The President, 12 November 2014

Regional Transport Authority, Pune

CC: Collector, Commissioners PMC & PCMC

CC: Mayor & Deputy Mayor, Pune

CC: Anil Shirole, Vandana Chavan etc MPs

CC: MLA, CC: Corporators

Dear sir,

# SUB: The proposed hike in PMPML bus fares is unfair, arbitrary and non-transparent and against the interests of the commuters and hence should be cancelled. There must be a "jan sunwai" public hearing before such a decision.

Since the PMPML is the only means of public transport for the 60lakh residents of Pune and PCMC it should be efficient, safe, reliable and affordable. But in reality commuters are facing serious problems every day, while no action is being taken about the many complaints being lodged regularly.

**1.** In view of the fact that there has been no commuter's representative in the RTA for the past 3 and half years, it is imperative that any decision to increase bus fares be taken only after a public hearing in the presence of NGOs, commuter's representatives and corporators. Such a public hearing was held before the increase in rickshaw fares was approved.

**2.** Please note that PMPML's proposed fare hike does not reveal necessary and relevant data. For example percentage of defective, off-road buses, fuel consumption, income from advertising, rent collection, arrears due to non-collection of grant money and administrative costs. On the other hand there are no indications of plans to make much needed improvements to any of the above. There is no information on these important issues.

**3.** Over the last month prices of diesel have fallen by Rs.6.50/litre with the possibility that they may drop even further. Such a scenario should lead to a reduction in bus fares and does not justify such an unjust and arbitrary increase.

**4.** When it is clear that PMPML's operation should be made efficient and affordable with the aim of increasing bus users which would lead to reduction in private vehicles, in reality decisions taken so far have resulted in a steady decline of bus commuters resulting in huge increase in private vehicles, congestion and pollution. Increase in fares has always resulted in the decrease of passengers. For example in April 2010 when the fleet was 1620 buses, average usage was 928passengers / bus with daily average of 12.81 lakh commuters. Unfortunately due to inefficient planning, lack of foresight and an over-priced service, this percentage has reduced consistently. The 3-monthly figures before and after the March 2013 fare increase clearly illustrates how this reduced passengers even further point as shown below.

 **Per day Per Bus Daily Commuters Daily Revenue**

Dec 2012 845 11.06lakhs 1crore 14lakhs

Jan 2013 849 11.15lakhs 1crore 15lakhs

Feb 2013 821 10.89lakhs 1crore 16lakhs

**After 25% Fare Hike Expct Daily Revenue**

Mar 2013 767 10.11lakhs 1crore 13lakhs 1crore 45lakhs

Apr 2013 757 9.81lakhs 1crore 16lakhs 1crore 45lakhs

May 2013 772 9.63lakhs 1crore 15lakhs 1crore 45lakhs

**5.** The above example proves that the assumption that the number of commuters will remain the same after the fare hike is proved wrong.

**6.** There has been a fare hike 2006, 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2013. You are requested to order the PMPML to make public the proposed expenditure and income and the actual expenditure and income and the number of commuters for the past three fare-hikes.

**7.** PMPML is an intra-city service. The present proposal implies that the 5lakh commuters travelling short distances will have to bear the brunt of a 50% increase in the fare. For a journey between 6 and 10km a commuter will have to pay Rs.15/- instead of Rs.10/-. This will invariably lead to a further increase of illegal transport methods and further increase in the number of private vehicles.

**8.** As a rule pass-holders are loyal and regular users, pay their fare in advance while reducing and also reduce the load on conductors, who are thereby free to ensure better fare collection from other passengers, thus greatly beneficial to PMPML. Inspite of this, however, hence the proposed 20% hike in pass holders and 66% hike in senior citizen pass-holders is totally self-destructive and uncalled for. Thus the hike in pass-holders fares should be completely rejected.

**9.** When the State Government has ordered both PMC and PCMC to compensate the loses of PMPML, it is not only unnecessary to burden commuters with fare hikes but it is also against the decision of the State Government.

**10.** We the undersigned representatives of various NGOs and citizens groups, request and demand the following: **a.** Immediate cancellation of the fare hike.

 **b.** Since this proposal is unjust, arbitrary and non-transparent and against the welfare of commuters, there should be a public hearing about the operation and running of the PMPML along with NGOs and representatives of commuters and corporators, and citizen bodies, no decision should be taken before such a public hearing is held.

Yours sincerely

 Jugal Rathi PMP Pravasi Manch

 Vivek Velankar Sajag Nagrik Manch

 Sudhir Jathar Nagrik Chetna Manch

 Sujit Patwardhan Parisar

 Prashant Inamdar Pedestrian First

 Sandip Khardekar Creative Foundation

 Sanjay Jadhav Chaturshruingi Citizens Forum

 Anoop Awasthi Legal Aid Society

 Dhananjay Shetbale Pimpri Chinchwad Citizens Forum

 Sunita Kale Deccan Gymkhana Parisar Samiti

 Yatish Devidiga Parivartan

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