How are we getting from the terminal to where we’re staying? Where’s the nearest public transport stop to a property? How much will it cost and how long does the ride take? A lot of questions arise that can be answered with several clicks or swipes. Public transit apps are here to help travelers navigate a city with the confidence of a local and save time.

BMTC bus tracking app was designed to keep in mind the passengers’ problems and promoting public use of transportation.

BMTC – Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation is one of the divisions of KSRTC government. The agency operates the public transport bus service in and around Bangalore, India.

we have seen that the main issue in switching over to public transport is not knowing the routes of the buses as majority board are in Kannada only.

This website lets you search the BMTC bus routes in Bangalore. You can either get information on the bus routes between any two locations or look up a specific bus route number.

How often do you travel by BMTC buses in Bangalore? How many are too scared to even give it a try? And how many have tried and given up? There are several reasons why many Bangaloreans do not opt to travel by public transport. Some of them are:

(a) Buses are not reliable.

(b) Buses are not punctual.

(c) Buses are not fast and take circuitous routes to reach the destination.

(d) Oftentimes the bus stops are a kilometer or more away from the residence and/or place of work.

(e) Buses are old and rickety with poor suspension.

(f) Buses are over-crowded leaving little standing space, let alone seating.

(g) Buses do not stop at the stipulated bus stops.

The list goes on. While we can do little on certain matters such as punctuality and quality, we can contribute in several other ways. Using public transport makes a lot of environmental and economic sense. Assuming that an average bus can hold 40 people and an average car carries 2 persons, one can perceive that a bus can potentially replace 20 cars! It is not difficult to visualize the amount of toxic emissions that can be thus eliminated.

Economically too public transport scores over private ones. A daily pass for BMTC buses (excluding the air-conditioned buses) costs Rs. 32; one can travel in any number of buses for 24 hours using this pass. A more comfortable journey can be had in the air-conditioned Volvo buses; a daily pass that includes air-conditioned buses also costs Rs. 75. If your office is 15 km away from your residence (which is not at all uncommon these days if you consider the far-flung Electronic City and ITPL corridors for example) and your car gives you a mileage of 10 km per litre in Bangalore’s chaotic traffic, you would be burning 3 litres of fossil fuel daily. This translates to around 100 to 150 rupees per day. This is of course excluding the amount of stress involved in driving and parking private vehicles in busy areas. The stress can be avoided by travelling in autorickshaws (really?); however you will have to shell out almost double the amount, Rs. 210 for travelling 30 km.

This is not to discount the utility of private vehicles; in fact, owning a car has become a necessity rather than a luxury. However one can use the car judiciously and occasionally rather than for daily commuting.

One of the main barriers to using public transport is the lack of information on the availability of buses on any route. Most of the buses display the source and destination on their route boards in Kannada only. And that too is illegible many a time. This makes it difficult for outsiders and non-Kannadigas to know where a bus is heading. Not to speak of the challenge to our visual faculties in reading and deciphering the miniscule letters on a whizzing bus in a jiffy!

Even for people who can read Kannada well, there is not enough information to decide which bus to take for reaching a particular destination. The detailed stops are rarely mentioned on the route boards. Newer buses have scrolling LED displays which are better but not sufficient – the scrolling is too slow to read and get the complete picture before the bus rolls away.

Another major issue arises when people travel to unfamiliar locations. It becomes very difficult to decide which bus to catch and which stop to get down at.

Having travelled in BMTC buses for over 15 years now, I thought of collecting information on bus route numbers and publishing it on the Web. Thus started the effort more than an year ago. The information was gathered from various sources, for example, the time table booklet published by BMTC, Bangalore city maps (the Eicher map is very good), Wikimapia, the BMTC web site, BTIS, and so on. It has been a painstaking but a very fulfilling exercise so far.

The result was the creation of a new website to help commuters search the BMTC bus routes in Bangalore. You can browse to www.narasimhadatta.info/bmtc\_query.html and check it out yourself!

I’m familiar with some places in Bangalore and not so familiar with others. So the information on some bus routes may be more refined than others. There is a feedback form at the bottom of the page that one can fill and submit for intimating any corrections and additions that need to be incorporated. Currently the site helps in searching direct bus routes only. Thus you will not be able to find the bus numbers between two locations for which no direct bus route exists. I’m working on a more advanced Bangalore Bus Route Planner that can compute and display multi-hop bus routes to reach any destination from any source. So stay tuned!

There are other websites on which one can search BMTC bus routes, but these are often outdated and lack sufficient detail. For instance the route search on the BMTC website hasbeen defunct for several months now with no published deadline for activating it. Further most of these websites mention only a few bus stop names. The intermediate points need to be interpolated from the available information. Many times we may not know the exact name of the bus stop where we want to alight. To address this problem, I’ve attempted to incorporate popular landmarks and institutions in the search locations.

Please check out the website and let me know what you think of the idea and the website. I’ll be specially interested in any constructive feedback to make the project better and more useful. And yes, spread the word around to your friends and relatives!