

Newspaper: The New Paper

Date: 22 March 2006

Title: My bus journey took forever

I boarded SBS service 39 (SBS752P) from Pasir Ris Drive 1 near the Pasir Ris MRT station on 16 Mar at 10.35 am. It was the slowest bus ride I have ever taken.

The road was clear of traffic, but the bus simply crawled. When it approached the traffic lights, the driver slowed down even further.

When the bus entered the Tampines Expressway, I thought that at last it would pick up speed.

But it still lumbered along behind a military truck.

What was the driver up to? Did he not leave the interchange at the scheduled time?

He was doing a disservice to passengers who had expected to reach their destinations in reasonable time.

This is not the first time I have sat on a bus deliberately going slowly.

Can SBS Transit explain this?

Roy Lee Daniels

Date: 27 March 2006

Title: Buses even stop at deserted bus stops

I agree with Mr Roy Lee Daniels, whose letter 'My bus journey took forever' (The New Paper, 22 Mar) wondered why so many buses crawl along the roads.

This is an old problem which the bus companies have apparently not resolved.

Another odd thing is that many buses also halt at bus stops when there are no waiting passengers there.

Also, they approach traffic lights slowly hoping for it to turn red.

These drivers are obviously doing this to prevent being penalised if they arrive too early at bus terminals.

Bus companies should be more realistic and flexible about trip timings and not force these drivers into tactics which work to the disadvantage of commuters.

Jamuna Ardimulam

Date: 29 March 2006

Title: Too many jerks, sudden braking

SBS buses are not only irritatingly slow as mentioned in recent letters to The New Paper but many of their drivers are in need of re-training.

I take the bus everyday and can say with certainty that jerky rides and sudden and hard braking are everyday events.

I have told SBS about this problem but there has been no improvement.

Albert Teo

Reply from SBS Transit

I refer to the letters "My bus journey took forever" by Mr Roy Lee Daniels dated 22 March 2006, "Buses even stop at deserted bus stops" by Ms Jamuna Ardumulam dated 27 March 2006 and "Too many jerks, sudden braking" by Mr Albert Teo dated 29 March 2006.

We have conducted an investigation into the speed at which Service 39 was travelling on 16 March 2006. In the letter, Mr Roy Lee Daniels asked did the Bus Captain not leave the interchange on time. Our records showed that the bus departed from Tampines Interchange as scheduled and arrived at its destination interchange 3 minutes earlier. Following Mr Roy Lee Daniel's feedback, we will look into the running time of this service and make appropriate adjustments where necessary.

With regard to the issue about bus drivers driving slowly as mentioned in Ms Jamuna's letter, we wish to clarify that our Bus Captains are required to regulate their speed if they notice that they are ahead of schedule especially when the road is unusually clear on certain days. The reason for this is to ensure that the Bus Captains keep the arrival times as close to the planned schedule as possible to avoid any disruption to the service like bus bunching. Indeed, from the perspective of the passengers on board the bus, the journey seems slow but to the passengers waiting at the bus stops along the route, they expect their bus to arrive on the time as it has been scheduled.

Nonetheless, we will monitor our services closely and make adjustment to the running times where necessary to minimise such situation.

As for Mr Albert Teo's letter about jerky rides, we could not investigate further as Mr Teo did not state which bus service, date and time he boarded the bus. SBS Transit does not condone such behaviour of our Bus Captains as it concerns the safety of our passengers. Should Mr Teo come across any of our Bus Captains who apply sudden brakes for no reason and endanger the safety of our passengers, we welcome Mr Teo to give us his feedback through our hotline at 1800 287-2727 with details of the bus service, registration number, time and date of incident for our investigation.

We thank the readers for their feedback.

Yours sincerely,
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