

## Editor's Note

*June whizzed by in a flurry of meetings. Having launched InfraShakti, we were busy connecting with various communities, from students to army veterans, from academic institutions to professional groups. Making plans for the future, amplifying ongoing projects, strengthening our social media presence, and finessing our messaging--all of that and more kept us busy through a month of relentless work. It was a process of great learning for us as we reached out to key decision-makers and policy-shapers to ensure our work had both relevance and resonance. And we were kept on our toes by the various communities we engaged with as their questions ensured we looked deep and wide for the answers.*

## City Mobility

### Selecting the Appropriate Public Transport System for Urban India

All metro systems operating in our cities have a mere 25-35 per cent of the projected ridership, leading to financial stress. More critically, none of the systems has achieved the benefits estimated at the time of approval of the project. It is therefore essential that an integrated public transport system is designed which can serve the differentiated travel demand in different city sizes, and for land use patterns to ensure the availability of a quality public transport system for all citizens. The Infravision Foundation (TIF)'s white paper provides a data-driven framework to select an appropriate urban public transport system in Indian cities. The project by Prof Geetam Tiwari and Deepty Jain, IIT Delhi, takes into account the relevance, affordability, ease of access and exit, as well as door-to-door travel duration of the system.



## Green Stamp

### Sustainability Rating for Infrastructure Projects

Project development involves increased consumption of resources such as steel and cement resulting in emissions and global warming, air and water pollution, and loss of biodiversity. Social impact can range from rehabilitation and resettlement issues to unfair labour conditions and conflicts associated with land acquisition. Infrastructure development, especially large projects. All this has a lasting negative impact on the environment and society, even after adhering to

mitigation efforts in letter and spirit. This project, by Anand Krishnamurthy and Manish Jain, co-founders Evint, and supervised by Rajaji Meshram, Distinguished Fellow, Transport & Logistics, TIF, proposes a sustainability rating framework that includes best practices, and overarching enhancement measures to existing regulations. It provides a rating scale using various parameters of sustainability, the methodology of rating, and the regulatory and operational framework in the Indian context.

## Welcome Aboard



### Dilip Cherian

Image Guru; Communications, Public Affairs & Crisis Consultant; and Founder, Perfect Relations

Joins as a Member of the **Council of Advisors**



### Jagan Shah

Architect; Urbanist; and Former Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs

Joins as a **Distinguished Fellow**

## Coming Up

The first summit of The Infravision Foundation (TIF) was held in Gurugram in January 2023, where we decided, going forward, we would meet once a quarter. So here we are. TIF is holding its first quarterly meeting of FY24 over July 2 and 3. It looks like it will be a packed two days with some members of the Council of Advisors and several Distinguished Fellows. We begin with a panel discussion, Is Social Infra getting neglected at the altar of Core Infra?, with some of the finest experts in the business. There is P. K. Sinha, former Cabinet

Secretary and former Principal Advisor to the Prime Minister; Nasser Munjee, founder and former MD of IDFC and Chairman, Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, India; Rajnish Kumar, former Chairman, State Bank of India; Ashish Dhawan, co-founder, Ashoka University & Founder, The Convergence Foundation; and Sameer Gupta, Chairman – Jakson Group. This will be followed by a day of discussing current projects and plans for next year. We are excited!

### Bhavgun Kaur

Vedica Scholar & TIF Intern

## Life@TIF

My journey at TIF has been very fruitful. I get to learn a lot from everyone here, and they all have expertise in their field of work. From learning about market research, how to collaborate with different organizations to expand the company's imprint, how advocacy is done for projects, to understanding how policies are made and their impact on us, I've learned quite a lot. The biggest learning has been to understand how a project comes alive from scratch, what kind of operations go behind the scene and the power advocacy holds in making it a success. Under the Vedica Shadow a Woman Leader programme, I was meant to shadow one mentor. I had the good fortune of shadowing three instead.



# InfraShakti Launched



## Infra Shakti

Powering People's Participation

InfraShakti has been powering on. We met gung-ho members of Atulya Ganga Trust, a group of Army veterans who have decided to save the Ganga by raising awareness about its pollution among people and creating an app that will actually measure the water quality index and make it part of the public discourse. Colonel (retired) Manoj Kehwar and riverine scholar with the Ministry of Culture, Abhay Mishra, shared notes with us on changing mindsets. They, like us, don't believe in NATO, which as they told us means No Action Talk Only. We also connected with another incredible group of volunteers led by former Union Coal Secretary Anil Swarup. He runs the Nexus of Good Foundation which believes in identifying, appreciating, propagating and replicating good work by individuals and institutions, among them civil servants. His mantra is simple: the good should come together and speak up to prevent evil from flourishing. We are energized by their ideas and all set to work together.



## TIF@TheMedia

It's time to set up an independent safety board and an independent regulatory authority. Asked on BQ Prime, the independent business and financial digital news network, TIF co-founder Vinayak Chatterjee said these are two changes he would recommend right away to reform Indian Railways, a behemoth, which he noted, is the eighth largest employer in the world. There have been several reports which have recommended ways to transform Railways, noted Chatterjee, adding that the Anil Kakodkar report of 2012, to review the safety of the Indian Railways and recommend improvements, could be a starting point for measures to strengthen

the organization. He pointed to the several reports on the Railways since 2002, including the Rakesh Mohan committee report of 2002 which suggested restructuring the Railway Board, the 2015 report of the Committee for Mobilization of Resources for Major Railway Resources and Restructuring of Railway Bodies and Railway Board headed by Bibek Debroy, and the 2021 National Rail Plan on the overall long-term development of Indian Railways which said an organizational overhaul was needed and merely reforming financing would not win the game.

## Big News of the Month

The Central Government's ambitious Great Nicobar Transshipment Port project is likely to get the all-clear from the high-powered committee (HPC) formed to scrutinize the environmental clearance (EC). The proposed project has been halted since April. On April 3, the Kolkata Bench of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) put a two-month stay on any further work on the EC granted to the project. The ₹ 41,000 crore project would be on hold until the NGT-appointed committee scrutinizes the green approval granted by the Centre. The committee was given two months to scrutinize unanswered deficiencies in the EC, which allegedly failed to address severe environmental and regulatory concerns related to the development of the mega port. The Centre aims at building it in public-private partnership mode.

## TIF's Take



India has, for many decades, fretted about the fact that over 75 per cent of the country's transshipment cargo is handled at ports outside India. In earlier times, the frustration was less manifest as foreign trade was not at the volumes today. But with India set to emerge as the third largest economy in the world, and with the quantum of goods imported and exported rising substantially, this deficiency in shipping infrastructure is beginning to hurt, not just in terms of the outflow of foreign exchange earnings, but even the loss of stature in the shipping industry by not having such a facility even with such a large coast-line.

Thus, the Government of India's decision to develop a ₹41,000 Crore transshipment port at Galathea Bay in Car Nicobar, Andamans, has been warmly welcomed. Whilst environmentalists have been concerned about the environmental damage in the surrounding fragile eco-system, it is understood that after a deep examination of issues, a high-powered committee set-up under the auspices of the National Green Tribunal has given its approval. So, it looks that the international bidding process for development of this port will now gather momentum. Ahoy !

## Infrastructure@theMovies

*Ek akela thak jayega, milkar bojh uthana/Saathi haath badhana.* This song, with the visuals of Dilip Kumar and Vyjanthimala exhorting their fellow villagers to work together to build a road is iconic proof of the difference a road can make. In the 1957 film, *Naya Daur*, Dilip Kumar takes on the challenge of horse carts being replaced by buses, by the villain, Ajit, obviously, by constructing a village road that will smoothen and shorten the time taken by a horse cart.

Dilip Kumar's character may seem a Luddite at first--he is, after all, opposing modern transport--but on second thought he was an advocate of good infrastructure. Naturally Dilip Kumar's horse cart wins over Ajit's bus. Directed by BR Chopra, it was written by Akhtar Mirza, who also wrote *Waqt* (1965) and *Dhund* (1973). It's a powerful indictment of thoughtless modernity, and it has a young Dilip Kumar in it. Need one say more? Find it on youtube.



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