

Gadkari assures Bus and Car Operators of full support in coming out of economic slowdown

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Union Minister for Road Transport &Highways and MSME Shri Nitin Gadkari has assured the bus and car operators of the country that the government is fully aware of their problems, and will fully support them to mitigate their issues. He said that he is in regular touch with the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, who are working overtime to uplift the economy during these difficult days of COVID-19 pandemic.

Addressing the members of Bus and Car Operators Confederation of India through video conferencing mode, Shri Gadkari said, opening of transport and highways will go a long way in instilling confidence among the public. He said public transport may open soon with some guidelines. He, however, cautioned towards maintaining social distance and adopting all safety measures like hand wash, sanitizing, face masks, etc while operating buses and cars.

Responding to concerns raised by the audience, the Minister informed that his ministry is looking at adopting the London model of public transport, where government funding is minimal and private investment is promoted. He also pointed out towards the poor standards of Indian bus and truck bodies which he said, work for only 5-7 years, whereas the European models last for upto 15 years. Shri Gadkari emphasized upon adopting their good practices, which will also be economically viable for indigenous industry in the longer run.

The Minister said, he is aware of the tight financial condition of the Indian market during the ongoing pandemic. But, he said, all stake holders will have to work together to combat it. He pointed towards a very good business opportunity being offered by world industry, which is trying to wriggle out of Chinese market. He said, Indian industry should grasp this opportunity to invite those foreign companies to invest with them in India. He expressed confidence that the country and its industry will together win both the battles – the one with Corona, and the one with economic slowdown.

Members of the confederation made suggestions for improving the condition of public transport which include extending interest payment exemptions, restarting public transport, extending age, life limit, deferring state taxes, extending MSME benefits, extending insurance policy validity, etc.

RCJ/MS

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