

Editor's Note

September was a seminal month for The Infravision Foundation (TIF). In Kiran Karnik, it found itself a new trustee with a tremendous track record in the IT industry. There was much to report in terms of impact. A workshop held last year in Delhi with CII and IRDAI has led to a rise in insurance companies issuing surety bonds for construction companies, a subject that IRDAI CEO Debasish Panda endorsed emphatically. This was following a comprehensive study on surety bonds by TIF in collaboration with Distinguished Fellow and State Bank of India veteran Supratim Sarkar as well as the SP Jain Institute of Management and Research in Mumbai. More on that next month. A well-attended roundtable on agri warehousing, following a TIF study, led to the idea of establishing a centre for agri infrastructure research and action. The TIF study on safe highways resulted in a detailed conversation with the Uttar Pradesh Police on interventions to reduce road accidents. There is a lot to do, and TIF is on it.

The Infravision Fellowship

Showing gratitude, someone said, is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other. TIF honoured its Distinguished Fellows at its half yearly meeting in Delhi. Supratim Sarkar and Akhilesh Tilotia were in attendance as TIF founder Vinayak Chatterjee awarded them certificates of excellence. Sarkar, a State Bank of India veteran, spoke of future projects TIF could do.



Supratim Sarkar receives certificate of excellence from TIF founder Vinayak Chatterjee

Tilotia, a public policy expert, who has worked across the public and private sectors, said he was excited about the many projects TIF is working on -- from agri infra to land value creation. He added: "We need to support the public policy process via well-thought-out analyses and appropriate conceptual frameworks."



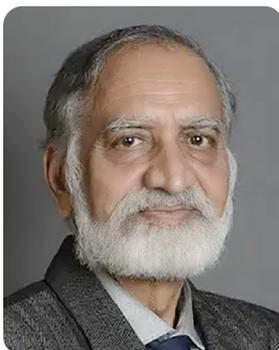
Akhilesh Tilotia receives memento from TIF co-founder Rumjhum Chatterjee



Team TIF at the half yearly meeting

TIF, he said, brings together diverse senior professionals and bureaucrats allowing the problem to be seen from multiple perspectives which enables a robust solution design. Certificates were also announced for Rajiv Ranjan Mishra for excellence in water conservation, Rajaji Meshram in transport, and Dr Soumya Kanti Ghosh in economic policy.

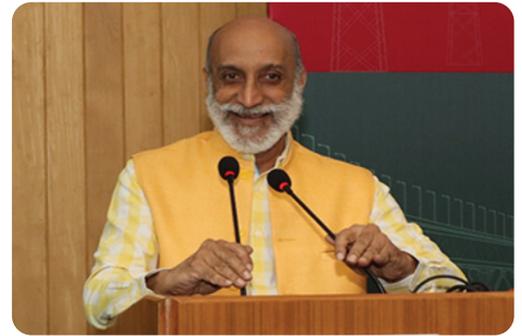
TIF's New Trustee



Few people in India can claim to have as brilliant a career in public service and in the corporate world as Kiran Karnik. One of the architects of the IT industry in India, he has always been at the cutting edge of technology, whether it was working with the late great Vikram Sarabhai to set up the Satellite Instructional Television Experiment or laying the foundations of Discovery Channel and Animal Planet in India. He is the person governments invariably turn to in a crisis, whether it was managing NASSCOM after the sudden passing on of Dewang Mehta or heading the Satyam Computer Services board after it was disbanded for irregularities. Karnik's ability to master the many transitions in technology and mentor those who manage it have made him an invaluable national asset. Karnik has been President of the India Habitat Centre as well as Chairman IIITD and is currently Chair of HelpAge India. TIF is honoured that he has agreed to guide it as Trustee.

Waking Up Dead Buildings with Aman Nath

Son of refugee parents, builder of a heritage hotel chain, and saviour of a considerable amount of history, Aman Nath, Chairman of the Neemrana Hotels, is all this and more. He was the guest speaker at the fifth edition of InfraKatha on heritage tourism infrastructure and he gave the invited audience at India Habitat Centre a taste of what it was like to be governed by a passion for the past and restoring it for contemporary use. In a conversation with senior media executive DN Mukerjea, he called the process "waking up dead buildings". "It is the process of taking you backwards but also forward because these properties are where you celebrate weddings or birthdays," he said. "Infrastructure and heritage are arrows with two heads," he said. On a personal note, he said, "not having money is the greatest asset. It forces one to be entrepreneurial".



Aman Nath in full flow



IHC Director Sunit Tandon, Aman Nath and senior media executive DN Mukerjea



TIF Founder Vinayak Chatterjee greets Aman Nath



Sneak Peek

TIF presented the sixth edition of InfraKatha at the India Habitat Centre on October 5, 2024. Shailesh Kochhar, a futurist and engineer who has been creating internet products from the very early days, was in conversation with TIF CEO Jagan Shah on Reshaping the Digital Infrastructure. Kochhar has worked with Google, Amazon, start-ups and scale-ups in the Bay Area, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Seattle, spending the better part of two decades as an engineer and entrepreneur in the technology industry. This vantage point gives him a special perspective on the ever-growing AI storm. You will hear more from the conversation next month.

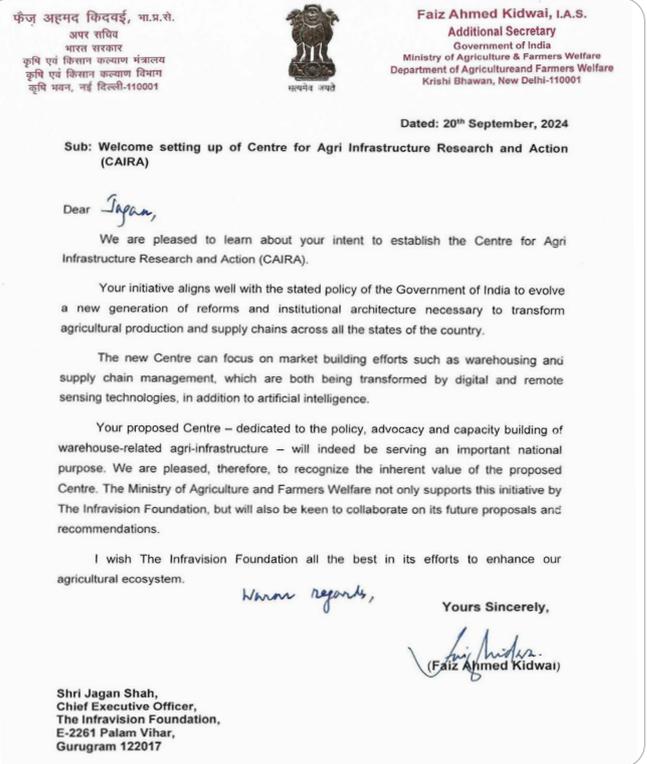
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In a fascinating article related to climate change, Distinguished Fellow Akhilesh Tilotia explored what would happen if a temporary mass exit is required out of Mumbai. The evacuation infrastructure may get overwhelmed, he writes in IMC Journal. "The good news is that the logistics infrastructure on all three evacuation routes has grown multifold over the last few years – Atal Setu, the Mumbai-Nagpur expressway, and significant flyover capacity on the Surat exits, are just some of the key examples. Comfort in the answer to the question of whether the evacuation routes can handle the surge in traffic can only come from detailed and stress-tested modelling exercises – it may not be possible to do a test run of such a drill. Such models should account for human frailties in times of stress and disasters," he adds.

TIF Impact

#TIF's efforts to mainstream agri warehousing have met with resounding success. Following a TIF study on agri warehousing by IIM Bangalore and a roundtable with key stakeholders, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Faiz Ahmed Kidwai, issued a letter of support for TIF in setting up a Centre of Agri Infrastructure Research and Action (CAIRA). The centre will work towards an ideal agri marketing framework that will ensure seamless integration between the farm gate, the warehouse and the logistics networks that connect commodities to markets.

#TIF initiated a dialogue with the Uttar Pradesh Police in September. IIT Delhi's Prof Geetam Tiwari, TIF CEO Jagan Shah and TIF Head-Advocacy Kaveree Bamzai met UP Police Additional DGP (Traffic and Road Safety) K Satyanarayan in Lucknow. A potential MoU will be signed shortly following an intense discussion on sharing of data on road accidents by the UP Police and analysis as well as potential interventions suggested by IIT Delhi and TIF. This followed the Safe Highways study by IIT Delhi. It is a subject very much part of the zeitgeist given Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari's admission that the government's efforts to ensure road safety have been a failure.



Letter of support from Ministry of Agriculture

TIF@Media



TIF@HelpAgeIndia



HelpAge India CEO Rohit Prasad, HelpAge Vice-Chairperson and TIF Co-founder Rumjhum Chatterjee, HelpAge Honorary Brand Ambassador Sharmila Tagore, HelpAge Chairperson and TIF Trustee Kiran Karnik, HelpAge board member Radhika Bharatram

HelpAge India launched its nationwide campaign #GenerationsTogether along with Young Champions for the Elder Cause involving school children and youth, which aims at strengthening intergenerational ties and fostering an age-inclusive society. HelpAge India also announced renowned actor and Padma Bhushan awardee Sharmila Tagore as its Honorary Brand Ambassador. HelpAge India Chairperson and TIF Trustee Kiran Karnik spoke about multi-stakeholder partnerships being the key to mainstreaming ageing while HelpAge India Vice-Chairperson and TIF co-founder Rumjhum Chatterjee delivered a beautiful tribute to Tagore, the ageless icon.

TIF Founder Vinayak Chatterjee wrote an in depth article in Business Standard on the government's proposal to set up 12 new industrial smart cities and how they can transform manufacturing investment. Key strategies include 'plug and play' environments, smart utilities, and private capital involvement. The project aims to generate one million direct jobs and three million indirect jobs.

Event Alert

TIF Adviser Prof G Raghuram will be speaking at the second National Summit on Warehousing & Supply Chain on October 16, 2024. This is part of TIF's extended outreach on agri warehousing.

Welcome Aboard



Lawrence Cardoza joins TIF as Research Associate. Armed with a Bachelors from St. Stephen's College and a Post Graduate Programme in Public Policy from the Indian School of Public Policy, he aspires to build compelling narratives to put the "public" back in public policy and strengthen the foundations of a resilient nation by further developing infrastructure policies. A certified mountaineer, he completed his Basic Mountaineering Course from the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering, and in his free time, he enjoys reading, calisthenics, and long-distance cycling.

Test Your Infra Power

1. India is set to become home to the second largest metro network in the world in four years. Which country has the largest network?
2. NASA astronaut Sunita Williams's eight-day space mission has become an eight-month ordeal. Who is her colleague on this trip?

3. What is the name of the Israeli mobile all-weather air defence system designed to intercept and destroy short-range rockets and artillery shells fired from distances of 4 to 70 km away?
4. Where in Bangladesh is the Indian Ports Global Limited developing a port?
5. Which king ruled that certain key industries would be monopolised by the State, the first PSUs so to speak. This included sugar, salt, iron, tobacco, sandalwood and mining of silver, gold and precious stones.

1. US
2. Astronaut Butch Wilmore
3. Iron Dome
4. Mongla
5. 18th century ruler of the erstwhile Mysore kingdom Tipu Sultan



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