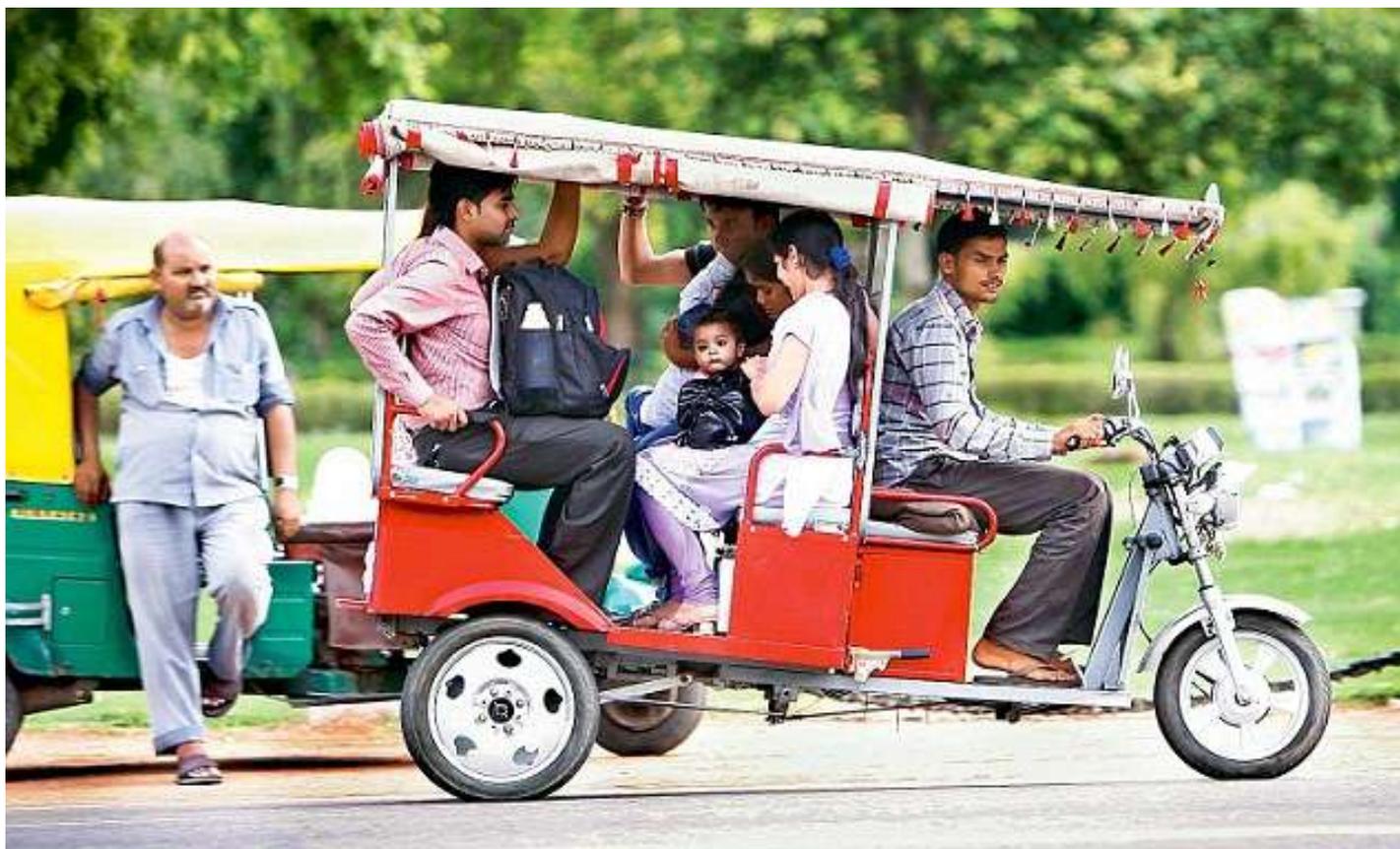


## Will Shift to Electric Mobility Leave the Poor Behind?



(Source: <http://www.cpnr.in/article/e-rickshaw-bill-passed-need-celebrate/>)

## In This Issue

### *COVER STORY:*

- Will the Shift to Electric Mobility Leave the Poor Behind?

### *HEADLINE OF THE WEEK:*

- Lacking a Clear Strategic Framework, Modi's Foreign Policy is Coming Apart

### *SECTION 1: ECONOMY*

- Book of Jobs: On Periodic Labour Force Survey
- Farm Owners with Other Income Sources are Ineligible for Maharashtra Agricultural Loan Scheme
- Government Limitations in Job Creation
- India's New IIP Services Suffer from Old Problems of Unreliability and High Volatility
- In Fact: A New Law Body to Handle Failed Financial Firms

### *SECTION 2: OPINIONS/BOOKS*

- **Opinions:** Muzzling Freedom of Expression; Unwise Proposal: On Election Commission Seeking Contempt Powers; We Cannot Afford to Lose Farmers; Practical Matters
- **Books:** Is the Cow a Religious Symbol? Throwback to Pre-Emergency Debate

## Lead Essay

### **Will Shift to Electric Mobility Leave the Poor Behind?**

Last month the NITI Aayog made a strong case for transforming India's passenger mobility paradigm through pursuit of a 'shared, electric and connected mobility future.' In its report - 'India Leaps Ahead: Transformative Mobility Solutions for All' jointly drafted with the Colorado based Rocky Mountain Institute the NITI Aayog conceives the future of mobility systems in India.

That this government is keen to shift the passenger mobility paradigm towards electric vehicle (EV) technology is clear from its recent announcements. The Minister of Power has announced that electric public buses may ply in the near future and government officials and agencies would move towards using only EVs. Further, the Minister of Roads, Transport and Highways (MoRTH) has assured that a new policy for both light and heavy EVs i.e. cars as well as buses will be released by December this year.<sup>i</sup> Last month MoRTH minister Mr. Nitin Gadkari's constituency, Nagpur, became the first city in India to adopt electric mobility system with a fleet of 200 EVs including taxis, buses, e-rickshaws and autos on a pilot basis with a long term objective of EV based public transportation system.<sup>ii</sup>

#### **Benefit of adopting EV backed transport policy**

The obvious gain from this policy shift towards EVs is in favour of the environment, also duly emphasized by the NITI Aayog. Its report states that adopting EV technology would cut India's energy demand by 64 percent and carbon emissions by 37 percent. Clean energy to power transportation, reduction of dependence on oil imports and improving public health are the main reasons for the policy push to revamp mobility system towards EVs. However, at the outset itself there are some significant challenges to this overhaul of India's transport infrastructure such as establishment of charging stations for EVs, adequate electricity generation and offering EVs at affordable prices given the technology costs. Nonetheless it is laudable that the proposed EV policy aims to build sustainable transport systems.

The following piece attempts to understand if this envisioned overhaul in the transport infrastructure has the potential to address gaps in the public transportation system. Specifically the piece will focus on whether the accessibility and mobility needs of the economically weaker sections of the society dependant on intermediate public transport are identified by the NITI Aayog and other relevant ministries as they push for a policy shift to adopt EV technology.

#### **Intermediate Public Transport is important for accessibility and mobility for those who cannot afford private vehicles**

The government's definition of 'public transport' confines itself to city bus and rail-based system. In case these formal modes of public transport are absent or inadequate informal modes of transport operate to provide demand based high frequency shuttle services. These form the intermediate public transport (IPT) which includes local and informal transport services like shared auto-rickshaws, maxi cabs, mini buses.<sup>iii</sup> The finding of the NSSO survey below affirms that IPT modes of transport are fast becoming popular modes of transport in urban as well as rural areas. A sizeable section of the population depends on public transportation for their commute. This is established by the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO) in its survey (June 2016). The survey reveals that spending on transportation forms a large share of the expenditure on services. Among the seven modes of transport listed by the survey, the bus/tram was used most in both rural as well as urban areas used by about 66 percent and 62 percent households respectively. The next most reported means of transport was the auto rickshaw used by about 38 percent rural households and about 47 percent urban households.<sup>iv</sup> Taxis are the third most accessed transport (9 percent) in rural areas and fourth most accessed (10 percent) in urban areas.

## Lead Essay

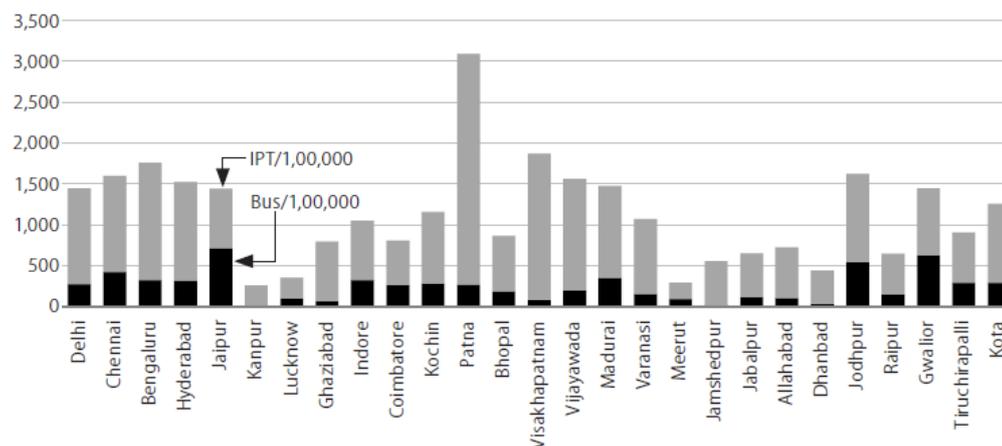
**Statement 3.1: Percentage of households reporting expenditure on different modes of transport, share of budget (in %) to total expenditure on transport and MPCE (in ₹) for different modes of transport in rural and urban areas**

modes of transport	rural			urban		
	MPCE (₹)	budget-share (%)	percentage of households reporting	MPCE (₹)	budget-share (%)	percentage of households reporting
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
air	0.04	0.06	0.04	4.14	2.53	0.14
railway	2.82	4.41	6.07	20.55	12.54	15.65
bus /tram	43.43	67.85	65.83	94.89	57.88	62.35
taxi	4.44	6.94	9.10	10.71	6.53	9.81
auto rickshaw	8.99	14.04	37.93	22.66	13.82	46.78
steamer /boat	0.09	0.14	0.63	0.21	0.13	0.46
rickshaw	0.54	0.84	4.88	1.96	1.20	7.86
horse cart	0.09	0.14	0.74	0.03	0.02	0.14
others	3.57	5.58	5.08	8.81	5.37	5.33
<b>all transport</b>	<b>64.01</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>82.85</b>	<b>163.94</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>83.90</b>

Source: Key Indicators of Household Expenditure on Services and Durable Goods, NSSO 72<sup>nd</sup> round (June 2014 – June 2015)

The bus and IPT numbers per one lakh people shown in the figure below further substantiate that the cities are hugely dependent on IPT.

**Figure 1: Bus and IPT Numbers per 1,00,000 People**



Source: 'Road Transport Yearbook' (2012), Ministry of Road, Transport and Highways

Research suggests that economically weaker sections of the society such as urban poor form a large part of these dependents.<sup>v</sup> Moreover, IPT is often essential for the viability of mass rapid transit system. It has been found that the poor in Delhi face the problem of unaffordable metro fares in addition to the 'costly and unreliable' IPT for their last mile trip compelling them to walk or cycle in unsafe conditions.<sup>vi</sup> IPT system is thus an important determinant in ensuring accessibility as well as mobility despite the presence of formal modes of public transportation. It was observed that battery operated e-rickshaws in Delhi during 2011 to 2013 offered a cheap and fast mode of transport for last mile connectivity to the Delhi metro resulting in a 30 percent increase in ridership without commissioning of a new line.<sup>vii</sup> The significance of IPT in ensuring smooth transit, especially the almost indispensable network of e-rickshaws cannot be ignored as the present government drafts a policy for EVs.

## Lead Essay

### **The National Urban Transport Policy (2014) does not focus on IPT adequately**

The NUTP, 2014 recognizes the role of paratransit system when the mass rapid transit systems are inadequate. However, the larger objective of the policy remains to 'restore paratransit to its normal role' i.e. for occasional trips ('such as trips to airports or rail stations with excessive baggage' and emergency trips ('that have to be undertaken immediately and it is not possible to wait for MRT) by improving organized MRT. What the MoRTH has fallen short of considering in this policy is that MRT cannot ensure door to door connectivity. With rapid urbanization and consequent rural to urban migration people have to settle away from the city centres for want of affordable housing. Without due acknowledgment of the indispensable nature of this IPT system the ministry would be exposing women as well as people who cannot afford contract carriage services to its vagaries. Considering that the day-to-day operations of this informal public transport are not monitored by any government agency<sup>viii</sup> regulating them will be difficult due to lack of understanding of the concerns of the system.

### **The way forward**

The present IPT system not owned by the government functions with a business motive and hence it is most active only during peak hours and across high density corridors. Will such an IPT system be mindful of the needs of the poor? Research suggests that IPT can play an important role for the urban poor by providing both mobility and employment as it accessible, available, flexible, adaptable and affordable.<sup>ix</sup> The new policy for EVs can either restrict itself to only replacing cars and buses with their electric counterparts or it could wield this technology to make public transportation accessible to that section of the society that most depends on it. By acknowledging the importance of IPT for achieving sustainable urban mobility the government can ensure that the poor do not face social exclusion.

The NITI Aayog in its report does dwell on improving first and last mile connectivity through 'transit oriented zoning' and ensuring 'high quality mobility services at lower cost.' Since transportation is not only moving from one place to another but more importantly determinative of access to opportunities as well as services what this policy document lacks is prioritisation of pro-poor mobility as this overhaul is envisaged. Will IPT using EV technology remain affordable for poor especially the urban poor who are vulnerable as they often live on fringes of busy cities, dependant job to make ends meet? Whether establishment of charging stations will be commissioned to remote or far flung areas to maintain connectivity for the poor? Given that affordable alternatives of commute are most skewed for economically weaker sections of the society questions such as above need to be answered by the anticipated policy.

### **Prepared By-**

Niharika Bapna

## Lead Essay

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## Headline

### **The truth about conflict of interest and big polluters dumping Paris climate agreement**

(Raakhee Suryapakah, *DailyO*, 4 June 2017)

President of the United States of America, Donald Trump announced that America would be pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement. The article states that this does not come as a surprise considering the new administration has many climate change deniers and people with vested interests in fossil fuels. On the other hand, countries such as India and China have reiterated their commitments towards the Paris Agreement. The article summarizes by stating that any action on climate change must be taken based on information provided by sources that have no vested interests.

Read More: <http://www.dailyo.in/politics/paris-agreement-trump-climate-change-global-warming/story/1/17612.html>.

Date of Access: 5.6.2017

## Economy

### Book of jobs: On Periodic Labour Force Survey

(*The Hindu*, June 17, 2017)

In order to generate quarterly reports on the urban labour market situation and annual dossiers on the overall employment scene, a new Periodic Labour Force Survey has been begun to track employment trends. According to D.V. Sadananda Gowda, Statistics and Programme Implementation Minister, it is a welcome development to capture the employment status of informally employed workforce. According to the survey conducted by the Labour Bureau since 2008, India has a depressing picture on new jobs for the world's youngest workforce in the first two years of the Narendra Modi government.

Read More: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/book-of-jobs/article19089850.ece>

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

### Farm Owners With Other Income Sources Ineligible for Maharashtra Agricultural Loan Scheme

(*The Wire*, June 16, 2017)

According to a government resolution dated June 14, the benefit of the loan scheme from the Maharashtra government will be exclusively for farmers without any other source of income, people getting income from other job will be out of the ambit of the scheme, under which Rs 10,000 initial crop loan assistance is provided to farmers. According to the Maharashtra state cooperation minister Subhash Deshmukh, the initial loan assistance of Rs. 10,000 is for the farmets in distress who have agriculture as the only source of income.

Read More: <https://thewire.in/148267/maharashtra-agricultural-loan/>

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

### Government limitations in job creation

(*Livemint*, June 19, 2017)

It is an appropriate time to consider an important question: What effect can the government actually have on job creation? One of Narendra Modi's core campaign promises in the 2014 election was creating job for the youth, in which his government has failed to deliver. According to the available data, in 2015 and 2016, average employment generation to be around 200000 jobs a year, which is a precipitous decline from the 2009-11 period when the annual job creation was 950,000.

Read More: <http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/B2gDpMIxRBQDNd2dGAYtzM/Government-limitations-in-job-creation.html>

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

### India's new IIP series suffers from old problems of unreliability and high volatility

(*Tadit Kundu*, *Live Mint*, June 19, 2017)

The Official data for factory output in India showed that the output growth accelerated to 3.8% in March from the previous level of 1.9% in February. However, the latest numbers that have been released recently suggest that the pace of industrial production has decelerated again, falling to 3.1% over the year-ago period. It has also been reported that such variations have been a hallmark of India's index of industrial production (IIP) for many years. An analysis done by Livemint, suggests that despite methodological improvements, the new IIP series continues to suffer from the same old problems.

Read More: <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/fh4MK6FTYGU6EbRjgoa6PP/Indias-new-IIP-series-suffers-from-old-problems-of-unreliab.html>

Date Accessed: 19.06.17

### In fact: A new law, body to handle failed financial firms

(*Shaji Vikraman*, *The Indian Express*, June 16, 2017)

In 2009-10, the Indian Government had decided to formulate laws relating to the financial sector. The Financial Sector Legislative Reforms Commission (FSLRC) had come up with a comprehensive Indian Financial Code, which had envisaged an overarching umbrella law for the financial sector across regulatory jurisdictions and a reshaping of the role of the regulators. The recommendations of were first submitted in 2013, towards the end of the UPA term. Now the NDA government has picked up some key suggestions from these recommendations which include, an independent Monetary Policy Committee to the latest Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017.

Read More: <http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/in-fact-a-new-law-body-to-handle-failed-financial-firms-4706307/>

Date Accessed: 19.06.17

## Opinions/Books

### Opinions

#### Muzzling freedom of expression

(Kapil Sibal, *The Hindu*, June 19, 2017)

“At the heart of the fundamental right of freedom of expression is free speech. But the human right to freely express oneself is not limited to free speech. The preceding enunciation is necessary to put in perspective controversies that have bedevilled the national discourse that has consumed public attention. I am talking of vigilantes who beleaguer, maim or even take people’s lives to allegedly save a cow; of anti-Romeo squads who allegedly prevent ‘eve-teasing’; of sentinels of morality who take revenge for what is called ‘love jihad’; and of self-appointed nationalists who brand all those who dare to oppose this government’s policy prescriptions in Jammu and Kashmir and towards Pakistan as ‘anti-national’.”

Read More: <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-opinion/muzzling-freedom-of-expression/article19100835.ece>

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

#### Unwise proposal: On Election Commission seeking contempt powers

(*The Hindu*, June 15, 2017)

The Election Commission of India has proposed to the Law Ministry that “it be armed with the power to punish for contempt”. It has been argued that ‘it is an unwarranted and poorly thought-out response to some strident accusations of partisan functioning, mainly from political parties that had lost in the electoral arena’. It has also been argued that the civil contempt which pertains to wilful disobedience of court orders, and also giving the ECI the power to enforce its orders may be an idea worth debating.

Read More: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/editorial/unwise-proposal/article19050126.ece>

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

#### We can’t afford to lose farmers

(Sunita Narain, *Down To Earth*, 16 June 2017)

In this article Ms. Sunita Narain talks about the real cost of food and how to benefit the farmers who are growing it. She criticizes the media over reporting the agricultural crisis only after the death of multiple farmers in Madhya Pradesh. She states that the current crisis is about the problem of aplenty. She discusses various problems and suggests solutions to the problems that form the agricultural crisis in India.

Read More: <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/blog/we-can-t-afford-to-lose-farmers-58113>.

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

#### Practical Matters

(Priyavrat Bhati, *Down To Earth*, 18 June 2017)

The article suggests that despite the growth in renewables, coal-based power will continue to dominate India’s power needs and Indian power plants should comply with environmental norms instead of resisting them. The article starts by describing India’s energy needs and also presents the stance of the power sector that the new norms are neither reasonable nor required. It then counters the stance by suggesting the positive effects of the norms.

Read More: <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/news/practical-matters-57894>.

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

## Opinions/Books

### Books

#### Is the Cow a Religious Symbol? Throwback to a Pre-Emergency Debate

(Prashant Bhushan, *The Wire*, 17 June 2017)

The article is about the book titled 'The Case that Shook India: The Verdict that Led to Emergency' by Mr. Prashant Bhushan. He describes various events related to a debate that eventually led to the Election Commission granting the Congress party, then led by Ms. Indira Gandhi, the cow symbol. The case of *Indira Gandhi vs Raj Narain* has been revisited to uncover the debate on whether the cow can be treated as a symbol of the Hindu religion.

Read More: <https://thewire.in/148233/cow-religious-symbol-emergency/>.

Date Accessed: 19.06.2017

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