

Editor's Note

A detailed research paper on improvements needed in warehousing, an insightful conference on urban mobility organised with CII in New Delhi, and a new CEO, The Infravision Foundation had a busy month. Even as the nation was captivated by the struggle to rescue 41 labourers trapped in a tunnel they were working on in Uttarakhand and world leaders met yet again for another round of discussions on climate change, TIF put its nose to the grindstone and worked on the agenda for next year. So here's wishing you a great year. See you on the other side in 2024.

Making Commodities Count For More

Warehousing is a critical element of supply chain management, enabling the storage of commodities and smoothening of the supply-demand and price fluctuations. To improve scientific warehousing, enhance credit availability in rural areas, and ease the exchange functions, the Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) was set up in India on October 26, 2010.

But the warehousing ecosystem has failed to meet the intended outcomes. A new research paper published by The Infravision Foundation (TIF) and IIM-B (Gopal Naik, professor, IIMB, and Gopi Shankar, assistant professor, Azim Premji University, Bangalore) recommends measures to improve them. For more on this read:

<https://www.financialexpress.com>



Welcome Aboard

We are happy to announce that TIF Distinguished Fellow Jagan Shah is our CEO.

Jagan Shah is a Senior Fellow at Artha Global, Mumbai. He has served as Director of India's National Institute of Urban Affairs (2013-19), Senior Infrastructure Adviser in the UK Government's Department for International Development (2019-21) and Senior Adviser (Capacity Building) at the World Bank, New Delhi (2021-23). He co-created India's Smart Cities Mission and played a key role in designing and implementing several other urban innovation programmes for the Government of India. He incubated the Centre for Digital Governance, the Sanitation Capacity Building Hub and the Climate Centre for Cities at NIUA as well as led the design of the CITIIS Programme funded by the Agence Francaise de Developpement. He has drafted key policies for Land Pooling, Transit-Oriented Development and Green Area Development for the Master Plan for Delhi 2041 and has been associated with the development of the Rapid Rail Transit System in the National Capital Region over the past decade. Since 2016, Shah has also served on the Board of Trustees of Clean Air Asia, an international NGO based in Manila. We warmly welcome Jagan and look forward to delivering more.



An empowered Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority is key to integrated Urban Mobility.

22 Speakers, Six Hours, One Issue

Various transport authorities must work in unison with each other for effective urban mobility, there needs to be convenient last-mile connectivity, effective premium bus services have to be introduced, and congestion charges as well as green zones must be instituted. These were among the key suggestions that emerged at Urban Mobility: Towards Seamless Integration, a conference organised by The Infravision Foundation and the Confederation of Indian Industry in New Delhi on December 4.

The event discussed two knowledge papers, developed by The Infravision Foundation with Prof Geetam Tiwari of IIT Delhi and Prof Sandip Chakrabarti of IIM Ahmedabad on the Appropriate Urban Public Transport Systems and Financial Sustainability of Metro Rail Systems respectively.

According to Prof Tiwari's paper, most metros suffer from a double whammy—there is not enough ridership and operations become financially unsustainable. Metro systems are capital-intensive and any decision to set up a metro system must be thoroughly scrutinised based on differentiated travel demand, which is characterised by the number of trips per day, distance travelled per trip, ability to spend, city population, and vehicle ownership. Prof Chakrabarti's paper calls for the establishment of an independent fare fixation committee with a mandate to implement automatic formula-based fare changes. The paper also recommends generating non-fare revenue by activating innovative local revenue sources to ensure positive fiscal, social, and environmental outcomes for metro systems.

As Mr Vinayak Chatterjee, Co-Founder, The Infravision Foundation, said, it was clear that governments should consider other options apart from the metro rail system, including an intelligent bus transit system, trams or even ropeways.

Ms Anna Roy, Senior Adviser, NITI Aayog, emphasised the need to be innovative rather than reactive in resolving urban mobility problems. Every city is initiating its own solutions.

Yet, as Dr O P Agarwal, Distinguished Fellow, NITI Aayog, stated, "Overnight change may upset the existing system. Even London Transport took 80 years to evolve." Dr Agarwal suggested taking up city specific pilot projects to provide customised solutions. Mr Ashish Kundra, Principal Secretary and Commissioner, Transport Department, Government of NCT of Delhi, pointed to the deadline set by his government to convert all aggregating mobility services, including the last-mile logistics service, to electric by 2030.



Panelists Deepak Sharma, Geetam Tiwari, Vinayak Chatterjee, Anna Roy and Sandip Chakrabarti



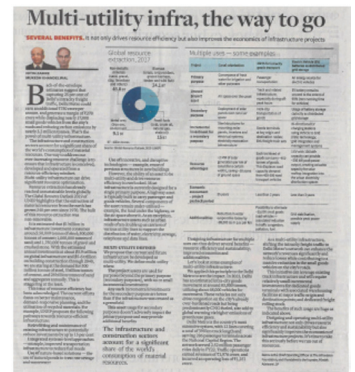
Speakers Sarika Chakravarty, Anuj Dayal, OP Agarwal, Ashish Kundra, G Raghuram, Geetam Tiwari



Speakers Jagan Shah, Rana Amani, Rahul Nilosey, Palash Srivastava, Tushar Arora, Sandip Chakrabarti

TIF@InTheNews

In an article in *The Hindu Businessline*, TIF COO Nitin Zamre and Mukesh Khandelwal wrote on the importance of multi-utility infrastructure. Back-of-the-envelope estimates suggest that by capturing 25 per cent of Delhi's intracity freight traffic, Delhi Metro could earn an additional ₹750 crore per year and generate a margin of ₹270 crore while displacing nearly 17,000 small goods vehicles from the city's roads and reducing carbon emissions by nearly 3.2 million tonnes. The infrastructure and construction sectors account for a significant share of the world's consumption of material resources. One way to address our ever-increasing resource challenge is to ensure that infrastructure is conceived, developed, and operated from a resource-efficiency mindset. Multi-utility infrastructure can drive significant resource optimization.



The Railway Men

What does it take to be a hero? *The Railway Men* on Netflix examines the idea of being a leader, someone who is able to empathise with people, rise above challenges, and find solutions where others see only problems. There is an upright station master, played by Kay Kay Menon, who sees a son in the new trainee, played with gangly grace by young Babil Khan; a maverick general manager who does what his heart tells him to, played by R. Madhavan; and a railway robber, a genial scamster (Divyendu Sharma, in good form). Adding to this is a fierce reporter (Sunny Hinduja) who refuses to let go of the Union Carbide story. It's a story of poor corporate governance and stellar public service. The role played by Indian Railways on Bhopal's darkest night has been less chronicled and celebrated. The city remains scarred still with the effects of the gas leak, with babies born with deformities, and women widowed before their time. The fight for justice has been long, hard and often with little reward. But *The Railway Men* reminds us it is all too easy to let corporate greed get away with industrial disasters of epic proportions with no accountability. It also tells us why calling the Railways the nation's lifeline is not a cliché.

Test Your Infra Power

1. Which is India's oldest Iron and steel plant?
2. Which is the most profitable PSU in India?
3. Which is the top-performing city, leading in the completion of projects, fund utilization, and overall criteria, according to the latest report by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs?
4. What mining technique, once used extensively in Meghalaya and banned by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in April 2014, was deployed in the last leg of the Silkyara tunnel rescue of 41 labourers?
5. Where was the song *Yeh ishq haye* from the popular film *Jab We Met* (2007) shot?

Answers: 1. TISCO in Jamshedpur, started in 1907. 2. ONGC 3. Surat 4. Rat hole mining 5. Rohtang Pass, located at an altitude of more than 13,000 feet on the Pir Panjal range of the Himalayas



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