



**TATHASTU**  
Institute Of Civil Services

# DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS

13th June 2025



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Institute Of Civil Services



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**13<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

**Mains Manthan**

- **Urbanisation and the challenge of ideal transit solutions (Page No – 8)**
- **Global Gender Gap Report (Page No – 1)**

**Prelims Saarthi**

- **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

## Urbanisation and the challenge of ideal transit solutions

### Why in News?

- Urbanisation - Challenges & Strategies

### Syllabus

- **GS Paper 1 – Indian Society**
- **GS Paper 2 – Governance & Social Justice**

## Urbanisation and the challenge of ideal transit solutions

**A**mong the various aspects of Viksit Bharat by 2047, an urbanised India is sure to be a principal one as it is expected that urban India will be the engine of growth in this transformation. Let us note that over 60% of India's population would move from low-productive rural India to highly productive urban India by the 2060s.

Clearly, the mobility of people on such a large scale within cities, from their residential quarters to work areas, will be a test for urban planners. While policymakers have plans to construct smart cities, where the need for the mobility of workers will be substantially reduced, the fact remains that, unlike China, we do not see many of the newly emerging smart cities coming of age. In contrast, the metros/existing tier 1 cities are on an ever-expanding spree, leading to rising challenges for policymakers, such as meeting the transportation demand of workers.

### Rising to the challenge

The government is increasingly focused on augmenting the public transport system to meet the urban mobility challenge. This year's Budget saw the launch of the PM e-Bus Sewa-Payment Security Mechanism, with the aim of improving urban bus transportation in India (nearly 10,000 urban buses). The PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM e-Drive) scheme was introduced, which will support the procurement of 14,000 new e-buses, 1,10,000 e-rickshaws, e-trucks, and e-ambulances. However, according to estimates, India needs 2,00,000 urban buses, but only 35,000 are operational (including e-buses). This is far below the requirement.

Another initiative has been the greater emphasis on building metro networks and a higher allocation of funds in multiple metro/tier I cities to cater to the high density. This is in line



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Planners in India need to look at whether they are investing in the most sustainable and cost-effective transit solutions

with the trend seen in the recent Budget.

However, as the Economic Survey that was released on the eve of the Budget on January 31, has cited, only 37% of urban residents in India have easy access to public transportation. In contrast, in Brazil and China, more than 50% of urban residents have convenient access to mass transit. Clearly, India is too far behind in developing an efficient public system.

The development of a metro network is a long-term and costly venture. Much of it has been developed with the Centre's funding. And invariably, most have yet to recover their total costs (which includes fixed and operational costs). In almost all metros, the ridership projected in the project document has still to be matched. So, recovering the cost may be a difficult proposition unless the route lies along a high-density route. Also, it has been observed that users are extremely fare sensitive – a fare rise invariably leads to a fall in footfalls. Invariably, consumers seek out their ways keeping in mind comfort, time and cost due to the high cost of last-mile connectivity from metro stations to their work/residence points.

Unlike in some developed countries where public transport is highly subsidised in order to make metro transportation cheap, our government is not financially rich enough to dole out recurrent and large subsidies.

### Seeking alternatives

India also needs cost-effective, road-based public transport for better last-mile connectivity. This year's Budget has increased allocations for urban bus systems, thus continuing efforts to boost capacity, especially in the metros. However, private investment remains limited due to uncertain returns. Government funds have shifted from CNG to more expensive e-buses. Future bottom-up transport models may focus on

road-based modes that use electric, CNG, hydrogen, or biofuel technologies. Yet, they often overlook trams and trolleybuses, which, based on a life cycle cost and revenue analysis, can outperform e-buses in financial terms and deserve serious policy consideration in India's urban transportation planning.

### Some estimates

Revenue generation and economic viability over time are the necessary parameters to estimate whether urban road-based public transport has a financial deficit or is making a profit in its life cycle. Analysing the profit and loss (P&L) percentages for various public transport modes will help in accurate decision-making on adopting a future transit. We find that trams show a 45% long-term profitability over seven decades, the usual life cycle of the tram, along with scalability and alignment with climate goals. In contrast, an e-bus system, which is currently the preferred mode on Indian roads, fails to maintain profitability due to high operational and replacement costs, resulting in a net loss of 82% over seven decades. Though moderately efficient, trolleybuses fall short of matching the overall benefits of trams, incurring a minimal loss over the specified time frame.

This raises a critical question. Are we truly investing in the most sustainable and cost-effective transit solutions, or are we chasing a future dependent on continuous public subsidies? The planned introduction of trams in Kochi could mark a game-changing moment in India's urban mobility story. Reviving our past is not just a nostalgic choice of what Kolkata thinks – it is a smart and timely move toward a more sustainable and financially viable transport future.

*The views expressed are personal*





## Key Takeaways from the Article

### Urbanization Trends and Mobility Challenges

- Urban India will become the engine of economic growth by 2047, as per the Viksit Bharat vision.
- By the **2060s**, **over 60%** of India's population is expected to be urban.
- This puts enormous pressure on urban mobility and public transportation infrastructure.

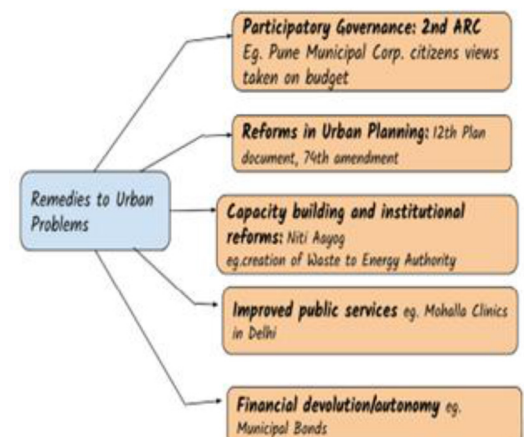
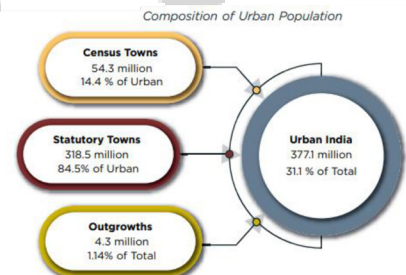
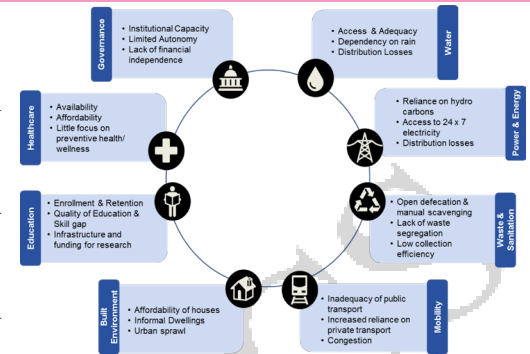
### Shortfalls in Current Transit Models

- Smart cities haven't matured fast enough; hence, Tier 1 cities continue to expand unsustainably.
- Despite efforts, urban transit infrastructure remains insufficient:

- Only **35,000 buses** (including e-buses) are operational vs. a **requirement of 2,00,000**.
- Only **37%** of urban Indians have easy access to public transport (Economic Survey).
- China and Brazil** have >50% access.

### Government Initiatives

- PM e-Bus Sewa-Payment Security Mechanism:**  
For urban bus improvement.
- PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM e-Drive):**
  - Procurement of **14,000 new e-buses**, **1.1 lakh erickshaws**, **e-trucks**, and **e-ambulances**.
- Focus also on **metro rail expansion**, though cost recovery remains poor due to:
  - Lower-than-expected ridership.
  - High fare sensitivity.
  - Poor last-mile connectivity.





- **Cost-Effectiveness and Sustainability of Alternatives**

- ♦ Current focus is on e-buses, but **trams and trolleybuses** are overlooked.

- ♦ **Lifecycle Cost Analysis:**

- ♦ **Trams:** 45% profit over 70 years.
- ♦ **Trolleybuses:** Minimal loss.
- ♦ **E-buses:** Net **loss of 82%** over 70 years due to high operational and replacement costs.

- ♦ **Private investment** remains low due to poor returns in urban public transport.

- **Strategic Urban Transport Insights**

- ♦ Developed nations heavily subsidise public transit (India lacks such fiscal bandwidth).
- ♦ **Kochi's tram revival** could be a turning point if implemented effectively.
- ♦ Important to **prioritise last-mile connectivity**, multi-modal integration, and lifecycle cost viability.



## Global Gender Gap Report

### Why in News?

- Global Gender Gap Report

### Syllabus

- **GS Paper 2 – Governance and Social Justice**

## India marks a relative drop in gender parity

**Press Trust of India**  
NEW DELHI

The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2025 has ranked India at 131 out of 148 countries, with a parity score of just 64.1%.

The report released on Thursday puts India among the lowest-ranked countries in South Asia. India had ranked 129 out of 146 countries last year.

The report said while the global gender gap has closed to 68.8%, marking the strongest annual advancement since the COVID-19 pandemic, full parity remains 123 years away

at current rates.

Iceland leads the rankings for the 16th year running, followed by Finland, Norway, the U.K. and New Zealand.

#### Best performer

Bangladesh emerged as the best performer in South Asia, jumping 75 positions to rank 24 globally with notable gains in "political empowerment and economic participation".

The 19th edition of the report, which covers 148 economies, revealed both encouraging momentum and persistent structural barriers facing women worldwide.

The Global Gender Gap Index measures gender parity across four key dimensions: economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; and political empowerment. The Indian economy's overall performance improved in absolute terms by 0.3 points.

India's performance in labour force participation rate remained the same (45.9%) as last year.

In educational attainment, the report said, India scored 97.1%, reflecting positive shifts in female shares for literacy and tertiary education enrol-

ment, which resulted in positive score improvements for the subindex as a whole.

#### Higher parity

"India also records higher parity in health and survival, driven by improved scores in sex ratio at birth and in healthy life expectancy," it said.

However, similar to other countries, parity in healthy life expectancy is obtained despite an overall reduction in the life expectancy of men and women, the report said.

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### Key Takeaways from the Article

- **India's Ranking and Score**
  - ♦ India ranks 131 out of 148 countries in 2025.
  - ♦ India's Gender Parity Score: 64.1%.

## The Global Gender Gap Index 2025 Rankings



Rank	Country	Gender gap closed	Gender gap score	Change in score versus 2024
1	Iceland		0.926	-0.010 ▼
2	Finland		0.879	0.004 ▲
3	Norway		0.863	-0.012 ▼
4	United Kingdom		0.838	0.049 ▲
5	New Zealand		0.827	-0.008 ▼
6	Sweden		0.817	0.001 ▲
7	Republic of Moldova		0.813	0.023 ▲
8	Namibia		0.811	0.006 ▲
9	Germany		0.803	-0.006 ▼
10	Ireland		0.801	-0.001 ▼

● Europe ● Eastern Asia and the Pacific ● Sub-Saharan Africa







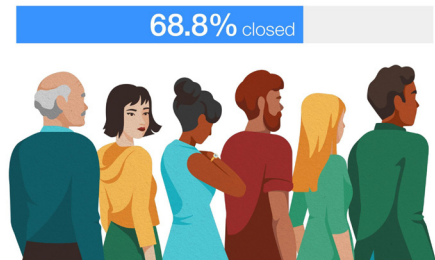
- **Comparative Regional Ranking**

- ◆ India is **among the lowest in South Asia.**
- ◆ **Bangladesh:** Best performer in the region, rank **24**, parity **77.5%.**
- ◆ Other South Asian ranks:
  - ◆ **Bhutan:** 119
  - ◆ **Nepal:** 125
  - ◆ **Sri Lanka:** 130
  - ◆ **Maldives:** 138
  - ◆ **Pakistan:** 148 (bottom of the list)

#### Global Gender Gap



As the world navigates economic uncertainty, the future of growth is tied to achieving gender parity – which currently lies **123 years away.**



Source: World Economic Forum, (2025), Global Gender Gap Report 2025.

## Key Takeaways from the Article

### India's Performance Across 4 Key Dimensions:

Economic Participation and Opportunity

Educational Attainment

Health and Survival

Political Empowerment

**Q. Which of the following gives the 'Global Gender Gap Index' ranking to the countries of the world?**

- (a) World Economic Forum
- (b) UN Human Rights Council
- (c) UN Women
- (d) World Health Organization





## International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

- ◆ What is it - ?
- ◆ Came into force - ?
- ◆ HQ - ?
- ◆ Legal Status - ?
- ◆ Reports to - ?
- ◆ Popularly known as - ?

# IAEA board censures Iran for not complying with nuclear obligations

The Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and the Foreign Ministry state that Tehran has 'no choice' but to respond to this political resolution; U.S. embassy in Jerusalem restricts staff movements due to security concerns amid heightened tensions

**Associated Press**  
**Agence France-Presse**  
VIENNA/WASHINGTON

**T**he UN nuclear watchdog's board of governors on Thursday formally found that Iran is not complying with its nuclear obligations for the first time in 20 years, a move that could lead to further tensions and set in motion an effort to restore UN sanctions on Tehran later this year.

Iran reacted immediately, saying it will establish a new enrichment facility "in a secure location" and that "other measures are also being planned".

"The Islamic Republic of



**Tense presence:** Armoured vehicles deployed outside the U.S. embassy building in Baghdad's Green Zone on Thursday. AFP

Iran has no choice but to respond to this political resolution," the Iranian Foreign Ministry and the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran said in a joint

statement. U.S. President Donald Trump previously warned that Israel or America could carry out air strikes targeting Iranian nuclear facilities if negotia-

tions failed to reach an agreement – and some American personnel and their families have begun leaving the region over the tensions, which come ahead of a new round of Iran-U.S. talks Sunday in Oman.

Nineteen countries on the International Atomic Energy Agency's board, which represents the agency's member nations, voted for the resolution, according to diplomats who spoke on condition of anonymity to describe the outcome of the closed-doors vote. Russia, China and Burkina Faso opposed it, 11 abstained and two did not vote.

The resolution was put forward by France, the U.K., Germany and the U.S.

### **Dangerous region**

Meanwhile, the U.S. embassy in Jerusalem announced it was restricting staff movements after President Donald Trump said U.S. personnel were being moved from the potentially "dangerous" West Asia.

"Due to the increased regional tensions, United States government employees and their family members are restricted from travel outside the greater Tel Aviv (area)... Jerusalem, and Be'er Sheva areas until further notice," the embassy said.

## Prelims PYQs (2018)

**Q. In the Indian context, what is the implication of ratifying the 'Additional Protocol' with the 'International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'? (2018)**

- The civilian nuclear reactors come under IAEA safeguards.
- The military nuclear installations come under the inspection of IAEA.
- The country will have the privilege to buy uranium from the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).
- The country automatically becomes a member of the NSG.





**Prelims PYQs (2020)**

**Q. In India, why are some nuclear reactors kept under “IAEA safeguards” while others are not? (2020)**

- (a) Some use uranium and others use thorium
- (b) Some use imported uranium and others use domestic supplies
- (c) Some are operated by foreign enterprises and others are operated by domestic enterprises
- (d) Some are State-owned

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