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## **MTC to get 300 new buses in September**

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CHENNAI: Come September and 300 new Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) buses will be on the city roads. A couple of months later another 600 new buses will join the fleet. All the 900 will be semi-low floor buses, each costing Rs 20 lakh.

According to official sources, the state transport department recently issued orders to procure 1,500 new buses 900 for the MTC and 300 each for the Coimbatore and Madurai transport corporations under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Mission (JNNURM) scheme.

Ashok Leyland will supply 1,000 buses and the Tata group 500. The department is expected to issue orders to procure 100 airconditioned buses in a couple of weeks, sources told The Times of India.

"About 300 buses are to be delivered by the end of this month and the remaining should be delivered in a phased manner by October-November. We are going to issue orders for 100 airconditioned buses soon and we hope the MTC will have

1,000 new buses by December this year," a senior transport official said.

The MTC presently has 3,350 buses of which 3,000 are on the road and 350 kept as spare vehicles in depots. The fleet includes 1,000 buses that are 10 to 12 years old; the normal life-time of a bus is 7-8 years. MTC officials said 40% of the new buses would be used to replace old vehicles and the remaining 60% inducted as additional buses. This would increase the fleet strength to about 4,000.

On the procurement of airconditioned buses, officials said all would be Volvo buses, each costing about Rs 80 lakh. The MTC currently has 30 airconditioned buses.

The expected induction of more new buses could increase the corporation's daily revenue by Rs 30 lakh. Presently, it earns an average of Rs 1.80 crore daily transporting about 50 lakh passengers on 650 routes in the city and suburbs. MTC buses make about 40,000 [trips](#) every day, or a distance of about 8.30 lakh km.