

Background: Ahmedabad Janmarg

Joint Runner- Up for the Award for Outstanding Innovation in Public Transport

The city of Ahmedabad, with 6 million people, is the seventh largest city in India.

The city and the state governments, as a way out of future transport network gridlock, prepared '**Integrated Transit Plan**' for Ahmedabad with a goal of long term sustainability of the city. The governments recognised that no single mode would cater to the mobility needs the city.

As part to the plans, following three distinct initiatives were undertaken towards the goal of long term sustainability and immediate reduction in emissions in the city.

- Interventions in Para-Transport – CNG Conversions
- Interventions in Public Transport
- Public Transport Initiative – Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS)

In addition, decentralisation of regional bus and rail terminals, putting in place pay-and-park system, advanced traffic management system and complementary measures to strengthen institutional framework are also part of the overall plan. Most recent of these focuses on BRTS development.

The Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) started its trail run on 3 July 2009 and revenue operation started on 15 October 2009.

Project: Janmarg Bus Rapid Transit

The first 12.5 kms of the project, named as '**Janmarg**', was developed by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation built under the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India. The Janmarg, within four months doubled its rider ship, gained significant public support and respect for its efficient, reliable and quality service.

BRTS Ahmedabad connects the central city, Kalupur with outlying industrial, institutional and residential areas through a network of over 88.8 kms. 80% of the network passes through low and middle income household areas.

The development of the 90 km long BRTS was a core part of the integrated transport programme. Ahmedabad transport strategy is focused **on moving people and not on vehicles**, consistent with JnNURM policy. The plan is based on the premise that all people should be able to move around in Ahmedabad with comfort and efficiency. They must feel safe and secure. Travel must be affordable. They must have choices for their mobility in terms of walking, bicycling, rickshaw, bus, BRT or any other form of transport depending on where they are going. To emphasise this, the system has been named as 'Janmarg meaning peoples way'.

Janmarg is the first full BRTS in India operated as a closed system, as stated in the application. 'Networks and not corridors' and 'connecting busy places and avoiding busy roads' have been basic principles for selecting 90 km long network. The network connects central city with traffic generators, such as transit terminals, markets, industries and institutions.

It uses integrated transit management system (ITMS). IMTS includes transit signal management, smart card integration, passenger information system, Geographic Information System (GIS) on the buses.

Dedicated right of way for the buses and stations with level boarding saves travel time for the buses and make the system more competitive with the auto travel.

BRTS streets are complete streets with dedicated bus lanes, cycle tracks, pedestrian facilities, personalised vehicles and optimum parking. It enhances quality of life for all citizens. For people with disability, access to BRTS stations is now easier with ramps, level boarding and better buses.