

The Building Blocks of Mythology

Editor's Note

The hurly burly of the General Election is done. It is time now for governance. The Infravision Foundation (TIF) has kept its powder dry, working on a series of studies and special projects. But as the heatwave extends itself across India and water scarcity hits households, questions of urban sustainability assume importance. TIF is dedicated to solving these problems and ensuring infrastructure is usable, liveable and durable.

Even Krishna was helpless when his kingdom Dwarka was sinking. It was a poignant reminder that even the greatest cities are susceptible to change, sometimes even total destruction. This was one of the many stellar revelations in mythologist and author Devdutt Pattanaik's conversation with TIF founder and managing trustee Vinayak Chatterjee. In the first edition of InfraKatha, TIF's monthly series in collaboration with India Habitat Centre, Pattanaik connected the dots between history, mythology and infrastructure, in a conversation laced with humour, insight and intelligence. With a packed crowd listening to them spellbound, Chatterjee drew out Pattanaik on a range of issues, from how ancient seers would follow in the footsteps of deer ('pugdandi') to cross forests and walk across the shallow parts of rivers (fjords, or 'tirtha') on their way to pilgrim centres to how the Harappan Civilisation was created by traders, not raiders. InfraKatha is a series of conversations that approaches infrastructure through unique and meaningful ways. Please click on the link to watch the conversation: [Video](#).



Kaveree Bamzai, Head of Advocacy, The Infravision Foundation, at the InfraKatha



Sunit Tandon, Director, India Habitat Centre, introducing TIF founder Vinayak Chatterjee and mythologist Devdutt Pattanaik



Pattanaik in full flow



Rumjhum Chatterjee, TIF co-founder, delivers the vote of thanks

Event Alert



InfraKatha 2, June 19, 2024

Paralympic winner Deepa Malik will be InfraKatha's next speaker, again at Gulmohar, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. The inspiring Arjuna Awards winner will speak about Inclusive Infrastructure, the need for upgradation of sports infrastructure, building infra for sportswomen and inclusive infra for Persons with Disabilities.



New Vision for Safe Highways

In theory, India has excellent road construction rules, traffic rules, and effective monitoring of road accidents, but there are gaps everywhere. From 2009 to 2019, road traffic crashes were the 13th largest contributor to health burden (deaths and disabilities) in India. For the working age population (15-49 years), road traffic crashes are the sixth largest contributor to health burden. A study sponsored by the Transport Research Wing, MoRTH, reported that the socio-economic cost of road traffic injuries is equivalent to 3.5-5% of the national GDP. Now a new study by The Infravision Foundation and IIT Delhi says the loss of human life in the road transport system is unacceptable and therefore the transport system should be designed in a way that such events do not occur. The road map comprises three specific actions which can be taken up in phases beginning with the identification of non-compliance of road geometry, speed management and roadside hazard management as per the current standards, and identification of gaps in the current contract documents with respect to safety compliance. TIF is working on an effective advocacy plan and will soon announce its engagements with all stakeholders.



TIF@CII

Vinayak Chatterjee, TIF founder and managing trustee, has been appointed chairman of the CII National Council for Infrastructure and Rumjhum Chatterjee, TIF co-founder and managing trustee, has been made chair of the CII Centre for Women Leadership for the year 2024-25.

TIF@FICCI

Jagan Shah, TIF CEO, was appointed to FICCI's Jury of Business-Friendly Cities Towards Liveability and Sustainability.



TIF@FactoryFloor

TIF co-founder Rumjhum Chatterjee inaugurated the We4She programme at C&S Electric's manufacturing plants in Haridwar. The We4She programme introduces dedicated manufacturing lines exclusively run and managed by women employees, underscoring the commitment to gender diversity and empowerment in the workplace. Chatterjee, Independent Director of C&S Electric, emphasized that such initiatives are crucial for equitable workplaces and expressed the hope that the We4She programme would inspire other companies to take similar steps towards gender parity, thereby setting a precedent for the industry at large.



Rumjhum Chatterjee on the factory floor



Chatterjee endorses the We4She programme

TIF@Media

In his monthly column in Business Standard, Vinayak Chatterjee did a thorough analysis of political party manifestos. One of the most striking aspects was the absence of any discussion on urban infrastructure, whether it is the development of Smart Cities or the use of municipal bonds to finance urban infrastructure.

TIF CEO Jagan Shah was quoted in a Hindustan Times article on parking regulations remaining a non-starter in urban India.

Infra visions in manifestos

Electrification has never been won or lost solely based on voter mindsets, notwithstanding that it is a political party's top priority. The BJP manifesto and the Congress manifesto both mention the need for smart cities and public transport. The BJP manifesto mentions the need for smart cities and public transport. The Congress manifesto mentions the need for smart cities and public transport.



VINAYAK CHATTERJEE

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Infra@Streaming

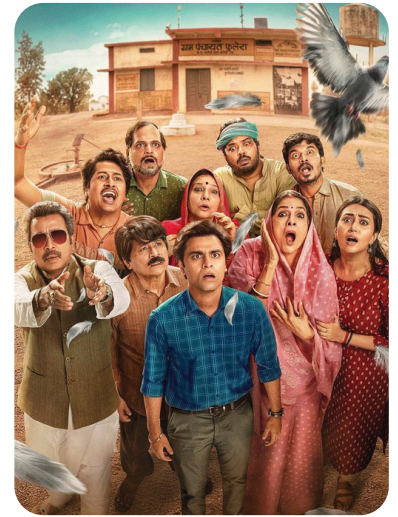
Rural Infra, Phuleria Style

Panchayat, Season Three, Hindi, Prime Video

Cast: Jitendra Kumar, Neena Gupta

How is a village governed with the complex connection between the sarpanch, the MLA of the area, the secretary of the Panchayat office and the District Magistrate?

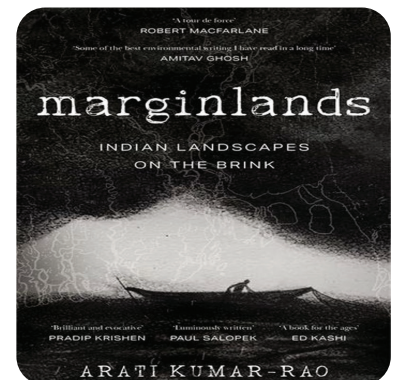
Who should get a house under the Prime Minister's Garib Awas Yojana? Who will fix the pothole in the road into which the sarpanch fell? Who will provide emergency medical care? Where is the public transport connecting to the next town? The fictional Phuleria has pretty much all the infrastructure issues that most villages in India face, and it treats them with a perfect mix of sweetness and light.



Infra@Books

Marginlands: Indian Landscapes on the Brink

Working across South Asia, independent photographer, writer, and National Geographic Explorer Arati Kumar-Rao documents environmental degradation that has reached cataclysmic levels. She chronicles how drastically depleting groundwater, habitat destruction, and land acquisition for industry devastates biodiversity and shrinks common lands, displacing millions and pushing species towards extinction.



Test Your Infra Power

1. What is the average number of trees per person in India, compared to the global average?
2. Where in India is the world's longest railway platform?
3. How many water bodies are there in India?
4. What is the percentage of installed capacity of solar power in India?
5. Where was the underground prison in which Bane imprisoned Batman in Christopher Nolan's Dark Knight Rises in 2012?



1. 28, and the global average is 422
2. Shree Siddharoodha Swamiji station in Hubballi, Karnataka
3. 24 lakh, according to Census of Water Bodies by the Ministry of Jal Shakti
4. 17 per cent of the total
5. Mehrangarh Fort, Jodhpur



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