

Centre For Law &
Urban Development
Monthly
NEWSLETTER

अधीतम्:
THE URBAN
ARCHIVES

JULY 2025

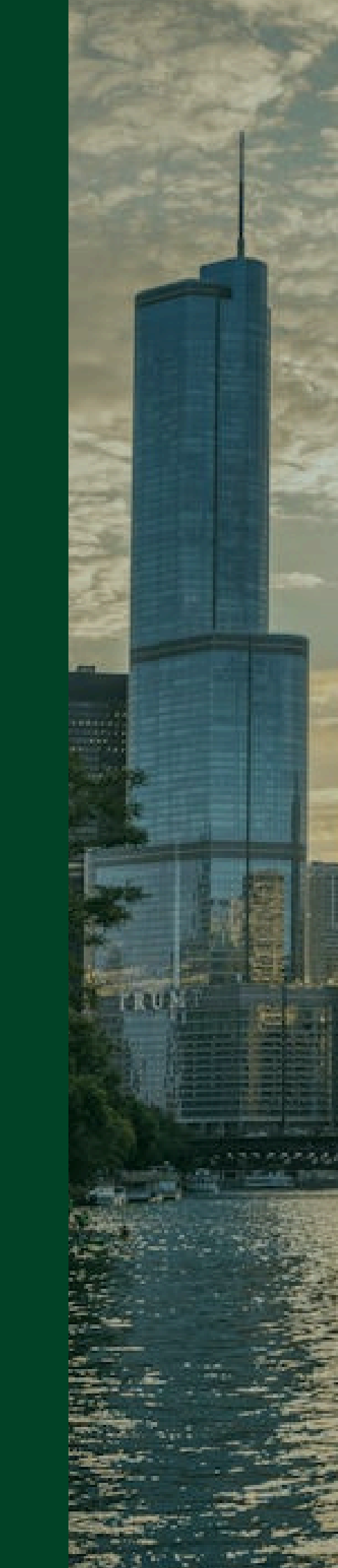


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About CLUD

The primary objective of the Centre is to evolve and impart comprehensive and interdisciplinary research involving land laws, property laws and working towards a sustainable legal education that is socially relevant. We aim to promote legal and ethical values and foster the rule of law and the objectives enshrined in the Constitution of India. Furthermore, the Centre works toward dissemination of legal knowledge and its role in national development, so that the ability to analyse and present contemporary issues of public concern and their legal implications for the benefit of public are improved. These processes strive to promote legal awareness in the community and to achieve political, social and economic justice.

Many believe that the path of liberalisation we embarked upon in the early 90s unleashed India's potential. Undoubtedly the country has undergone vast changes in all spheres and we see a more confident India asserting itself on the global stage. However, this progress has come with very significant challenges to the country. India's various social classes are yet to be assimilated; their participation in the process of governance remains fractured. Cumulative progress needs to be fair and equitable and integral to that is a legal system that empowers the marginalised.

Our sincere endeavour is to make legal education an instrument of social, political and economic change. Each individual who is part of this institution must be remembered for the promotion of social justice. Our students will not only be shaped as change agents as the country achieves its social and developmental goals, but will also be equipped to address the imperatives of the new millennium and uphold the Constitution of India.

EDITOR'S Note

-ANANYA ANAND

The July issue of the newsletter comes at a time when India's urban transition is at a juncture – where the demands of growth, justice, and sustainability have to be harmonized within the framework of the law. The events reported by this issue capture the complexity of this challenge, as they follow how judgments by courts, policy steps, and international narratives keep adapting the urban legal scenery.

This month has seen considerable activity across sectors. In the real estate and housing sector, court rulings have reaffirmed the need for procedural justice, transparency, and consumer protection, ensuring that developmental ambitions do not come at the cost of accountability. Land and tenancy matters, also, have seen new judicial focus, with courts still upholding the constitutional inviolability of property rights and demanding systemic change in the administration of land. These shifts are emblematic of the broader evolution of India's legal infrastructure – one that seeks to align governance with the ideals of equity and access to justice.

Urban policy has also taken decisive turns. Delhi's fuel ban and its subsequent reconsideration highlight the delicate balance between environmental urgency and social preparedness. Legal reforms like the Bills of Lading Bill, 2025 and the development of regional transport networks under the Namo Bharat and Gati Shakti programs are indicators of India's commitment towards modernizing its infrastructural and logistical systems through innovative legal thinking and planning.

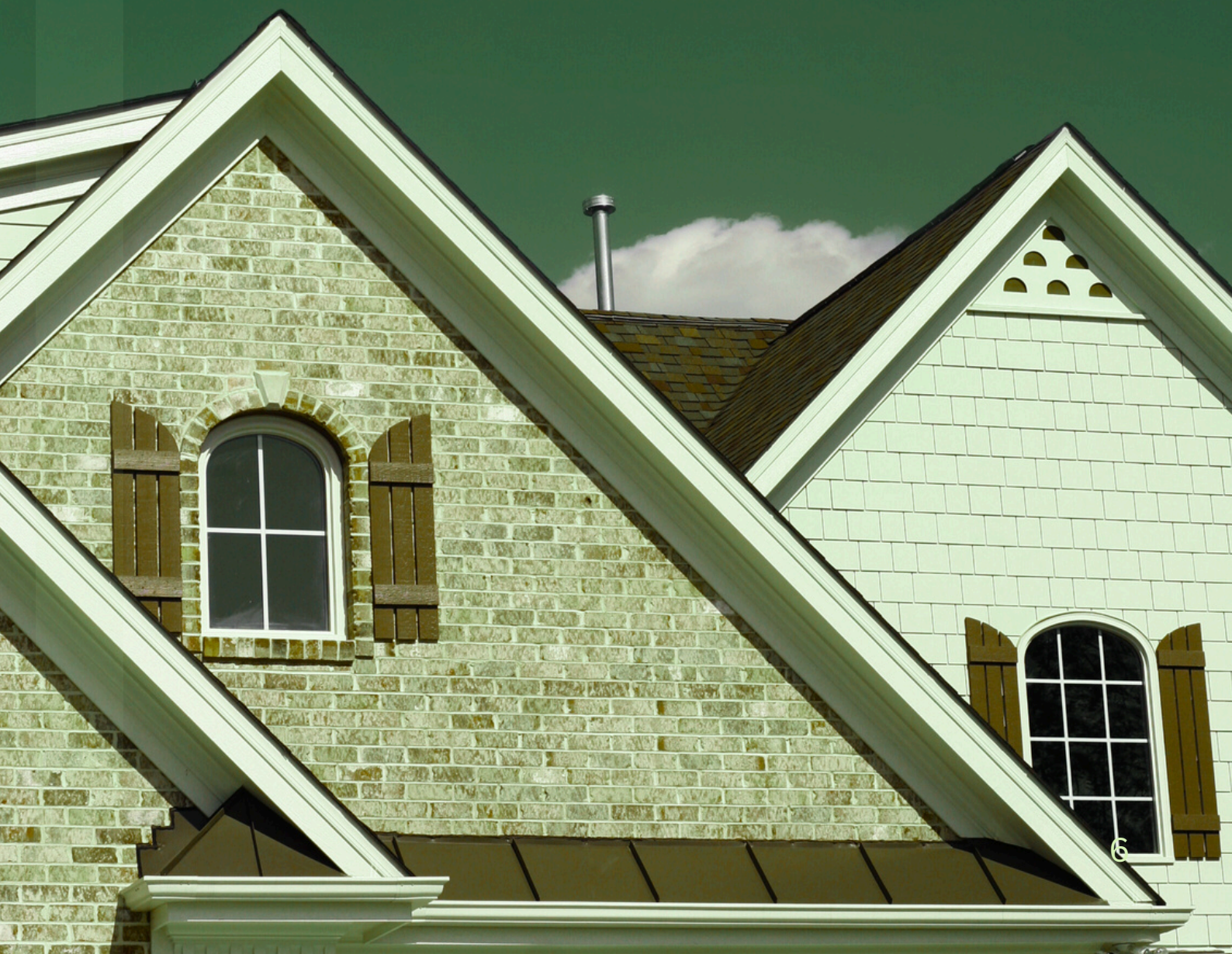
The new paradigms for clean energy finance, renewable technology, and environmental conservation further reflect an increasing appreciation that sustainability needs to be infused not only in rhetoric of policy, but also in institutional and enforceable legal frameworks.

At the global level, the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion on climate responsibilities, the re-engagement of the United States with land use policy, and the European Union's cohesion-competitiveness debates all indicate a global reconsideration of how law facilitates development. As a whole, these trends reinforce that urban change, whether in Delhi, Brussels, or California, cannot be separated from issues of justice, rights, and planetary care.

For the Centre for Law and Urban Development, this newsletter is at once a record and a reflection of these changes. It is the joint work of our student research and editorial teams to record recent urban legal developments with rigour and clarity. Through such publications, the Centre continues its focus on promoting legal scholarship that informs policy, traverses disciplines, and critically engages with the realities of contemporary governance.

As we walk into an increasingly complicated urban future, it is increasingly important that we see development not simply as a yardstick of investment or infrastructure, but as a process imbued with fairness, participation, and sustainability. We hope this edition adds meaningfully to that conversation – one that imagines cities not as engines of growth alone, but as cities of justice and inclusion.

REAL ESTATE & HOUSING



Development Authority Cannot Penalize Allottee for Its Own Lapses: Allahabad HC in M/S Kinetic Buildtech Pvt. Ltd. v. State of U.P.

In *M/S Kinetic Buildtech Pvt. Ltd. v. State of U.P.*, the Allahabad High Court examined the validity of the Greater Noida Industrial Development Authority's (GNIDA) decision to cancel a group housing plot allotment and forfeit over ₹10.64 crores paid by the developer. The dispute stemmed from GNIDA's allotment of a 22,000 sq. m. plot to the petitioner under a lease agreement. The petitioner contended that the physical possession of land was never handed over to them and that the allotment merely existed on paper. had unilaterally changed the site layout through a letter, but never executed the required supplementary or correction deed. As a consequence, payment obligations and construction timelines could not be met until the corrected deed and actual possession were delivered. The petitioner therefore sought the quashing of orders passed by the Additional Chief Secretary of Uttar Pradesh and the CEO of GNIDA cancelling the allotment of land made to the petitioner.

The Court's discussion focused on the procedural lapses which plagued the entire process. The Court noted that there was no evidence indicating that a signed document attesting to possession was provided to the petitioners. It was noted that the objection letter relied upon by GNIDA to allege default by the petitioners had not been properly delivered. It was noted further that even though the site plan was revised by GNIDA, it did not carry out the required correction deed, regardless of repeated requests from the petitioners. The Court further noted that this conduct and the accompanying notice was arbitrary and contrary to the principle of natural justice, and that the Development Authority could not exact a penalty on the allottee for its own default.

The Court stressed the importance of procedural fairness, especially with such significant commercial interests at stake. Order can be read [here](#)

Karnataka RERA Orders ₹70 Lakh Refund to Homebuyers for Delay in Possession

In *Divya Balasubramaniam v. M/s Ozone Infra Developers Pvt. Ltd.*, the Karnataka Real Estate Regulatory Authority (K-RERA) examined the liability of the promoter for an inordinate delay in handing over possession of an apartment. The dispute arose from an agreement of sale between the homebuyer and the developer, with the agreed completion date of 1 June 2021.

The complainants had made an advance payment of Rs. 51 lakhs. However, even after 3 years had elapsed since the scheduled completion, possession was not handed over. Further, the promoter failed to provide any satisfactory updates or respond to homebuyer's communications, forcing the latter to approach the Regulatory Authority under Sections 18 and 19 of the Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act, 2016. In response, the complainants sought a reimbursement of the amount spent along with interest.

The Authority focused on the promoter's continued failure to comply, as well as a lack of any documentary support. It was observed that the documentation establishes that the sale agreement obligated the promoter to provide possession within the period set out in the agreement.

Further, the Authority concluded that the lack of possession of the apartment was a clear breach of both contract and their statutory obligations. The Authority further remarked that once the promoter had accepted an advance, the money should not be held indefinitely while not satisfying their obligations.

The Authority considered leading Supreme Court judgments in *Newtech Promoters v. State of Uttar Pradesh* and *Imperia Structures Ltd. v. Anil Patani*, in holding that an allottee has an unqualified right to withdraw from a delayed project and for a refund with interest, under section 18(1) of RERA. It ruled that the promoter's inability to secure possession within the time frame contemplated and issue any justification for the delay, was contrary to the purpose of RERA and violated buyers' legitimate expectations.

Accordingly, the Authority ordered the promoter to issue a refund of 70 lakhs, with interest and provided the promoter 60 days to comply and failure to comply would result in recovery proceedings under the Act. Order can be read [here](#)

TNRERA Issues New Guidelines to Regulate Real Estate Advertisements

Tamil Nadu Real Estate Regulatory Authority (TNRERA) has released a comprehensive set of guidelines with an aim to enhance transparency and curb misleading promotions in the real estate sector. The guidelines require promoters to ensure that all advertisements in print, electronic, and social media comply with prescribed disclosure norms. Key initiatives include 1) mandatory disclosure requirements; 2) Regulation of outdoor and electronic advertising; 3) clarity in content and; 4) penalties for violators.

To further the aim of transparency, the guidelines mandate all advertisements in newspapers, magazines, brochures and websites to clearly display the project's RERA registration number and QR Code. The guidelines specifically require these details to be mentioned either at the top or bottom corner of the advertisement in a legible font. Although classified ads are exempt from including QR codes, they must still bear the registration number.

To regulate advertisements, the Guidelines mandate outdoor hoardings, bus shelters and other vehicle-based ads must carry the same registration and website details in a legible format. Further, television and radio ads must explicitly state whether the project is "RERA registered." Social media advertisements must also include the project's registration number and link to the TNRERA website.

Further, to enhance clarity in content, the Guidelines preclude the promoters from using vague disclaimers such as “terms and conditions apply.” All claims are required to be clearly stated. The content must also include accurate location details, the promoter’s name, office address, and contact information. Projects that are exempt from registration (projects less than 500 sq. m. in area or with fewer than eight apartments) must state that they are exempted from RERA registration.

Lastly, the Guidelines seek to ensure compliance, as any breach of these guidelines will invite penalties under Sections 61 and 63 of the RERA. Such liabilities have also been extended to media houses to ensure compliance, failing which the Authority may initiate action proceedings against guilty entities.

Together, these guidelines aim to reinforce consumer protection and transparency in the real estate sector, ensuring that buyers make informed decisions while purchasing real estate. The guidelines can be read [here](#)

NCLT Indore Allows Reverse CIRP: Priority to Project Completion Over Liquidation in Real Estate Insolvency

In the present case, NCLT examined an application for the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP) commenced by 27 homebuyers against the developer of a residential project in Bhopal who were seeking to begin CIRP as the flats had not been delivered although a substantial sum of more than Rs. 7.9 crores had been paid in total. The dispute stemmed from a Builder-Buyer Agreement which promised possession within 24 to 36 months. The petitioner contended that the developer required additional payments and made unilateral changes to the project phases and timelines without receiving homebuyers' consent.

The developers argued that homebuyers were not “financial creditors,” as defined under section 5(7) of the IBC. Additionally, they claimed that over 85% of the project was complete and the rest was delayed due to outside issues, including COVID-19, and that some buyers had chosen alternative remedies before the Madhya Pradesh RERA. The developers urged that insolvency would not be in the best interest of the buyers, rather the project should proceed under Reverse CIRP mechanism with infusion of fresh funds.

It proposed that a sum of Rs. 4.5 crores be infused towards the completion of Towers A and B, with possession in 12 months and also agreed that all recoveries and sales proceeds would be placed in an escrow account, monitored jointly by representatives of homebuyers, management and an independent expert. After perusing the submissions, the Tribunal found that the homebuyers qualified as financial creditors under Section 5(8)(f) of the IBC, as they satisfied both the numerical and monetary thresholds under Section 7(1). It noted that the defaults were persisting and that such petitions seek project resolution, not mere recovery.

Other objections including limitation and parallel RERA proceedings were also rejected. However, the Tribunal was in agreement with the developer's submission that a CIRP would not serve the homebuyers' interests. Therefore, it allowed the project to proceed under Reverse CIRP, and appointed an Interim Resolution Professional (IRP) who would oversee the infusion of funds and progress of the project. The IRP was to file quarterly progress reports and ensure that the projects get completed within 9 months (extendable by 3 months).

Thus, the petition was accordingly allowed, while ensuring timely completion of the project and protection of homebuyers' rights over liquidation.

Order can be read [here](#).



LAND CONFLICT

Mushtaq Ahmad Jan & Ors Vs Govt. Of J&K, LPA No. 55 of 2024

In a Letters Patent Appeal, a division bench of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court held that the state cannot be permitted to invoke the plea on doctrine of adverse possession to provide legitimacy to unauthorised occupation of private land as such an action leads to violation of constitutional as well as basic human rights of the citizens.

The dispute arose as the land belonging to the appellants was taken possession of by the RDD in 1958 for construction of a block building. The possession was taken without following the due process of law and without payment of any compensation. The appellants then sought direction for the respondents to formally acquire the land as per the provisions of law to which the respondent contested citing delay and laches on grounds that the land was taken more than 62 years back and the suit was hopelessly time barred.

The primary issue before the division bench was whether the respondents could take the defense of adverse possession for its own failure to follow due process for acquisition of land.

The division bench relied on the judgment of the Supreme Court in the case of *Vidya Devi v. State of Himachal Pradesh*, (2020) 2 SCC 569 in which the Court laid down that the state cannot dispossess a citizen of its property without following the procedure established by law. The Court further held that the state being a welfare one, cannot be permitted to perfect its title over a piece of land by invoking the doctrine of adverse possession to grab the property of its own citizens.

The Court further noted that the action of forcibly occupying the land in 1958-59 was violative of the then applicable fundamental rights and after the 1978 amendment, continued to violate constitutional rights of the appellant. Accordingly, the Court directed the authorities to initiate acquisition proceedings under the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013.

MANOHAR AND OTHERS VERSUS THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA AND OTHERS, 2025 INSC 900

A division bench of the Supreme Court comprising of Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih held that the highest bona fide sale exemplar must be considered to fix the market value in land acquisition proceedings.

The dispute arose with regard to the land acquired in Village Pungala in district Parbhani in Maharashtra for the purpose of developing an industrial town near Jintur. The appellants were aggrieved by the compensation amount that was granted to them at the rate of Rs. 10800/- per acre and filed a reference under Section 18 of the 1894 Act which partially allowed the enhancement to Rs. 32,000/- per Acre. The appellants approached the High Court for further enhancement which led to a dismissal and a subsequent appeal to the Supreme Court

The primary issue with the Supreme Court was whether the appellants were entitled to compensation based on the highest sale exemplar presented by the appellants.

The court referred to the ruling in *Mehrawal Khewaji Trust (Registered), Faridkot and Others v. State of Punjab and Others*, (2012) 5 SCC 432 and notes that since the appellant's land was situated at the prime location, it deserved the benefit of highest sale exemplar.

The Court rejected the averaging principle on the grounds that the method of averaging the prices fetched by sales of different lands is generally not advisable and is only permissible in certain scenarios.

As a result, the Supreme Court allowed the appeals and increased the compensation granted to the appellants from Rs. 32,000/- to Rs. 58,320/- per Acre.

TENANCY & MIGRATION



1.DUSIB launches a Drive to provide Shelter to Slum Dwellers and clear its Land of any Encroachments

The Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) has launched a drive under which it will be conducting a survey of the land under its jurisdiction to determine the land which is encroached by slum dwellers. The drive aims to reclaim the land encroached by the slum dwellers and provide adequate housing to them under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).

Data reveals that there are about 675 slum clusters in Delhi, providing housing to around 50 lakh people, forming about 20% of the population. Of the 675 clusters, around 378 are situated on land belonging to central government agencies such as the Railways while the rest of the slums are situated on land managed by DUSIB, MCD and others. 0.5% of the area in Delhi houses this 20% of the total population in the area.

The drive will take effect by mapping of details such as the existing land use, number of households and total area of each cluster. This effort aims to build upon the *Delhi Slum & Jhuggi Jhopri Rehabilitation and Relocation Policy, 2015* which prioritises *in-situ* rehabilitation of the slums wherever possible. Under that policy, eligibility depends on the slum settlement being in existence before a cutoff date (for example before Jan 1, 2006), certain documentation (voter ID, etc.), non-ownership of another house, etc.

Similar drives in Mumbai and Kolkata reveal the advantages of in-situ rehabilitation over ex-situ rehabilitation as the former helps people stay near their original location, preserving their livelihood while the latter leads to loss of jobs, cost burdens and even people moving back to create new informal settlements.

2. PNB Housing Finance Limited v. Manoj Saha, 2025 INSC 847

A division bench of the Supreme Court of India, comprising of Justice P.S. Narasimha and Justice Joymalya Bagchi, on the 15th of July, 2025 held that a tenant cannot resist eviction under the SARFAESI Act unless the tenancy is established before the creation of the mortgage.

The dispute arose when the respondent claimed to be a tenant in a secured asset before the same was mortgaged. The respondent entered into an unregistered tenancy agreement in 1987 for five years, subsequent to which he remained as a monthly tenant. The property was mortgaged by the 2nd respondent in 2017. As the loan became an NPA and the appellant issued demand notice, the outstanding amount was not cleared and the appellant took symbolic possession as per the provisions of the SARFAESI Act. Thereafter, physical possession was taken as well by the appellant. The primary issue before the Supreme Court was whether the appellant could have taken possession of the property when the first respondent had a pre-existing tenancy right in the property.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court, allowing the appeal, overturned the decision of the High Court and restored the possession of the property to the appellant. The Court relied on *Bajarang Shyamsunder Agarwal v. Central Bank of India*, (2019) 9 SCC 94 and *Vishal Kalsaria v. Bank of India*, (2016) 3 SCC 762, which held that the tenants who claim their right in property through oral/unregistered agreements, must produce evidence to establish the claim of tenancy. Such proofs may include (rent receipts, tax receipts, electricity charges, etc.

Since the first respondent failed to prove any of such documents, it could not be established that he had a pre-existing tenancy and hence the Court allowed the appeal and evicted the tenant.

3. High Courts raise concern over the Tenants paying paltry rates of rent for properties leased out in localities with high rent.

A single bench of the Delhi High Court comprising of Justice Anup Jairam Bhambhani, in the case of Mrs Madhurbhashani & Ors v. Ranjit Singh. 2025:DHC:5120, recently raised concerns over the trend of financially well-off tenants continuing to occupy the landlord's property for decades, while paying a paltry amount as rent.

The dispute before the Court arose as the petitioners filed eviction petitions for two properties situated in Sadar Bazar, Delhi Cantonment. The properties in dispute were old constructions and fetched the petitioners paltry rents of Rs. 40/- per month.

Justice Bhambhani, on this trend remarked that this trend of unjustly occupying the premises at such rates and for such elongated periods is not justified. The Court stated this practice as egregious misuse of an anachronistic piece of legislation, namely the Delhi Rent Control Act, 1958.

In a similar instance, a single judge bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court comprising of Justice Deepak Gupta, granted eviction to the petitioner on a property which was leased out in 1970 for a rent of Rs. 225/- per month against the market rent of Rs. 10,00,000/- per month.

This reflects how certain provisions of the rent legislations of the region prove to be prejudicial to the interests of the landlord as the tenant is paying paltry amounts despite being a rich and affluent one. The rent legislations, originally drafted to protect vulnerable tenants are being misused by the well-off ones.

4. Rajasthan High Court calls for Structural Reforms in Revenue Courts which decide Land Ownership and Tenancy Rights without any Judicial Training

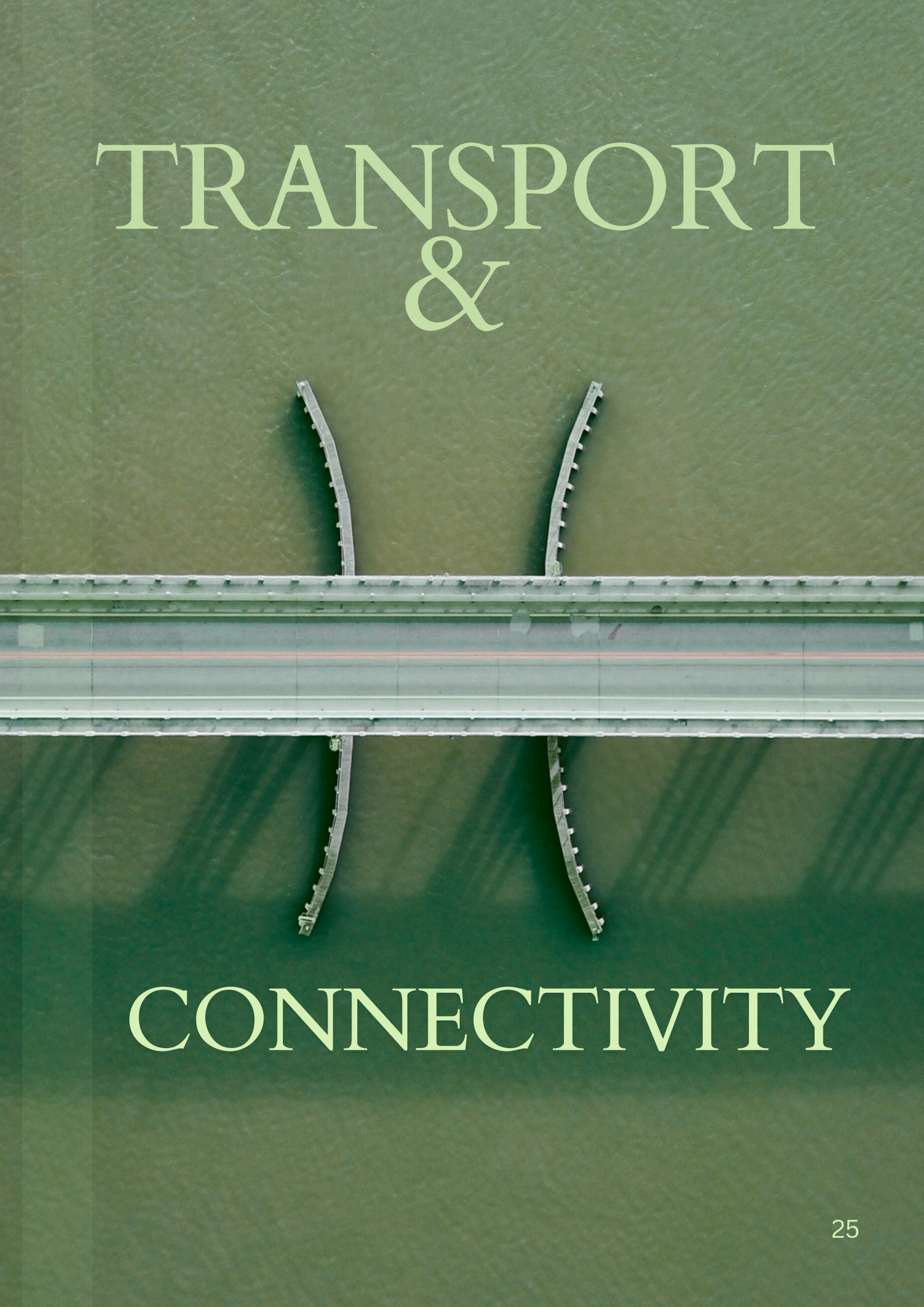
A single judge bench of the Rajasthan High Court comprising of Justice Anoop Kumar Dhand, observing the Lack of Judicial Training among the Revenue Court Officers called for structural reforms in the form of proactive and corrective measures.

The Hon'ble judge pointed out that the revenue courts are presided over by administrative officers other than judicially trained judges, who function as the first point of access to justice for millions of rural citizens. The Court noted that the revenue officers impact not just the lives of the litigants but their next generations as well, necessitating efficiency at that stage.

The Court suggested the following steps for effective administration of justice:

- Development of Revenue Courts of Rajasthan as Fully Digital Institutions
- Need to create a Rajasthan Revenue Courts Data Grid or Virtual Justice Clock for display of real-time statistics on pendency of cases and promotion of timely and expeditious disposal of cases.
- Providing structured training to the revenue officers to enhance overall effectiveness and fairness of judicial proceedings.
- Dedicated Administrative Judicial Academy to be set up at the state level for continuous professional development of officers.

- SOP to be formulated and implemented for Revenue Courts for ensuring expeditious disposal of cases.
- Mechanism required to be formulated to ensure time bound disposal of cases in Revenue Courts, and presence of an effective monitoring system over their functioning. A quota system required to be introduced mandating disposal of specified number of cases, particularly old targeted cases, on priority basis, and accordingly, same to be reflected in the Annual Confidential Reports of these officers.
- Like Civil Court, Revenue Courts should be directed to promote Alternate Disputes Resolution Mechanism to reduce burden of litigation and facilitate amicable settlement.
- An online portal to be introduced as “Revenue Cases Computerized Management System” (RCCMS) to effectively track the disposal and quantity of revenue judgments.
- Law journal related to Revenue procedural laws along with Legal handbooks and pocket guides of procedural laws to be provided to the field officers posted at Revenue Courts.
- Government should consider amending the relevant rules to introduce a procedure for conducting comprehensive examinations for posting of officers in Revenue Courts to check and test their legal acumen.

An aerial photograph of a multi-lane bridge spanning a body of water. The bridge has a grey concrete deck and metal railings. Two large, curved, metallic structures are visible on the bridge's surface, possibly part of a maintenance or construction equipment. The water is a dark, textured green. The title 'TRANSPORT &' is overlaid in a light green, serif font at the top.

TRANSPORT
&

CONNECTIVITY

- Delhi Enforces Fuel Ban on Old Vehicles from July 1

From July 1, 2025, Delhi has stopped supplying fuel to end-of-life vehicles. This category includes diesel vehicles that are older than 10 years and petrol vehicles that are older than 15 years. The enforcement follows long-pending directives of the Supreme Court (2018) and the National Green Tribunal (2014) directing the phasing out of high-polluting vehicles. The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has deployed Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at nearly 500 fuel stations across the city. These systems have been put in place in order to instantly verify registration details with the VAHAN database to deny fuel to non-compliant vehicles. Joint teams of the Transport Department, Traffic Police, and MCD have been stationed at high-traffic pumps, with vehicles impounded on the spot in case of violations.

The scale of this is quite significant. Delhi has over 80 lakh registered vehicles, and about 62 lakh would fall into this “end-of-life” category. Experts warn that while the transport sector contributes nearly 28% of PM2.5 emissions in Delhi, age-based bans may not be the most scientific solution. Critics argue that a poorly maintained newer car may pollute more than a well-kept older one.

Policy Takeaway: Clean air demands systemic solutions. While Delhi's fuel ban is a bold start, lasting impact will depend on coupling it with scrappage incentives, robust public transport, and emission-based regulation.

- Delhi's Fuel Ban on Old Vehicles Faces Pause After Public Pushback

What began as a decisive environmental measure quickly turned into one of Delhi's most contested policies. On July 1, 2025, the city began enforcing a ban on the sale of petrol and diesel to end-of-life vehicles, defined as petrol vehicles older than 15 years and diesel vehicles older than 10 years. The decision stemmed from directions of the Supreme Court (2018) and National Green Tribunal (2014), which sought to curb vehicular pollution in the capital.

The government installed Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at over 350 fuel stations to detect non-compliant vehicles. Joint enforcement teams from the Transport Department, Traffic Police, and the Municipal Corporation of Delhi were deployed to ensure compliance, and several vehicles were impounded on the first day.

However, the act was met with immediate resistance. Over 62 lakh vehicles were affected, and many owners were not even aware of their registrations being expired. Long queues and confusion at fuel stations caused public anger, while small business owners and delivery drivers argued that the rule unfairly targeted those without resources to buy new vehicles. Several technical faults, including inaccurate number plate readings and database mismatches, worsened the problem.

On July 4, the Delhi government wrote to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) seeking a suspension of the ban. The CAQM subsequently deferred its enforcement until November 1, 2025, citing the need to address “technological shortcomings and cross-border fuel misuse.” It also emphasised that the rule must be rolled out simultaneously across Delhi and nearby NCR districts such as Gurugram, Noida, and Ghaziabad.

What Lies Ahead

Officials now face the dual challenge of refining the ANPR system and ensuring fairness in enforcement. Experts have suggested supplementing age-based limits with emissions-based testing and expanding the vehicle scrappage incentive scheme. For millions of Delhi residents who depend on older vehicles for their livelihood, the coming months will determine whether the fuel ban becomes a tool for cleaner air or another instance of environmental policy outpacing social preparedness.

Policy Reflection: Environmental governance must move at the speed of justice while balancing the urgency of cleaner air with the rights and realities of those it seeks to regulate.

- Parliament Passes the Bills of Lading Bill, 2025

Parliament has passed the Bills of Lading Bill, 2025, marking a major step toward modernising India's maritime legal framework. The legislation replaces the colonial-era Indian Bills of Lading Act, 1856, which has governed the shipping sector for over a century and a half.

The new Act simplifies and reorganises the law governing bills of lading — the key documents issued by carriers that record the type, quantity, condition, and destination of goods being transported. It clarifies the rights and liabilities of shippers, consignees, and endorsees, ensuring that ownership and responsibility are clearly defined at every stage of the transaction.

Introducing the Bill in the Rajya Sabha, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal described it as part of a broader effort to align India's shipping laws with international standards. The government has said that the new framework will make the sector more transparent, reduce litigation, and lead to a rise in ease of doing business.

The 1856 Act was a short, three-section statute that provided limited guidance on modern shipping practices. The 2025 legislation instead introduces a comprehensive framework that allows the central government to issue implementation directions, includes a repeal and saving clause, and removes outdated colonial terminology .

This reform comes amid India's wider maritime development vision under the Sagarmala programme, which focuses on port modernisation and coastal connectivity. The government believes the new Act will strengthen India's position in global trade and support its ambition of becoming a leading shipbuilding and logistics hub by 2047.

Policy Reflection: Replacing a 169-year-old statute with a modern, transparent framework signals India's shift from colonial legal remnants toward a globally competitive maritime regime.

- Parliamentary Panel Calls for Stronger Regional Transit Planning as Namo Bharat Network Expands

While India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) prepares for full-scale operations, Parliament's Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs has urged the government to strengthen planning and integration in urban transport. In its July 2025 report on the "Regional Rapid Transit System and the Role of NCRTC," the Committee has called for expanding the mandate of the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) beyond Delhi-NCR to other metropolitan regions as well.

The report showed that urbanisation and population growth are rapidly extending to beyond the city limits. This makes regional connectivity a key to sustainable mobility. It noted that only one of the eight proposed RRTS corridors has been fully sanctioned so far, underscoring the need for faster approval of projects and regional plans, including the long-pending Delhi-NCR Regional Plan 2041. The panel also recommended the creation of Unified Metropolitan Transport Authorities (UMTAs) in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh to ensure integrated policy and planning for metro, rail, and bus networks.

The Committee's findings came in the midst of NCRTC gearing for expansion of the Namo Bharat network, which currently operates between Delhi, Ghaziabad, and Meerut. The system's 82-km corridor reduces travel time between Delhi and Meerut to under an hour and connects seamlessly with metro lines, bus terminals, and railway stations.

With trains capable of 180 km/h and featuring business, economy, and women's coaches, Namo Bharat exemplifies a new benchmark for high-speed, commuter-centric public transport. Yet, as India's metro network surpasses 1,000 km across 20 cities, experts caution that rapid expansion must be matched with quality maintenance, equitable access, and regional planning that ensures smaller cities share in this mobility revolution.

Policy Reflection: Infrastructure growth must move from city-centric expansion to region-centric planning, ensuring that the benefits of rapid transit extend to every citizen.

- Delhi Metro's New Corridor Aligns with Gati Shakti Vision for Seamless Urban Mobility.

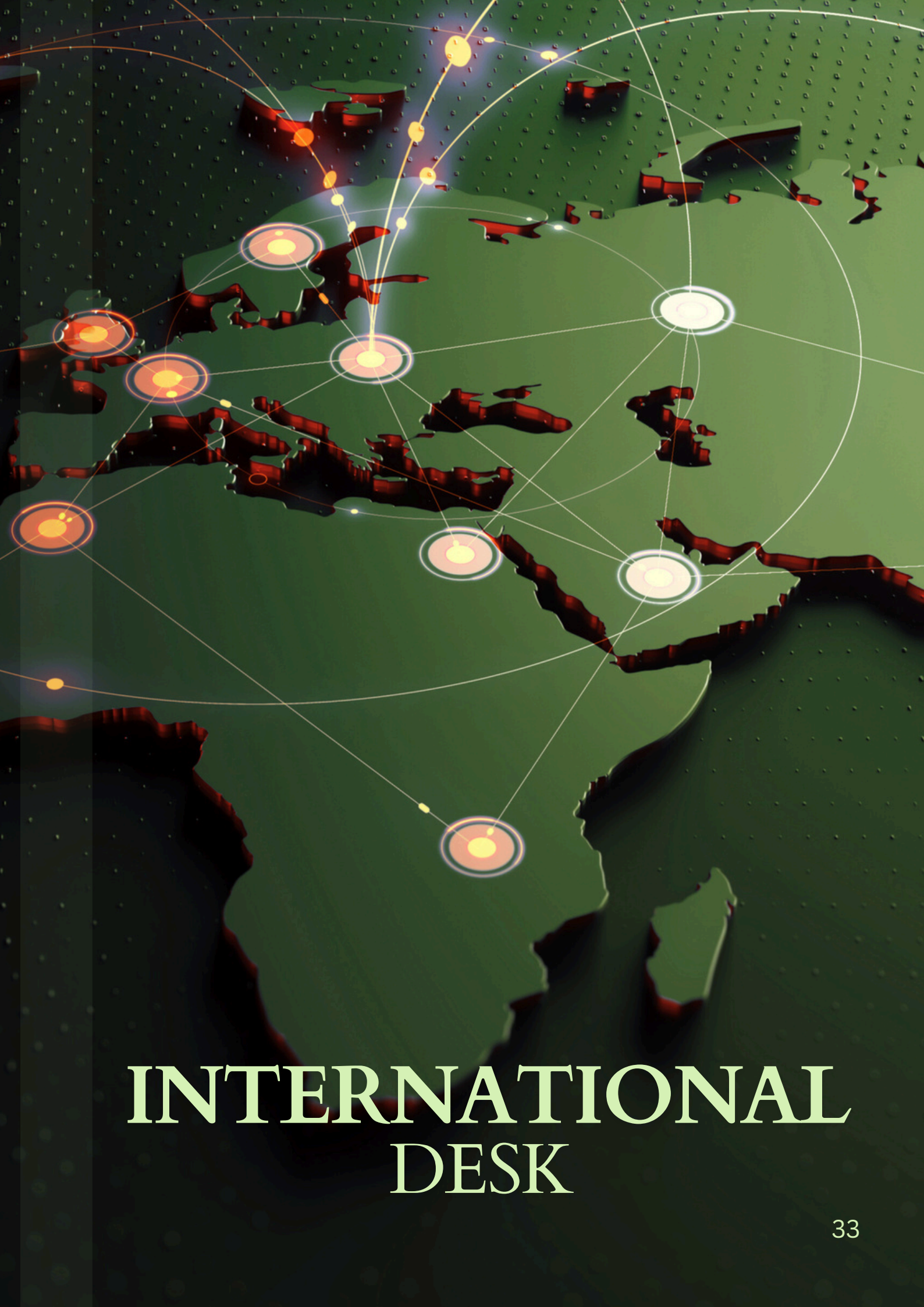
The Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) has secured its first Delhi Metro contract under Phase IV, which is a 7.3 km elevated corridor linking Lajpat Nagar to Saket G Block through seven stations, including Chirag Delhi and Andrews Ganj. Valued at ₹447 crore, the project will be completed within 36 months and is expected to decongest South Delhi's arterial routes while enhancing last-mile connectivity.

RVNL's entry into Delhi's metro network marks an institutional broadening of rail-based urban development under the Ministry of Railways, linking metro expansion with national transport planning. Officials noted that the project reflects RVNL's growing role in building "future-ready, sustainable transport infrastructure" across eight Indian cities.

The corridor also exemplifies the PM Gati Shakti – the National Master Plan for Multi-modal Connectivity, launched to synchronise 16 ministries through a shared GIS-based platform. The initiative integrates schemes such as Bharatmala, Sagarmala, and UDAN to ensure that roads, rail, ports, and urban transit are planned holistically rather than in silos. Its six-pillar framework promotes optimisation, synchronisation, and dynamic real-time monitoring of major projects.

When seen through this lens, Delhi Metro's Phase-IV expansion is more than a transport upgrade. It is a test case of coordinated infrastructure governance under Gati Shakti — demonstrating how spatial data and inter-ministerial collaboration can translate into tangible improvements in city mobility.

Policy Reflection: The integration of Gati Shakti principles into metro expansion signals a shift from piecemeal urban development to coordinated, evidence-driven planning that prioritises efficiency, sustainability, and commuter experience.



INTERNATIONAL DESK

Federal Government Spearheading New Housing and Land Use Policy in the States

The United States is facing an affordable housing crisis. The federal government has decided to step back into land use policy. The ROAD to Housing Act of 2025 was introduced recently in the Senate and seeks to dismantle regulatory barriers, initiate pro housing reforms, streamline housing production among other things. This decision of the federal government to re-enter into the sphere of land use policy came as it became evidently clear that without government intervention, local regulatory mechanisms and zoning restrictions would persistently restrict the supply of affordable housing and keep homes out of reach for common people.

The most conspicuous feature of the legislation is its emphasis on land use and zoning, which are areas which had erstwhile been left to local governments. It was last in the 1920s when the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act was implemented, that the government had intervened in a similar manner. Now, the federal government again seeks to assert a more proactive role in shaping the growth of American cities. Other provisions and research by the legislation include funding for local zoning reform, promotion of preapproved housing designs in order to limit red tape restrictions, and incentives to build near transit corridors by way of adopting tools, such as reduced parking minimum and increased density allowances.

The bill also introduces an innovation fund for cities. This is to help the cities, expand supply of housing, ensure environmental compliances for small scale projects, and especially focus on programmes to transform vacant properties into affordable homes. There is also an effort through this bill to modernise existing Federal housing tools such as the rental assistance demonstration program. There is also an endeavour to increase accountability and transparency, which includes the implementation of measures such as congressional testimony from housing, regulators, and oversight of housing agencies.

This legislation indicates a tangible shift towards making housing a prerogative of the federal government beyond the mere control of local governments. This is because the issue of local land use in light of lack of affordable housing has become a national economic and social issue for the United States.

Cohesion Policy at the Crossroads of EU Budget Considerations

The European Commission announced its proposals on the post-2027 EU budget on 16 July, yet city-leaders were concerned that there would be a serious gap: risk of loss of Cohesion Policy, Europe's most effective instrument to balance its territory, at a time when cities are under increasing pressure of climate change, inequality and geopolitical turmoil. The Eurocities network especially claimed that the future of green, digital, and social transitions of the EU would be hampered in the absence of a renewed Cohesion Policy.

Cohesion Policy is the EU's foremost investment policy which aims to minimize the differences between regions, enhance solidarity, and achieve equal development in Europe. Conventionally contributing about 1/3rd of the EU budget, it funds infrastructure, innovation and social projects, and the notion of subsidiarity, namely the decisions made as close to the citizens as possible, is central to this approach. City leaders want not only that this budget line is saved as of 2028-2034, but also urbanised: a mandatory urban chapter in national plans, with at least 15% to city interests.

The problem nonetheless remains that the EU is now tilted towards competitiveness and industrial policy. Suggestions of Enrico Letta on the Single Market and Mario Draghi on competitiveness propose radical changes, but they might put cohesion on the backburner.

European city mayors on the other hand emphasize that competitiveness and cohesion should not be separated by a thin thread, and they should be met in practice in cities, where more than three quarters of the European population live. Centralisation of funding and the transmission of funds mostly via national governments may lead to cities being viewed as recipients and not strategic partners which undermines the capacity of the EU to provide place-based outcomes.

City leaders are laying out reforms beyond the level of funding. They demand the binding application of the principle of partnership i.e. the need to co-decide with cities in investment planning and more powerful tools such as Integrated Territorial Investments (ITI) and Sustainable Urban Development (SUD). Even smaller municipalities would be enabled to use EU-wide ambitions through the provision of a simplified funding framework through a sense of trust, alongside technical support and direct connection with funds. As the EU budget debate unfolds, the message is clear: Europe cannot meet its climate, social, and competitiveness objectives without cities at the helm.

California Expands Housing Protections and Streamlines ADU Regulations Through New Legislation

California has enacted a new legislation, focusing on wide-ranging housing measures to improve affordability, strengthen borrower protections and streamlining approval process. The primary features of the law are: 1) the promotion of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Junior ADUs (JADUs); 2) Protections for Borrowers with Subordinate Mortgages; 3) Seismic Retrofitting of Affordable Multifamily Housing and; 4) Surplus Land and Institutional Properties

The law strengthens state pre-emption over local ordinances that restrict ADU and JADU construction. The Act prohibits financial barriers from being listed as “reasonable restrictions” and removes provisions that allow local agencies to impose design or development standards. The bill ensures faster ministerial approval of ADUs, reducing local discretion and CEQA review hurdles, thereby reinforcing the state’s mandate for by-right housing approvals.

To protect the interests of borrowers with subordinate mortgages, the Act prohibits a variety of conduct, including a failure to communicate for extended periods of time by mortgage servicers. Servicers must also certify compliance with these rules before commencing foreclosure procedures, under penalty of perjury, to ensure that borrowers are protected from improper foreclosures.

Further, the legislative measure directs state resources to retrofit affordable multifamily housing units with a high earthquake risk. The provision seeks to protect residents by focusing on lower-income housing and in turn is intended to promote long-term affordability.

Lastly, school districts will now have to follow the state's surplus land rules when selling or leasing property, which means affordable housing projects must be given priority. The bill also makes it easier to build housing on land owned by churches, faith-based groups, and colleges by clarifying the rules for "by-right" development. Like ADUs, these projects will move forward through a streamlined process and won't get held up by lengthy CEQA reviews, helping cut down approval times and get projects built faster.

The legislation shows California's push for a balanced housing strategy. It streamlines approvals under CEQA, strengthens protections for borrowers and homeowners, and directs resources toward making affordable housing more resilient.

ICJ Affirms Binding Climate Obligations of States in Landmark Advisory Opinion

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) delivered its long-anticipated Advisory Opinion on the obligations of States in respect of Climate Change. The request was referred jointly by the UN General Assembly in 2023, following sustained advocacy from small island States most at risk from climate impacts. There were two broad issues before the Court: (i) what are the obligations of State under International Law to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment from emissions of greenhouse gases for States and for present and future generations? (ii) What are the legal consequences under international law if States, by their acts or omissions, cause significant harm to the climate system?

The ICJ observed that under the current regime of International Law, States are legally bound to prevent the degradation of the environment. It affirmed that the obligations of States apply universally and extend to both direct and indirect actions or omissions contributing to anthropogenic emissions. Under Customary norms, duties to prevent significant harm and to cooperate were found to be binding. Principles such as sustainable development and intergenerational equity were found to be guiding factors in this regard.

The Court held that States have strict due diligence obligations under customary and treaty law. Under the Paris Agreement, every State has to develop and follow nationally determined contributions (NDCs) in line with its highest possible ambition with respect to scientific evidence and equity.

Additionally, obligations such as mitigation, cooperation and assistance were held to be binding with a focus on due diligence and collective responsibility. The Court also trawled the interlinkage between International Human Rights Law and climate commitments, asserting a right to clean, healthy, and sustainable environment as an inherent component of rights to life, health, and adequate living conditions.

Finally, the Court addressed the issue of state responsibility. It clarified that States in breach of the obligations mentioned above are subject to international responsibility. Such responsibilities can be incurred by lack of action in due diligence, be it through direct emissions or through insufficient control of private actors. The ICJ reiterated that principles of attribution, causation, and reparation have to be based on well-established norms of State responsibility and held that climate protection was a collective legal and ethical obligation under International Law.

This judgment is of historic significance, as it elevates climate duties into binding legal obligations under International Law and provides a legal footing for vulnerable States and communities pressing for stronger climate action. The advisory opinion can be read [here](#).

HEALTHCARE & SANITATION



India Health Exhibition 2025: At the Crossroad of MedTech, Innovation and Collaboration.

Informa Markets India has declared that India Health Exhibition 2025 will make a comeback to be held between 11 and 13 July in Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The second edition is expected to be larger and more effective in the future, following the successful first one in 2024, with over 300 exhibitors and over 8,000 healthcare professionals expected to attend.

Based on the internationally known WHX-Dubai (previously Arab Health), India Health is already becoming a flagship of the healthcare ecosystem of the country. It is also highly timed considering that the healthcare sector in India is expected to attain USD 638 billion by 2030 due to its growing demand, digitalization, and favourable policy changes. Public-Private Partnership (PLI) schemes and sound investment in research and development are likely to drive the MedTech sector to reach a market size of USD 50 billion alone.

Among the brands that will be exhibited at the 2025 edition will include Marengo Hospitals, Midmark, Italian Medtech Association, DKS Ortho, and Pharmalab.

The event will include medical devices, diagnostics, orthopaedics, information technology systems, and wellness solutions with 95-percent of the players being Indian companies and 5 percent being international players. Two new highlights are the Start - Up and Medical Laboratory Pavilion and a B2B matchmaking application that will help organize the networking of buyers and sellers.

Alongside the exhibition are two knowledge platforms that are running. More than 25 speakers will be at the Global MedTech Connect which focuses on topics including U.S. tariff pressures, ISO13485 and Indian MDR alignment, IMDRF membership and refurbished medical devices guidelines. One of the parallel tracks will include more than 50 speakers who will speak about artificial intelligence in diagnostics, preventive genetics, digital healthcare, sustainability, and entrepreneurship.

India Health 2025 is aligned to Make in India initiative and Digital Health Mission with the support of associations like AIMED, ADAMI, AHPI, EPCMD and MTAI. The exhibition will be a very important venue of innovation, cooperation and international alliances as India continues to build its healthcare capabilities and increase medical tourism.

UGC Bans Online and Online Degree Healthcare Programmes 2025-26.

All higher education institutions (HEIs) have been instructed by the University Grants Commission (UGC) to abandon healthcare and allied programmes including Psychology, Microbiology, Biotechnology, Food and Nutrition Science, Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics offered through online or Open and Distance Learning (ODL) programs starting July 2025.

This has been determined, ratified by the UGC in its 592nd meeting of 23 July 2025, based on recommendations by the Distance Education Bureau Working Group. The policy is in place, based on the National Commission for Allied and Healthcare Professions (NCAHP) Act, 2021, which notes that stricter regulation and professional accreditation of healthcare education is necessary.

As a result, HEIs that had earlier received sanction to deliver such courses online will lose the sanction. Institutions are also forbidden to accept new students to such programmes in the academic cycle of 202526. Where multi-specialisation degrees are involved, only those streams related to healthcare will be impacted; e.g., a BA with multiple majors will no longer have Psychology as one of the components of online or ODL education.

At the same time, the UGC has reaffirmed its stance on the unrecognised foreign collaborations and added that any degree and diploma awarded in the course of partnerships not expressly approved in the 2022 and 2023 joint and dual-degree frameworks will not be recognized in India. This position follows on the heels of previous warnings, such as a December 2023 warning that many EdTech sites and organizations were not listening.

Analysts believe that the prohibition is aimed at protecting students against acquiring a qualification that lacks job market or higher education relevance especially in highly sensitive areas of health care where hands-on instruction is essential. The directive is also a reflection of the greater efforts of the regulator to strengthen regulation of the rapidly growing online education industry.

Through such actions, the UGC will send out a message that it intends to abide by the rules and that it is determined to maintain the integrity of healthcare education in India.

CarePay Introduces AI-powered EMI Finance System Careena to fill the healthcare payment gap in India.

The increased cost of healthcare and low insurance coverage, which stands at approximately 36% of the population in India, places millions of people in financial jeopardy in medical emergencies. To help overcome this problem, fintech innovator CarePay has launched Careena, an artificial intelligence based healthcare EMI software platform, which aims to make medical financing more open, comfortable, and patient focused.

A short form of CARE Engagement Assistant, Careena takes advantage of artificial intelligence to automate and speed up the process of financing. Evaluating factors like ones employment, education and their income, the platform provides immediate eligibility checks and approvals up to 10 lakhs in a matter of minutes- a process that used to take days by tradition.

We are determined to break the barrier of finances that hinder the ability to get timely medical intervention. Careena is not just a digital product, but a healthcare-financing companion that ensures quality care at the right time that is never a financial burden, Gaurav Gupta, CEO of CarePay, said.

Key features of this system includes EMI options of 0%, with partner hospitals covering the interest expenses to improve patient acquisition; Risk assessment by use of AI, which guarantees correct and fast loan approvals. Also, with the new mobile-first design, it provides ease of access and integration with the hospital systems along with strong data protection and compliance with regulatory measures.

The CarePay platform already has over 550 wellness centres, 1,500 clinics and 30 major hospitals as well as five multinational healthcare companies and 25 chronic-care facilities they have partnered with.

CarePay was established in 2023 and is quickly becoming a leader in the B2B2C healthcare financing market, enabling healthcare providers with patient payment plans that are flexible and simplify their operations. The company, with Careena as its center, is transforming the relationship between the patient and provider in financial decision-making processes, and thus, opens up the path to an inclusive and technology-driven healthcare-financing ecosystem in India.

Global Health Round-Up: UN Summit Aims to Fill Finance Gaps, Gavi on Track to meet Vaccination Targets, Suriname is Going Malaria-Free.

In the past two weeks, the world of global health has seen several remarkable events, including radical changes in the United Nations, as well as some significant progress in the funding of vaccines and the elimination of diseases.

Of particular focus in the world was the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FFD4) which opened on 30 June in Seville, Spain. The Seville Commitment was a political commitment signed by the representatives of 193 member states to reduce the 4 trillion per year financing deficit in the US on development and health. The initiative suggests three times the multilateral lending, expansion of debt relief arrangements, improvement of tax income in low-income countries, and establishment of new solidarity levies, such as excising luxury travel and activities with high emissions. UN Secretary-General António Guterres highlighted the necessity of these actions noting that two-thirds of the Sustainable Development Goal indicators are still not achieved, and 3.3 billion citizens of nations where debt servicing is more significant than health spending live.

Meanwhile, the Global Summit on Health 2 Immunization in Brussels created a momentum that was strong in support of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

International leaders, philanthropists and private-sector partners have made contributions of more than US 9 billion to Gavi 11.9 billion Gavi target of 2026-2030. Other commitments included 4.5 billion dollars to be used as compliments to fund national health systems, expected cost reductions on life-saving vaccines, and approximately 800 million to expedite the production of vaccines in Africa. The aggregate commitments make Gavi a strides closer to ensuring that 500 million children are safe against preventable diseases though some key donors were not represented.

At the same time, the World Health Organization declared Suriname malaria-free, the first Amazonian nation to do so after nearly 70 years of targeted work. Suriname is thus officially declared a malaria-free state and adds to 46 just as sovereign states and 1 territory in the world that officially declare themselves malaria-free.

All these events contribute to highlighting the fact of consistent stumbling blocks and the steps toward the specified direction, which are the reason why the process of financing reforms, immunization pledges, and critical achievements in the prevention of infectious illnesses have been achieved.

ENERGY WATCH



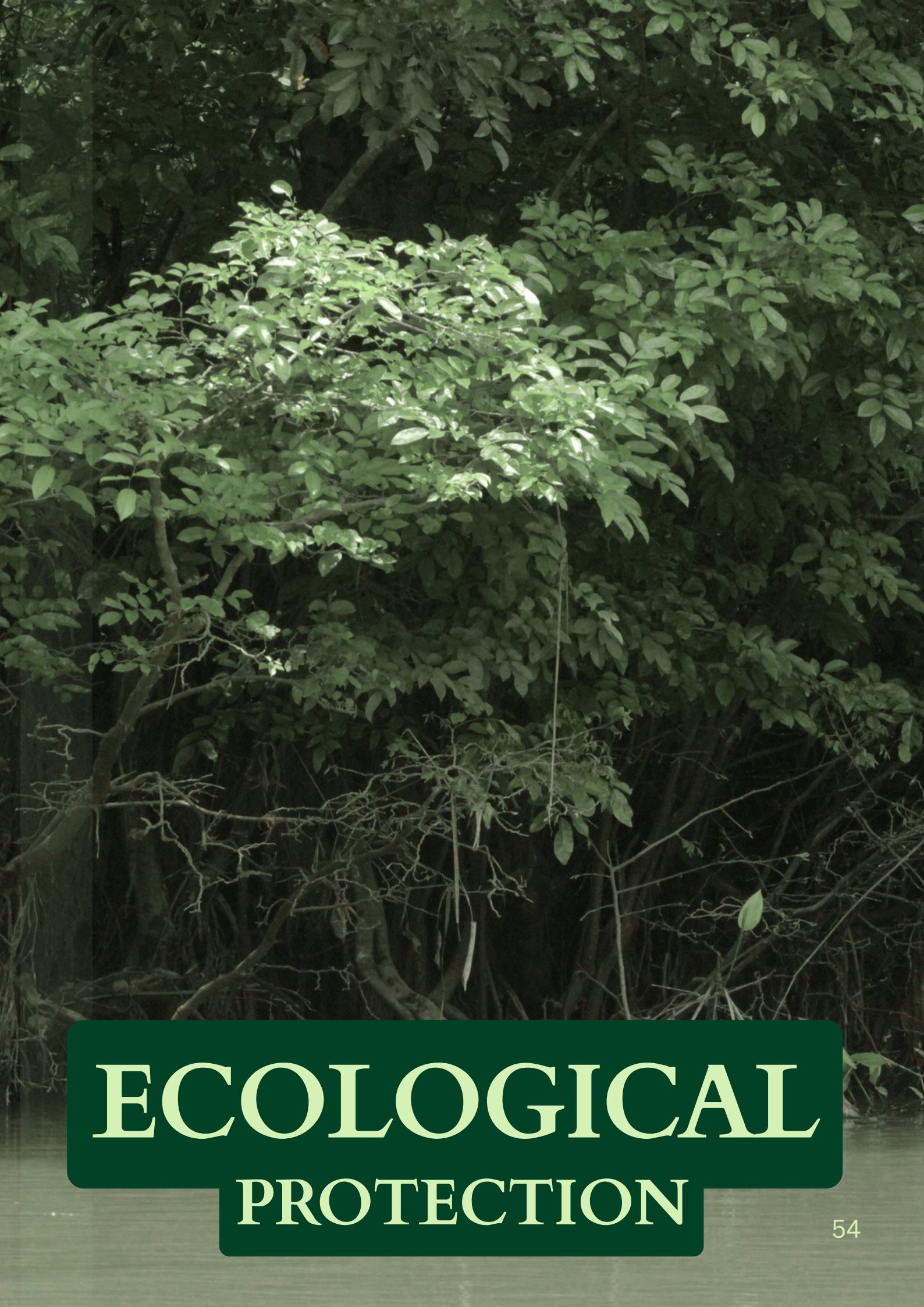
India's Investor-led Push for Renewable Energy

The Indian Venture and Alternate Capital Association organised the inaugural IVCA Renewable Energy Summit 2025 on 15th July in Mumbai. The aim of the summit was to increase funding, in innovation and collaboration in the renewable energy space. India, in the last few decades has emerged as a lucrative market for renewable energy as it is both a major consumer as well as a major producer of renewable energy. Particularly considering the increasing concerns of climate change, India posits itself as an attractive destination for clean energy investments for Indian as well as global investors. The summit was thus to capitalise on this transforming nature and profit potential of the renewable energy sector in India.

The summit included among its participants several policymakers, regulators, renewable energy companies, tech developers, entrepreneurs, corporates and most importantly domestic as well as international innovators in the clean energy sector. The sessions of the summit particularly focused on themes such as accelerating clean power finance in India, the role of renewables in enabling EVs, AI, green hydrogen and clean infrastructure, innovations in energy storage, grid tech and hybrid energy systems and policy perspectives for accelerating clean energy deployment.

According to industry leaders, India is still half-way through its energy transition—renewables currently constitute nearly half of the generation base, but to get further, the gaps between the suppliers of capital developers and regulators need to be narrowed. The summit discourse did not stop at the conventional solar and wind energy debates but instead moved to innovative areas like green hydrogen, electric mobility, waste and water management, sustainable fuels, and solutions based on the circular economy. It is envisaged that these developments will especially transform the way transport, waste, and consumption of energy are handled in Indian cities.

For urban law and development, the Summit is an indication of change: clean energy has ceased to be an environmental adjunct but an economic growth, infrastructure planning and legal framework pillar. Sustainability imperatives will continue to be intertwined in investment strategies, zoning laws and regulatory designs. The IVCA Summit is therefore not only a capital market trend but a bigger change—whereby the future of urban India is being redefined in terms of financing and governance of renewable energy.



ECOLOGICAL PROTECTION

The Supreme Court flags forest clearance by bulldozers overnights during pendency of the case

On 23 July 2025, the Supreme Court through Chief Justice BR Gavai, while considering a suo motu case of deforestation in the Kancha Gachibowli forest area in Hyderabad (Telangana), remarked that using bulldozers to clear a forest area overnight cannot be termed as sustainable development. The Court also warned the concerned state authorities of contempt proceedings and temporary imprisonment as the Court considered the act over the long weekend to be a misuse of power to bulldoze the region.

The case arises out of a government order issued by the Telangana State Industrial Infrastructure Corporation in 2024 seeking to alienate the land which includes 400 acres of green cover in the Kancha Gachibowli forest area for setting up IT infrastructure. For this, widescale tree clearance was initiated due which was protested against by the citizens there and various PILs were filed. The PIL petitioners had argued that not only was the project continuing without an environmental assessment and nor was the state proceedings in compliance of two Supreme Court judgments namely, *TN Godavarman Thirumulpad v. Union of India* and *Ashok Kumar Sharma v. Union of India* which mandated all states were directed to form committees for identification of forest and forest-like areas before commencement of projects of the kind. 55

The case was listed further for August 13th 2025 where the state informed the Court that it was looking for an alternative and coming up with a better proposal for its IT site and considering sustainable development.

While the Court's intervention in the matter was certainly laudable, the Court's ready acceptance of the State's as yet uncertain alternative proposal without any actions against the officials who disregarded the Court's guidelines and felled the trees over the weekend looks over the need for fastening liability to convey the urgency of the matter. It remains to be seen whether the State's proposal will adequately address the concerns of all the parties especially the communities who will be adversely affected. Read the order [here](#).

Mangrove Coalition launched to strengthen India's coastal cities from climate risks

A Mangrove Coalition has been established in the country for shielding Indian coastal cities from the dangers of climate change. This coalition is all about uniting the fight to conserve mangroves, and does so by valuing the importance of nature, engaging with the community, and making science accessible to the public.

Well-known citizen science initiative Mangrove Mitras in Mumbai is one of the coalition's major undertakings, and gets people living in cities and towns to monitor the health of their mangroves, document the variety of life, spread the word, and back the restoration of these ecosystems.

The coalition is also supported by WWF-India, the Mangrove Cell, and the Maharashtra Mangrove Foundation who are all working together to develop a standardized "Mangrove Health Assessment Protocol" that takes into account ecological, hydrological and economic factors to refine the conservation plans.

The coalition is essentially a master plan to bring together different stakeholders, residents, NGOs, researchers and politicians who can all work towards protecting and restoring these ecosystems, and it couldn't be more necessary because urbanisation, rising sea levels and powerful storms are putting a lot of pressure on our mangroves. It highlights their role as natural barriers against extreme weather events and important carbon sinks. The coalition wants to close the gap between research, policy, and grassroots engagement by encouraging teamwork in monitoring, restoring, and using mangrove ecosystems sustainably.

A key part of this effort is the Mangrove Mitras program, which was launched earlier in Mumbai. This program empowers citizens and local communities to help map, monitor, and restore mangrove areas through citizen science. It documents biodiversity and raises awareness and responsibility among urban populations that rely on coastal ecosystems for their livelihoods and protection. [Read more here.](#)

Amid rising ecological threats, Pune's NGT Bench becomes the Second-Busiest in India after Delhi

Pune's Western Zone National Green Tribunal's (NGT) Bench has become the second-busiest NGT bench in India as it deals with increasing ecological threats and rising public use of legal remedies for environmental harm. Over June 2024 to May 2025, 632 petitions were filed with this bench which is part of a total of 4,204 cases filed nationwide.

Of those 632, 368 cases have been resolved, while 1,247 remain pending including older and new petitions. The Principal Bench in Delhi remains the busiest with 2,218 petitions in the same time frame. Other benches (Chennai, Bhopal, Kolkata) have fewer cases in comparison. The Western Bench (Pune) has jurisdiction over Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, and the union territories of Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli.

As ecological damage, unregulated development, and civic governance failures (unauthorised construction, pollution, encroachments, illegal mining, lack of environmental clearances) grow, citizens, activists, and lawyers are increasingly using the NGT bench to seek redress. While the rise in filings shows good awareness and willingness to hold parties accountable and resorting to legal measures, several stakeholders express concern over delays and inefficiencies. Legal practitioners argue that the Pune bench's work culture needs reform, pointing out more technical and procedural hurdles which may dilute the bench's ability to address core environmental issues swiftly. Read more [here](#).

IISc Study concludes that only 3% green cover left in Bengaluru

A new study from the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) has shown that Bengaluru's green cover has dropped to just 3%. This is a sharp decline from about 70% in 1970.

Rapid urban development has largely caused this loss. Infrastructure projects like roads and metro lines, the "white-topping" of roads, large-scale tree cutting, and other changes in land use have all contributed. The decline in greenery is creating serious environmental and public health issues. Bengaluru is turning into a heat island. This decline in greenery and the consequence change is leading to rising temperatures, reduced biodiversity, drying borewells etc.

Environmentalists mentioned have warned about potential long-term effects of this change which includes soil degradation, loss of bird and animal populations, and risks to human health. One of the experts, Vinod Kartavya, argues for immediate policy goals and recommends increasing green cover to 10-11% in the short term and aiming for 33% in the long term. Another expert, Ajay Chandra has pointed out that the heat index could rise by over 45%, leading to further deterioration of public health and the environment.

The report classifies Bengaluru's situation as an environmental emergency. Without any appropriate remedial action, the city faces escalating climate-related challenges, increased public health issues, and irreversible ecological damage.

The IISc study presents a troubling picture portraying the "Garden City" and its loss of its green identity. Urgent steps are needed to stop and then reverse this sharp decline. 59

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