on a single unit level and is guaranteed across the lifetime of each tyre with digital information readable by all stakeholders and users covering tyre manufacturing, logistics, OEMs and distributors and wholesalers, fleet management, quality assurance, retreading and end-of-life.

The Giti GSR237 and Giti GDR675 remain in the Giti truck and bus portfolio. 




## Daimler Truck, Mitsubishi Fuso, Hino and Toyota Motor Corporation conclude Definitive Agreements on integrating Mitsubishi Fuso and Hino Motors



The deal will proceed to closing subject to approval from the relevant boards, shareholders and authorities.

By integrating Mitsubishi Fuso and Hino Motors, the companies aim to improve business efficiency in areas such as development, procurement and production. With this, they expect to significantly enhance the competitiveness of Japanese commercial vehicle manufacturers and strengthen the foundation of the automotive industry in Japan and Asia.

The new holding company shall proudly contribute to customers, various stakeholders, and the automotive industry by helping to solve issues surrounding commercial vehicles, such as carbon neutrality and logistics efficiency, while striving to realize a sustainable and prosperous mobility society and to strengthen the commercial vehicle business globally through the development of CASE technologies (Connected, Autonomous, Shared, Electric), including hydrogen. 

**D**aimler Truck AG (President and CEO: Karin Rådström, hereafter “Daimler Truck”) Mitsubishi Fuso Truck and Bus Corporation (President and CEO: Karl Deppen, hereafter “Mitsubishi Fuso”), Hino Motors Ltd. (President and CEO: Satoshi Ogiso, hereafter “Hino”) and Toyota Motor Corporation (President and CEO: Koji Sato, hereafter “Toyota”) concluded Definitive Agreements for the integration of Mitsubishi Fuso and Hino.

Further details on the scope and nature of the collaboration, including the name of the new holding company, are intended to be announced over the coming months.

## Solaris Awarded for Excellence in Dual Education



**S**olaris received an award in the nationwide “Angel of Dual Education” competition. The company was recognised for its long-standing and consistent collaboration with educational institutions, effective preparation of young people for professional careers, and active promotion and development of the dual education system. Through its dual education programs, Solaris has already supported over 320 young participants.

The award was presented during this year’s Dual Education Congress, as part of the “Angel of Dual Education” competition organized by the National Career Guidance Forum. Solaris received the distinction for its excellent results in implementing dual education programs and for its ongoing, committed cooperation with schools and universities.

Solaris runs dual education programs and supports the development of skills among young people entering the job market on two levels: vocational education and higher education. Over the course of a dozen or so years, more than 320 individuals have participated in Solaris’ dual education initiatives.

The company’s long-standing collaboration with educational institutions has had a real and positive impact on the local labour market. Since 2007, Solaris has run a Practical Vocational Training program in partnership with the Vocational School in Murowana Goślina. For three years, students from the Solaris Patronage Class gain practical knowledge and hands-on experience in the mechatronics profession, working under the guidance of qualified engineers and specialists. To date, 209 students have completed the program at the Bolechowo plant alone, with over 100 continuing their careers at Solaris. In 2013, the company’s facility in Środa Wielkopolska joined the initiative, offering a dedicated training workshop for future welders. A total of 43 students have taken part in the program there. ■

## Prasarana Appoints New Leadership



**P**rasarana Malaysia Berhad (Prasarana) on 1 July 2025 announced the appointment of YBhg Tan Sri Mohd Nasir Ahmad as the new Group Chairman and Amir Hamdan as Acting President and Group Chief Executive Officer (PGCEO) effective from 1 August 2025 and 15 July 2025 respectively.

Tan Sri Mohd Nasir previously served as the Chief Executive Officer of Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Berhad (PUNB) until his retirement on 1 June 2011. He has also assumed the responsibility of Group Chairman of CIMB Holdings Berhad since 2018. He replaces Tan Sri Jamaludin Ibrahim who retired as Chairman of Prasarana on 30 April 2025. Amir’s appointment as Acting PGCEO is in line with Prasarana’s commitment to ensure continuity of leadership and the

company’s operations in its efforts to provide safe, efficient and competitive public transport services. He replaces Mohd Azharuddin Mat Sah, who will end his term of service with Prasarana on 14 July 2025. ■





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