

HTFORDELHI

DTC's killer buses roam free on Delhi roads

PUBLIC THREAT DTC buses were sold as safer alternatives to killer bluelines, but are the biggest violators of rules on the roads

Subhendu Ray

subhendu.ray@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Transport Corporation's (DTC) standard low-floor buses, touted to be a safer alternative to the killer Bluelines and offer lakhs of city dwellers an international standard public transport, have themselves turned out to be killers on the roads.

As many as 65 people lost their lives under the killer wheels of DTC buses in 2013, just two less than that in the previous year. Seven people have already been killed by DTC buses in the first half of January this year.

Talking to HT, Debashree Mukherjee, chairman cum managing director, DTC, said that after assuming office two weeks ago she has taken up the task to reduce the rate of accidents involving DTC buses as the top priority.

"We will show zero tolerance to accidents involving DTC buses. In the first place we are going to improve synergy with the traffic police to reduce fatal accidents by DTC buses. We are going to start investing all fatal accidents and intensify the punitive action on the violators. We will ensure buses run on dedicated lanes and stop at authorised points at the bus stops." Records of Delhi Police show that DTC buses violated all kinds of norms and the most fatal accidents took place due to speeding, lane jumping and jumping traffic signals.

"They (DTC buses) are among the biggest violators on roads and most of them are driven by inexperienced drivers and conductors," said Anil Shukla, additional commissioner of police (traffic).

"Despite constant checks and stringent prosecutions, we could not discipline the DTC drivers," he added. A DTC official said many drivers of the Blueline buses, which were taken off roads following their poor performances by the former Delhi government, were reappointed as DTC drivers on contract as the cash-trapped DTC could not afford to hire new experienced drivers.

"DTC buses are run by three types of drivers - permanent drivers, Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB)-



■ DTC buses are not only the cause of accidents but also block traffic by diverting from their designated lanes in the race to pick the maximum number of passengers.

ARVIND YADAV / HT PHOTO

appointed drivers and drivers appointed on a contractual basis. A total of 1100 posts of drivers are lying vacant which result into double shift by some drivers leading to accidents as the drivers become tired," the official said.

The cops have now adopted a two dimensional approach - educate DTC drivers on safe driving and show no mercy to the violators - said Taj Hassan, special CP (Traffic). They have also asked the Transport department to ensure that speed governors installed in DTC buses are not tampered with. "If the speed governors are functional the buses will not speed up beyond 40kmph. This itself would restrict accidents significantly," a traffic police official said.

A traffic police study on city's road accidents indicate that

several pedestrians and cyclists were the victims of speeding DTC buses last year.

The traffic police have decided to take up the matter with new transport minister, Saurabh Bharadwaj and also the L-G and apprise them about the rise in the cases of fatal accidents by DTC buses.

The cops have also asked the civic agencies to paint the roads demarking lanes for movement of DTC buses and designating areas for picking and dropping commuters at bus stops so that it becomes easier for the traffic police to catch the violators.

NEXT WEEK

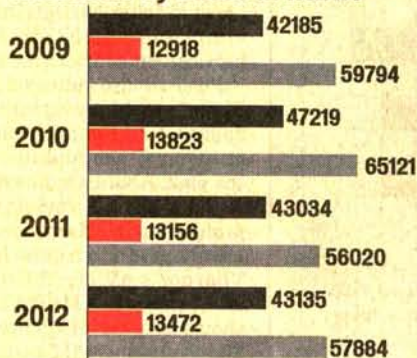
Hit-and-run cases claim maximum lives

DANGEROUS TRANSPORT

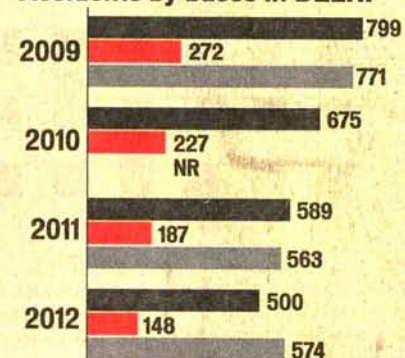
Incidents involving buses

TOTAL ACCIDENTS DEATH INJURED

Accidents by buses in INDIA



Accidents by buses in DELHI



SOURCE: CENTRE FOR MEDIA STUDIES