



**OFFICE OF THE MANAGING DIRECTOR  
ASSAM STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION,  
PALTANBAZAR, GUWAHATI - 781008.**

Press Release:

Dated, Guwahati the 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2022.

Information about a Press Meet organized by a political party called Aam Admi Party, Assam on 9<sup>th</sup> Sept'2022 has come to the notice of the ASTC authority. In that Press Meet, the spokesperson of the political party repeatedly and consciously used the word "Doubt" while labeling certain allegations on the procurement of 100 electric buses. All these doubts could have been cleared by obtaining clarification and details from the ASTC authority, however, the said political party preferred to express their doubt in Public. Although ASTC always welcome criticism, however, unsubstantiated allegation hurt the sentiment and emotion of large section of Public in Assam who have enormous trust on the entity called ASTC who brought motorized public mobility in Assam and has been serving the people of state relentlessly since 1970.

To reinforce the uncompromising trust of large section of Public in Assam on ASTC and to clear the doubt of the said political party, ASTC compelled to issue this press release so as to inform the citizen of Assam about the advantages of the buses and about the procurement process undertaken by ASTC.

Like any other vehicle, Price of any Electric Bus is dependent of many technical features loaded in the vehicle. Therefore, price comparison of Electric buses having same technical features is a prudent and acceptable approach. ASTC would like mention that the buses ordered by ASTC have much superior technical specifications as observed than in the buses procured by those other States/Organizations as cited by the Political Party. Few of such advantages are as below:

1. The buses ordered by ASTC are fitted with battery having min. 230 KWh capacity (High km range). Whereas, it is observed that the orders placed by those States/Organizations are fitted with battery having 150 KWh capacity (Low km range).
2. The buses ordered by ASTC are fitted with Air Conditioning system.
3. The buses ordered by ASTC are fitted with Front & Rear air suspension, Front & rear disc brakes Aluminum panels for comfortable and higher durability.
4. To maintain the buses in proper condition for effective uses for longer period all the buses procured by ASTC will have 5 years comprehensive warranty for all spares, consumables, tyres, and battery without any additional cost to the procuring authority.

Therefore, price comparison presented by the political party appears to be imprudent. If the cost of additional battery capacity and cost of 5 years comprehensive warranty covering all spares, consumables, tyres, and battery are taken into account, then, the purchase price of the buses ordered by ASTC is the most economical.

For the benefit of the said political party who concluded that other States/Organization made better purchase, ASTC would like to provide following information

1. It is observed from the notice issued by Kerala Govt. Vide notice No. SRA1/001003/2021 dated 03.05.2022 that Kerala State Road Transport Corporation cancelled part of the order issued to the Bus Manufacturer for 50 Electric Buses due to delay in delivery. The same manufacturer has defaulted in supply to many Government organizations which has been revealed by Kerala Govt. in the same notice.

3. It is also learned that the buses ordered by HRTC are non-AC and having battery capacity of 150 KWh and without 5 years comprehensive warranty for all spares, consumables, tyres, and battery

ASTC is fairly certain that no political party will recommend ASTC to place order to a supplier who is habituated defaulter and people of Assam will not forgive ASTC, if it places order by compromising on the technical specification just to procure the buses on price which looks cheaper so as to avoid allegation from some quarters. As such, ASTC incorporated provisions in the tender to avoid defaulter in supply and to ensure better technical specification.

The said political party also questioned the bidding process for procurement of those electric buses. The political party questioned why ASTC did not go for re-tender to obtain better price discovery and thus allegation labeled on the transparency process of the tendering. In this regard, ASTC would also like to place following facts for consideration of all concerned:


- Initially a tender was floated for Purchase of 125 Nos High Range 9m AC Electric buses by Guwahati Smart City Limited (GSCL) with technical assistance of ASTC in the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Assam on 28<sup>th</sup> December, 2021. Only one bidder participated in the tender despite repeated extensions providing ample time to interested bidders to submit their bids. The only bidder that participated in that tender was M/s Olectra Greentech Limited. However, the tender was annulled subsequently. Following which the responsibility for the procurement of the electric buses was given to ASTC by Government of Assam.
- Subsequently, ASTC had floated an RFB for the procurement of 100 Nos high range 9m AC electric buses with the same specification as in the previous tender floated by GSCL as per the MoU signed between ASTC and GSCL dated: 31st March, 2022 vide ref. no. ASTC/HO/CE/Proc of EV/024/2021-

➤ 22/0725 dated: 21st May, 2022 in the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Assam and it was widely published as follows:

- a. Newspaper / Print media Details : English Local Daily-The Assam Tribune, National Daily- Times of India (Kolkata/Delhi Edition) & The Hindu (Delhi City Edition)
- b. Purchaser's Website: <http://astc.assam.gov.in>
- c. E-Procurement Website: [www.assamtenders.gov.in](http://www.assamtenders.gov.in)
- d. Various other independent websites.

➤ In response to the tender floated by ASTC two bids were received as on bid submission date 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2022. ASTC further extended the bid submission date two times to enable further participation by interested bidders. The corrigendum-V for extension of the bid submission date was widely published in newspapers and also mailed to all interested bidders that attended the pre-bid meeting to ensure more participation. Despite all the extensions given by ASTC for more participation, no additional bids were received till the bid submission end date i.e. 14<sup>th</sup> July, 2022. For the fair evaluation of technical bids received, ASTC constituted a Bid Evaluation Committee (BEC) comprising of Professor of IIT, Faculty member of Assam Engineering Institute, Procurement Specialist of World Bank funded Project etc. Moreover, a high level committee is also constituted by the Government of Assam to review the recommendation of BEC. The high level committee took into consideration that **ASTC will not incur any operational expenditure except the electricity cost for the procured buses for a period of 5 years as all the responsibility for maintenance of the fleet of electric buses will be in the scope of the supplier under comprehensive warranty which is in the greater interest of the general public.** ASTC while floating the Request for Bids had taken care of all necessary requirements to encourage competition, like, standard bidding terms and conditions, industry-friendly specifications, wide publicity, sufficient time for formulation of bids etc. Therefore, no logical reason exists to refloat the tender afresh. Moreover, ASTC has complied to all the requirements under provision 23, sub provision 20 (ii) of Assam Public Procurement Rule'2020 to conclude that the bid process valid even if there is only one responsive bid. Thus, The BEC and the high level committee complying the provision 23, sub provision 20 (Lack of competition) of Assam Public Procurement Rule'2020 decided to Award the Contract for procurement of 100 buses to Olectra Greentech Limited.

It is a well-established fact that re-tendering alone cannot bring either more competition or competitive price. Re-tendering within an objective to get only competitive price is a futile exercise which consume precious time which also end-up in cost escalation. ASTC cannot effort to waste time while the state is eager to climb the ladder of the progress, better public amenities. Moreover, State Cabinet has also announced to roll these electric buses for the service of public soon.

  
Authorized Signatory,  
Management of ASTC