

# Bharat Taxi Explained: How Bharat Taxi's Cooperative Model Is Challenging Uber

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## Bharat Taxi Latest News

- Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah has launched **Bharat Taxi**, India's first **cooperative-based ride-hailing platform**, positioning it as an alternative to private cab aggregators.
- The initiative is aimed at strengthening the cooperative movement while improving access to affordable and people-centric urban transport.
- According to the Ministry of Cooperation, Bharat Taxi places drivers—called **Sarathis**—at the centre of the platform.
- Unlike aggregator-led models, drivers will have **ownership, operational control, and greater say over earnings**, reducing dependence on commission-heavy digital platforms.
- The model seeks to enhance driver autonomy and ensure fairer income distribution through a cooperative structure.

## What is Bharat Taxi

- **A cooperative-based ride-hailing platform** – Bharat Taxi is a ride-hailing app built on a cooperative model, aimed at offering an alternative to privately owned cab aggregators.
- **Drivers at the core** – According to the Ministry of Cooperation, the platform places drivers at the centre of ownership, operations, and value creation, allowing them greater control over earnings and day-to-day functioning.
- **Reducing dependence on private aggregators** – The model is intended to help drivers move away from exploitative practices often associated with aggregator-led platforms that limit income and autonomy.
- **Not a direct government initiative** – While government-backed, Bharat Taxi is not run by the Government of India. It is operated by **Sahakar Taxi Cooperative Limited**, an independent cooperative entity.
- **Cooperative expertise behind the project** – The initiative is supported by individuals who have previously worked with Amul, drawing on experience from one of the world's most successful cooperative movements.

## Bharat Taxi's Cooperative Business Model

- **Driver-owned structure** – Under Bharat Taxi, every driver—called a Sarathi—is a *member of the cooperative* and holds five shares, giving them a stake in ownership and decision-making.
- **Zero-commission pricing** – Unlike private aggregators, Bharat Taxi does not deduct commission per ride. Drivers instead pay a **fixed daily fee of ₹30** (₹18/day for auto-rickshaws) to use the platform, addressing long-standing concerns over high commissions and limited autonomy.
- **Lower fares for passengers** – With no per-ride commission, cost savings are passed on to riders. Officials estimate fares to be up to 30% cheaper than those charged by platforms like Uber and Ola.
- **Large driver base** – Bharat Taxi has stated that it already has over four lakh registered drivers, indicating significant early adoption of the cooperative model.
- **Safety and verification measures** – The platform includes in-built safety features, a dedicated helpline, and driver verification. In partnership with Delhi Police, 35 special booths have been set up to quickly address passenger complaints and concerns.
- **Pricing Philosophy** – Bharat Taxi aims to offer fair, transparent pricing, avoiding opaque surge pricing. The goal is not to be the cheapest, but the most reasonable and predictable.

## Pilot Cities and Expansion

- Bharat Taxi pilots began in Delhi-NCR and Rajkot in late 2025.
- The service has since expanded to cities like Ahmedabad, where adoption has been rapid.
- As per government data:
  - Around 4 lakh drivers are registered.
  - Over 10,000 rides daily are being completed.
- The aim is nationwide operations by 2029, making it the largest ride-hailing platform in India.

## Early Adopters: Hope Mixed with Caution

- The early adopters have welcomed the zero-commission model but report initially lower earnings due to fewer bookings.

- Despite this, both drivers remain hopeful that demand will rise as awareness grows.
- Many drivers say they prefer a driver-owned, cooperative platform over private aggregators that take high commissions.
- Some passengers report **teething troubles**, such as:
  - Staff unfamiliar with software at booths.
  - Longer queues.
- Higher fares at certain locations compared to earlier prepaid services.
- Officials acknowledge early challenges and say pricing algorithms and operations will improve as more data is gathered.

## The Road Ahead

- Bharat Taxi's early phase reflects strong government backing, rapid driver onboarding, and high expectations, but also the realities of building scale in a competitive market.
- Its success will depend on increasing ride volumes, refining pricing, and delivering consistent user experience, while staying true to its cooperative promise.

Source: **IE** | **FE** | **HT**

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