



busworld india coming up

FROM THE DRIVING SEAT



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Busworld and its local partner, Inter Ads Ltd, are busy making arrangements for the fourth edition of Busworld India, to be held in the Bombay Exhibition Centre in Mumbai from 12 to 14 January 2011.

Patrick Van Impe, Secretary General of Busworld, predicts that this edition will be larger and better attended than previously. "We have established strong links with trade associations in the bus and coach industry in India who are convinced of the benefit of having stand-alone exhibitions specifically for the industry and its customers.

"The population of India is around 1.2 billion people! Despite the opening of new car factories, levels of car ownership are still quite low, about one vehicle for every 80 people. There are around 700,000 buses in circulation in India, which equates to one bus for every 1,700 people. That means that India has a lower level of bus population per 1,000 people than any of the world's other large countries.

1. The expansion of the highway network in India has opened opportunities for small numbers of sleeper coaches.
2. Isuzu is one of the global players becoming established in India.
3. Quality standards are improving - important in a country famous for its monsoon season.
4. A stylish coach from Sutlej Motors, a long established builder in India.
5. Temsa has put its plans for India on hold.
6. Smaller buses are popular for rural routes, works and school transport.



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1. The Symphony coach from Ruby, one of India's largest bodybuilders.
2. Good ground clearance is still important on many Indian roads.

"At the last Busworld Kortrijk, we held an India Day Conference. One of the presentations was by Kulwant Wilkhu, President of the Indian Association of Bus Industry. He is also Director of Business Development & Strategic Planning of Sutlej Motors.

"He produced many fascinating statistics. In 1951, railways carried 85% of the passengers using public transport, and buses only 15%. By 2008, the situation had completely reversed, with buses moving 85% of passengers. He estimated that around 10% of India's population today uses buses, and that the shortfall on numbers in circulation was around 500,000.

"He said that the average age of buses in India was ten years, therefore demand for new vehicles should be running at around 70,000 per annum. Putting that into perspective, it is more than twice the annual replacement levels in Western Europe. That makes us highly optimistic about the future success of Busworld India."

In the first decade of this century, the Indian Government invested very heavily in a 5,952km network of highways, known as the Golden Quadrilateral, linking Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai. That network was completed in 2006, opening up demand for long distance express travel.

Further north-south and east-west corridors were completed only recently. Furthermore, in 2006, the Government announced an eight-year road construction programme to create a secondary highway network, including ring roads and widening of existing arterial roads. It was planned to link every village in India to the road network. That will lead to demand for commuter services for India's emerging middle classes.

At the beginning of 2009, it was estimated that there were around 50,000 buses (above 8 tonnes gross) running in the major cities, but the real requirement was 120,000. Last year, during the global financial crisis, the Government released stimulus funds as part of the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission to enable the purchase of 15,000 buses for 68 cities. Of those, 51 had populations exceeding one million people. Buses had to be either low entry, or with the floor no more than two steps above the ground. They also had to

be equipped with facilities like multiplex wiring, destination equipment, GPS and passenger information systems.

The Government also supplied funding to the State Transport Corporations to help them modernise their aging fleets. All of this was a

major boost to the manufacturing and component supply industries.

There is a similar story of shortage of supply for intercity and tourism coaches. There are around 70,000 vehicles in use, but the rapid expansion in the highway network and growth in tourism has resulted in a requirement for around 120,000 vehicles.

COMPETITION COMES TO INDIA

For several decades, production and sales of commercial vehicles in India, from around 5-6 tonnes gross, was in the hands of two major manufacturers, Ashok Leyland and Tata Motors.

That has changed. Volvo Bus Corporation rightly predicted that the opening of the intercity highway network would lead to an increased demand for express coach services, using vehicles with greater power and higher levels of comfort than those available at that time in India.

Since that time, Volvo Truck Corporation has formed a joint venture with Eicher Motors, which will include trucks and buses. MAN has teamed up with Force Motors. While they are initially concentrating on medium range trucks, buses are certainly in their plans. Mercedes-Benz has developed coaches with Sutlej Motors, a well-established local builder, and will add interurban vehicles to the range. Mercedes-Benz is also planning to bring in MCV from Egypt to set up a factory for the manufacture of city buses.

Swaraj builds medium size buses using Isuzu components while Ceria Motors, an associate of JCBL, uses King Long technology.

Tata acquired a minority shareholding in Hispano, one of the largest Spanish bodybuilders, a few years ago, and subsequently increased its stake to 100%. They are offering Tata Hispano vehicles in premium sectors in the Indian market. Tata has also established a joint venture with Marcopolo of Brazil in the high volume light-medium sector.

Irizar of Spain now has two factories in joint ventures with Ashok Leyland and Sundaram Industries in southern India. India has Western legal and accounting systems. English is widely spoken. It all makes for good working collaborations in a market which will expand in the coming years.



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1. Volvo rapidly established a premium brand with its coaches in India.
2. Volvo is enjoying rapidly growing sales of its low entry buses in Indian cities.

a great success

FIRST BUSWORLD RUSSIA



The first Busworld Russia was recently held in the city of Nizhniy Novgorod which lies about 400km east of Moscow. The regional Governor and his senior officials were very enthusiastic about bringing the Busworld concept to the city. The exhibition was held in three halls of a modern fairground on the banks of the Oka River. Other exhibitors took space outside and benefited from three days of glorious hot sunny weather.

Nearly half the buses in Russia are more than ten years old. Just looking at those on the streets in Nizhniy Novgorod, there were some modern low floor vehicles, but many services are operated by midibuses with high floors and front-mounted engines. Many older vehicles were observed, but they were generally in reasonably good condition, suggesting that their public authority owners are spending large amounts of money on repair and maintenance, including heavy rebuilding. In Western Europe, the demand for wholly accessible vehicles and lower emission limits has all but eliminated that practice.

The city is the headquarters of the GAZ Group which in turn owns Russia's largest and only full range bus and coach manufacturer, Russian Buses. This has four subsidiaries, namely the Likino Bus Plant near Moscow, trading as LiAZ, the Pavlovo midibus factory (PAZ), the Golitsyno factory outside Moscow (GoIAZ), and the Kurgan factory in Western Siberia (KaVZ). There has been considerable rationalisation of their product ranges to eliminate duplication, although there is still some overlap, such as the Kurgan factory building some PAZ models for Siberian conditions.

A spokeswoman for Russian Buses said that her company was delighted that the first Busworld Russia was being held in their home city. It gave them an ideal opportunity not only to meet customers, but also suppliers. There is a great shortage of specialist component suppliers to the bus and coach industry in Russia, so most factories have to make many of their own components.

There is a greater understanding nowadays of whole vehicle life costs, therefore Western engine makers like Caterpillar, Cummins, Deutz and MAN have become established, also other



well known suppliers like Allison, Voith and ZF. Russian engine manufacturers have entered into agreements to acquire engine technology from the likes of Cummins and Renault. Daimler now owns 11% in KamAZ, the largest truck builder, which is closely associated with the NefAZ bus factory in Neftekamsk.

Russia has abundant supplies of natural gas. LiAZ showed a full low floor city bus with one of the first gas powered versions of MAN's popular 6.7 litre engine. Outside there was a full low floor articulated vehicle with a larger and more powerful Cummins CNG engine. Standards of appearance, fit and finish of interior components were vastly improved from previous Russian standards and are now quite acceptable. Initial price is still a very important consideration in the Russian purchasing decision.

The GoIAZ plant was represented by two models, namely a 12.4m long interurban coach with an MAN engine and a high deck Cruise

coach body on a Scania K310 chassis. Like most Russian vehicles, these were comparatively under-powered by Western European standards.

The VDL Group has worked for several years with the Neftekamsk (NefAZ) factory, supplying buses and coaches in kit form with DAF engines. Local assembly qualifies for exemption from 30% import duty for vehicles built outside Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. One of the exhibits in Busworld Russia was a high-standard suburban bus, based on the Berkhof Premier design, with the engine mounted on the offside in the front section of the vehicle. Evidently, Russian drivers prefer this for its better traction in snowy winter conditions. It would be hard to describe this as major business for VDL, but it keeps them with a presence in an important market with good prospects for expansion.

Belarus was represented by MAZ which had around 150 modern full low floor city buses

1. The busy stand of the Russian Buses group.
2. An Otokar midicoach basks in brilliant sunshine alongside an amazing mural.
3. NefAZ assembles and sells several VDL models including this articulated interurban bus.
4. A full low floor LiAZ city bus powered by a Cummins CNG engine.
5. A low floor minibus built in Turkey by Karsan.
6. A neat little midibus from Yutong.
7. A new 12.4m interurban coach from the Golitsyno factory.
8. Daewoo brought this selection of smaller buses from Korea.
9. MAZ of Minsk, Belarus, showed this tidy low entry midibus.
10. This Etalon midicoach was built in Ukraine.

running in Nizhniy Novgorod. The company showed a very neat low entry midibus and a full size low floor articulated bus, powered by a CNG engine. One of the main manufacturers in Ukraine is the Etalon Corporation, the new

identity for the former BAZ, based in Borispil, which is around midway between Kiev and its international airport.

Despite the tariff barrier, Turkish, Korean and Chinese manufacturers all exhibited at Busworld Russia. Operators in the far east of Russia are closer to Chinese factories than those of Russian Buses!

It was interesting to observe visitors at Busworld Russia. Although many vehicles are owned by public sector organisations, including factories, people had come to the exhibition to do deals. Often they were in teams of two to three people, visiting stands and getting into earnest discussion. There was even a local television station with a complete studio in one of the halls, interviewing people and spreading the message about the exhibition. Regional politics play a large part in life in Russia.



The timing of Busworld Russia was excellent. The market, like many others, was hit by the global financial crisis, but is now recovering

strongly. Russia has vast resources of oil, gas and minerals. The medium to longer term prospects for the market look good.

SMART MOVE LAUNCHED IN RUSSIA

The Smart Move campaign was launched in Russia and the CIS region on 30 June 2010 during the opening of Busworld Russia in the presence of around 400 leading political and business representatives, including the Governor of the Nizhniy Novgorod region, Mr Valery Shantsev.

At a time when demand for mobility in Russia and other CIS countries is growing exponentially, promoting buses and coaches and implementing the policy and business objective of doubling their use will bring substantial benefits to society and communities in terms of better social inclusiveness and increased opportunities for all citizens to rely in affordable and high quality transport services at negligible cost for society; considerable improvement in road safety and reduction of road fatalities; decrease in CO2 emissions and a spectacular reduction of congestion in cities at zero cost to taxpayers; and creation of millions of new jobs.



1. Russia needs to invest in modern accessible buses like this LiAZ with the latest MAN CNG engine.
2. The distinguished panel at the launch of the Smart Move campaign during Busworld Russia.



BUS CODE INTRODUCED

India has had a bad record for road accidents, including many fatal and serious injuries. It used to be reckoned that one person was killed on the roads in India every six minutes!

A few years ago, the Government decided that legislation was needed to improve the safety and conformity of production of buses and

coaches in India. The old Motor Vehicle Rule & Act 1939 was long overdue for major revision, taking into account the many advances in vehicle technology since it was enacted.

The result has been the Bus Code AIS052. Wisely, the Indian authorities chose to develop legislation which has many similarities to the European Bus Directive (EC/2001/85). India has also adopted other European legislation, for instance on engine emissions, (see separate article).

The Bus Code is primarily concerned with safety and quality in the construction and use of buses and coaches. Manufacturers are now required to test and homologate complete vehicles. They also have to test components to comply with standards. For instance, the structures of coaches must comply with a

roll over standard known as AIS031, directly equivalent to ECE R66. ABS is now mandatory in coaches and power steering is required on all vehicles.

A large number of important components have to be tested for compliance with the Bus Code, for instance headlights, rear lights, rear view mirrors, side marker lights and all glass.

After a manufacturer has obtained Type Approval for a new vehicle or family of vehicles, he then has to satisfy the authorities that all subsequent models will be built to the same dimensions and standards, known as Conformity of Production.

The Indian authorities ensured that adequate test facilities were made available by certifying more agencies. Separate annual inspection and certification was introduced at the same time for buses fuelled by CNG.

Some of the small traditional bodybuilders have been unable to comply with the new requirements, but there have been interesting initiatives where smaller groups have banded together, with the various members each taking responsibility for part of the construction of a complete vehicle, in order that they can collaborate and meet the new Bus Code.

It is a major step forward in India's desire to improve vehicle quality and road safety.

INDIAN EMISSION STANDARDS

After the progressive levels of European engine emission standards had become established, India adopted the same progressive reductions, but known as BS 1, (equivalent to Euro 1), BS 2, and so on. BS stands for Bharat Standard.

The current standard in the major cities, with effect from April 2005, is BS 3. They are Delhi,

Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Pune, Surat, Kampur and Agra. In the rest of the country, BS 2 is still the permitted limit.

The major cities will be required to move to BS 4 from April 2011, and the rest of the country will at that time move forward to BS 3. One of the anomalies of the system is that there is nothing to prevent a vehicle registered outside the main cities, but operating within them.

In November 2009, the Government said that it was in the final stages of establishing fuel efficiency standards for vehicles. In the near future, manufacturers will have to test and declare the fuel consumption of their vehicles and their emissions, making them available to prospective purchasers.

NEWSLETTER ON LINE

The Busworld Newsletter is now available on-line at www.busworld.org. Alternatively, we can arrange to send it to you by e-mail.

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