Taipei City to Issue Monthly NT$8000-per-bus Subsidy to Bus Operators

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a severe impact upon bus companies and city bus operations. During the press conference on April 24, Deputy Mayor Huang Shan-shan announced a subsidy of NT$8,000 per-bus-per-month for bus companies. The city government will also talk with the central government on finding ways to help bus companies.

The deputy mayor pointed out that the pandemic has been detrimental to the operators of the city’s public bus system. For local buses, the daily ridership volume has dropped by nearly 6 million – roughly 16-percent. Needless to say, the income has been cut by as much as NT$ 140 million.

However, as bus companies are not the targets of the central government’s current relief plans, the city government has decided to go ahead with implementing the NT$8,000 subsidy for starters. Also, the city government has agreed to the request of bus operators on extending the deadline for the mandated replacement of dated buses in the backdrop of the financial challenges caused by the pandemic.
During the press conference, Huang also announced that the real-name based face mask vending machines are ready to serve the public at locations in Wenshan and Wanhua districts. Currently operations are going smoothly, and the trial will last for two weeks. Evaluation will then be conducted to determine follow-up actions.

Huang stressed that both the central government and Taipei City agree on the importance of expanding channels for citizens to acquire face masks. That is why the central government gave the green light for the vending machines, adding them to the list of sellers which already include pharmacies and online platforms. While vending machine require maintenance staffing, the deputy mayor believes that this option is comparatively less costly than the convenience store alternative.

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