



Editor's Note

Financial closures. New beginnings. March was brimming with excitement about what lies ahead. There are events which will come to fruition in April, partnerships that will take us into new directions, and ideas that await execution. TIF's journey continues.

Big data holds key to DECARBONIZING URBAN TRANSPORT

Leveraging big data and analytics could be the game-changer in transforming India's urban transport systems and reducing carbon emissions, concluded experts at a seminar on "Decarbonising Urban Transport Using ITMS Data" organized by The Infravision Foundation (TIF).

NOIDA can serve as model city for data-driven decarbonization strategies

A pioneering study conducted jointly by The Infravision Foundation (TIF) and IIT Delhi identifies NOIDA as having exceptional potential to become a model city for data-driven decarbonization initiatives. With its advanced Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) and comprehensive data infrastructure, NOIDA offers a fertile testing ground for innovative approaches to sustainable urban mobility.

V. Umashankar, Secretary, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), delivered the keynote address, emphasizing the critical role of data in addressing road safety challenges. "Ad hoc solutions and plan implementation do not work. There is a clear need for data-driven decision making, especially in the road safety sector," stated Umashankar.

He highlighted three major factors affecting road safety: behaviour, vehicles, and road infrastructure. Umashankar called for streamlining processes around compliance, decarbonization, and environmental considerations, advocating for micro-level data analysis to inform interventions that can effectively reduce road fatalities.

The TIF-IIT Delhi study comes at a crucial time for NOIDA, which is projected to reach a population of 2.5 million by 2031 according to the NOIDA Master Plan 2031. This rapid growth is expected to exacerbate existing challenges of traffic congestion, extended commute times, and deteriorating air quality.

The roundtable was widely covered in the media with stories from DD News, IANS and The Print.



TIF CEO Jagan Shah, IIT Delhi Professor Emeritus Dr Geetam Tiwari, EKFON-STRABAG CEO Rajat Mishra, Addl DGP Traffic and Road Safety. Punjab Amardeep Singh Rai, CSIR-CRRI Director Manorjan Parida



EKFON-STRABAG CEO Rajat Mishra with Secretary, MoRTH, V Umashankar



Shah, Assistant Professor, IIT Delhi, Rahul Goel; Additional Secretary, MoRTH, Mahmood Ahmed; Programme Head, WRI India, Avinash Dubedi; and Assistant Professor, School of Planning and Architecture, Sairam Dasari



Shah, Principal Consultant NAFED Dr D Vasudevan; Programme Manager, Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, Vaishali Singh; Research Professor, Indian Institute of Science, Dr Vijay Kovvali; and Associate Professor, IIT Roorkee, Dr Amit Agarwal



CAIRA presented a paper at the Buyer Seller Meet in Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh as the first of its long term engagement with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA). The two day visit to Tawang under the aegis of the North Eastern Regional Agricultural Marketing Corporation Limited (NEREMAC) included a field trip to meet representatives of production and processing units. The findings will inform CAIRA's report on mapping the export routes for key produce from Arunachal Pradesh.



Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu at Buyer Seller meet

TIF@Media

- TIF's study on High Speed Rail made waves. PTI did a story on it that was published in several newspapers and digital portals (<https://theprint.in/india/developed-india-needs-high-speed-rail-passengers-prefer-faster-luxurious-travel-study/2558959/>).
- Infrastructure Today carried a detailed report on the High Speed Rail study (<https://infrastructuretoday.co.in/hsr-needs-fast-tracking/>) which prioritises four corridors, among other suggestions.
- TIF's report on the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority was on the front page of Business Standard in an advertisement which emphasised missing forests, missing funds, missing land banks and missing data.
- TIF Founder and Managing Trustee Vinayak Chatterjee wrote in his well regarded Business Standard column about the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP) and the National Monetisation Plan (NMP). Both ended their first run in March 2025. In his article, he discussed their achievements and the way forward as Versions 2.0.

COMPENSATORY AFFORESTATION

The problem of missing forests, missing funds, missing land banks, missing data.

Whenever forest land is used to develop infrastructure, project developers contribute to a central fund that is disbursed to the states by the Compensatory Afforestation Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA). In 2013, CAMPA expressed some doubts on the real time allocation of land for afforestation and the accountability of funds. The Annual Report (2023-24) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change revisited the issues raised by CAMPA and noted a widening gap between plans and progress.

A new study by The Infravision Foundation and TERI has made comprehensive suggestions to overhaul CAMPA to

- Ensure greater transparency and timely updating of data across various portals such as APO, e-Green Watch and Parivesh
- Identify consolidated land banks
- Build capacity of state forestry department officials
- Improve Centre-state coordination for more effective results
- Engage local communities in afforestation departments

Compensatory afforestation needs significant overhauling so that India's robust development agenda is not pitted against serious ecological degradation. It deserves better administration, management and utilisation of the funds contributed by those who are building the country's infrastructure and investing in its future. Only then can India balance its growth ambitions with much needed environmental sensitivity.

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ABOUT THE INFRAVISION FOUNDATION

- India's independent think-tank on infrastructural issues
- Championing appropriate infrastructural development initiatives for economic prosperity

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TIF@Dialogue

TIF CEO Jagan Shah spoke at the CII South India Annual Convention 2025 at Infra South: Crafting Liveable Environments in Indian Cities. He emphasised the need to bridge the gap between city planning and on-the-ground realities, ensuring cities are not only planned but also liveable for their residents.

Shah also spoke on a distinguished panel with Rainmatter Foundation CEO Sameer Shisodia; former Tata Trusts Deputy Director Dr Malavika Chauhan; and Executive Director at Samarthan-Centre for Development Support, Bhopal, Yogesh Kumar. The session was moderated by sustainable agriculture and climate change scholar Aakriti Wanchoo on land based mitigation for the second dialogue in the Land Based Mitigation (LBM) series hosted by Iora Ecological Solutions. LBM is a crucial driver for climate action, but its success depends on strong collaboration across sectors. While afforestation, agroforestry, and wetland restoration are widely implemented, grassland-based approaches remain underexplored.



TIF CEO Jagan Shah



Welcome Aboard

Priyanka Bains joins CAIRA as a research associate. She is an economist by training and a problem-solver at heart. She graduated from Lady Shri Ram College for Women with a degree in economics and pursued her Master's in economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University. Passionate about development, policy, and sustainability, she's on a mission to make agriculture smarter, more efficient, and climate-resilient—because feeding the world shouldn't cost the planet.

TIF Family@Work

TIF Distinguished Fellow and Co-Chair, IVCA Climate Council, Akhilesh Tilotia, wrote the foreword for The Climate Guys' new report: Geopolitics & Policies: Impact Assessment on Climate Investments, offering a must-read on how policy shifts shape green finance.

Member of TIF's Council of Advisors G Raghuram wrote on electrification in the Rail Business magazine.

"As of October 2024, about 97% of the route network is electrified. While there have been detractors of this policy, my view is that the policy of 100% electrification is visionary," he wrote, adding that an important value of electrification is that it will help earn carbon credits, not only for Indian Railways, but also for freight users of Indian Railways in terms of 'greening' their material transportation.

QUIZ: Test Your Infra Power

1. How many road projects, including under Bharatmala Pariyojana, are facing delays currently, mainly due to land acquisition issues and contractors' financial difficulties?
2. Where is India's First Vertical Lift Railway Sea Bridge?
3. How many airports does India have currently?
4. Who created the latest trend in AI, the animation form pioneered by Studio Ghibli?
5. The tokenisation of land assets led to a recent confrontation on X between two tech leaders. Who were they?

1. 637, according to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari
2. The New Pamban Bridge in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu
3. 148
4. Directors Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata and producer Toshio Suzuki
5. Sridhar Vembu of Zoho and Nandan Nilekani, non executive chairman of Infosys.



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