

# Electricity to Run BMTC Fleet in 5 Years: DyCM

Proposal looks ambitious because there's not a single electric bus in BMTC's 6.5k bus fleet

## Our Bureau

**Bengaluru:** Over the next five years, the state government will phase out diesel buses deployed for public transport in Bengaluru, deputy chief minister G Parameshwara said on Tuesday, giving hope to citizens long complaining about rising pollution.

The city will, instead, have electric buses for public transport, Parameshwara, who also holds the Bengaluru development portfolio, said after opening the eighth edition of 'Bus World India 2018', an exhibition of buses here at the international exhibition centre near Peenya. Companies including Tata Motors, MG Automotives, Force Motors and Olectra (formerly Goldstone) showcased their latest passenger vehicles and innovations during the event.

"Over 70 lakh vehicles use Bengaluru road every day and our roads were not built to take so much of traffic load. We require an efficient public transport system including buses. There is a proposal with our government to replace all buses with electric buses in about five years," Parameshwara said. His comment of converting the BMTC fleet in five years appears to be ambitious as none of the BMTC's 6,500 buses is electric. Though the corporation had introduced an electric bus on a pilot ba-

sis in 2014, the services were suspended in three months and it did not venture into buying such buses due to high cost and maintenance.

Last year, the transport utility changed its mind and initiated the process of purchasing electric buses as the Union government had come out with a subsidy. In February, Hyderabad-based Olectra Greentech was listed to provide 80 buses to the BMTC but it



has not awarded the work yet.

Transport experts believe that converting the fleet into electric is a step in the right direction but point out that it could take much longer time. "Production and availability of electric vehicles is a real challenge. Though it's good to have goals such as this, the government should encourage production and import of electric vehicles," urbanist Ashwin Mahesh said.