

**Contact:**

**AJIT JOHL**

President

Persatuan Pengguna Pengguna Pengangkutan Awam Malaysia (4PAM)

(ROS: PPM-021-10-09072012)

(National Public Transport Users Association)

019 2222 898

[ajit@4pam.org](mailto:ajit@4pam.org)

20<sup>th</sup> March 2015



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## PRESS RELEASE

---

**4PAM SAYS NO TO UNTIMELY AND UNWARRANTED PRICE HIKE FOR TAXI AND EXPRESS BUS!**

4PAM is deeply disappointed with the fare hike that has been proposed by SPAD for Taxi and Express Bus Service, its president Ajit Johl says "The hike is unwarranted and untimely, while we agree that there is an increase in the operation cost, it is still bearable to a large extent". Improvement in services must be seen and measured. 4PAM recommends the setting up of benchmark for service levels for all Public Transport Operators. This will ensure that price hikes are justified to reflect improvement in Safety, Protection, Awareness and the Rights of the PTU is assured and it can be reviewed annually. Till and until more transparent mechanisms are put in place there should be not be any price hikes for the sector. The time has come to empower the Public Transport User (PTU). The PTU is the largest stakeholder in the sector and hopes the Prime Minister, will intervene and stop this untimely and unwarranted price hike.

**Taxis**

The basis used by SPAD, which is bigger and better cars only applies to 900 1Malaysia taxis, what about the rest? Only 2 new terminals are built in Kuala Lumpur and Ipoh, how does this affect the rest of the users in the country?

Price hikes would not solve the current critical issues, such as: - Overcharging cabbies, Taxis that are in deplorable conditions, Drivers that are not qualified and a host of issues that has been plaguing the industry for a long time. The Public Transport User (PTU) demands that SPAD takes a serious look at enforcing complaints. Impounding of taxis, issuing of summons, monthly renewal of permits are some of the measure that can be used.

4PAM understands that the PTU can lodge a complaint by calling in, but what happens after that? Where is the assurance that rogue drivers are punished? Only tough laws and strict enforcement will cure the industry of its ailment. 4PAM insist that these measures be put in place before any form of fare hike takes place.

### **Express Bus**

4PAM is not in favour of the price hike for Express Bus. The industry need to show some drastic improvements. 4PAM want the directors of express bus companies be held equally if not more responsible for accidents that involve their buses. In the event of accidents, the entire fleet must be suspended pending a review. Only with such laws would the hiring of bad drivers be eliminated. Until such stern measures are put in place, flouting of laws will keep taking place. The insurance coverage must be increased for loss of human lives, too many incidents have taken place with little being done.

4PAM welcomes the new ICOP System for express buses. The results of this must be made public, so the PTU can make a well informed decision of which operator to use. An empowered PTU who can make informed decision, will result in operators moving towards compliance.

### **LRT/Monorail/KTM Intercity/Rapid Buses**

On a separate note, 4PAM supports the price hike for the LRT Ampang Line (19 years), LRT Kelana Jaya Line (17 years) and Monorail (12 years). KTM Komuter's (12 years), while KTM Intercity's (25 years), which is overdue. We also appeal that the fares for Rapid Buses be increased, as these too has been overdue. Price hikes should be reasonable, timely and not hurt PTU. These services have seen a marked improvement, but more needs to be done. For any PTU user who remembers the infamous "BMW busses that used to ply the streets of Kuala Lumpur" will surely understand and see the marked difference in the current bus services.

### **Mobile App**

4PAM applauds the use of technology for the Public Transport Sector and welcomes SPAD proposed "MeterOn" app, but feels that app would be more suitable for all sectors except the Taxi Industry. We urge SPAD, and Ministry of Transport to make it mandatory for all providers of Public Transport to have a similar app or combine and built the needs into a single app. If the information about the quality of the operator is made public, then the PTU is more aware and can make a well informed decision.

We urge SPAD to make the "MeterOn" app compulsory for all operators in the Bus and Rail Industry, which will provide SPAD, with more eyes to help improve and monitor the Public Transport industry. If the ICOP can be made public and incorporated into "MeterOn", Express Bus companies would have to automatically buck up and improve services. The app would have to be transparent, where users can track their complaints and SPAD can act as a mediator. 4PAM strongly believe that this is the way forward to help the industry shake off some of its woes and suggest that until such an app become an industry standard all price hikes for the Taxi and Express bus be put off. PTU also would need a contact centre, as not all PTU's have access to smart phone.

As for the Taxi Industry, 4PAM recommend that all taxi drivers must be hooked up to **SPAD approved mobile operator** of their choice. Apps must then be upgraded to allow the PTU to make direct complaints to SPAD, with pictures and actual incidents. These makes it easier for the PTU to lodge complaints and track the action of the complaint. The app can then alert the taxi driver to resolve the complaint with SPAD and he will be temporarily suspended from the mobile app, resulting in him not

getting any business from the app. This process will give empower the PTU and assist SPAD in monitoring errant taxi drivers.

Only taxi drivers that are willing to adhere to the industry standards will be allowed to register with the mobile app operator. The mobile app operator has to ensure this and be held accountable to ensure taxis, are clean, safe and the drivers have no police records. With simple measures like this, over a short period of time PTU will have faith and move to start booking taxis with mobile apps and taxi drivers will have to improve services to meet market conditions. This simple new measure will also stop illegal operators of mobile app to operate in Malaysia.

Regulation is good but it is the market forces that will drive compliance. The business model has to be fair to the taxi driver. On this note 4PAM urges the removal of permits to companies and encourage individual permits. Taxi drivers are business people and need to comply with regulations just like any other business, therefore it is best that the permits given to companies be removed and converted to individual permits.

#### **4PAM Initiatives**

To encourage the use of Public Transport, 4PAM is organising a series of events. To kick off this event, we are starting “Car Free Friday’s”. The event is aimed at reducing private cars on every Friday of the week. We request user of private vehicles to examine their Friday Travel plans and try and use Public Transport. We believe this simple initiative will help reduce city congestion and provide the individual with a stress free Friday. If the driver has to go to office and back on Friday we appeal that they use Public Transport on Friday, this is to start the usage of Public Transport. Let’s give it a try, it’s only 4 Fridays in a month.

4PAM adds, the reality about public transportation is that it's future-oriented. If we're planning for what we have, we're behind the curve, rational transportation policy should seek a balance between individual convenience, the efficient use of limited resources, and urban-living values that protect spaciousness, natural beauty, and human-scale mobility.

4PAM believes hopes that it can remove 30% of traffic from the roads on Friday, with this initiative. In addition there are a host of events being planned out and details can be obtained at our website, [www.4pam.ngo.com.my](http://www.4pam.ngo.com.my) or our [www.facebook.com/4pams](https://www.facebook.com/4pams).