

# CAN INDIA TAKE SAHI ROAD TO URBAN MOBILITY?

Relevant for: Indian Economy | Topic: Infrastructure: Roads

Green choice: E-rickshaws at Delhi Vishwavidyalaya Metro Station waiting for passengers. Sushil Kumar Verma/The Hindu

What should the future of mobility be for India? “Safe, Adequate, Holistic Infrastructure or SAHI.” That is the recommendation of a report presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the Global Mobility Summit, Move, in New Delhi on Friday.

‘Transforming India’s Mobility: A Perspective’ prepared by the NITI Aayog and Boston Consulting Group (BCG) calls for efficient and convenient public transport to answer the twin problems of pollution and congestion. The report quickly attracted attention amid daily increases in fuel prices.

Mr. Modi reiterated the ‘mantra’ in his speech at the Summit. “Public transport must be the cornerstone of our mobility initiatives,” he said. The audience included CEOs of global car makers, including the Chairman of Japanese major Suzuki, Osamu Suzuki, Vice Chairman of Hyundai Motor, Chung Euisun, Toyota CEO Takeshi Uchiyamada, and Chen Zhixin, President of largest Chinese car maker SAIC.

Mr. Modi elaborated on his ‘7Cs’ for the future of mobility: it stands for common, connected, convenient, congestion-free, charged, clean and cutting-edge.

## Familiar travails

The Prime Minister touched upon the familiar travails that cities face: motorised personal vehicles requiring more roads, parking, and traffic. “While mobility is critical to preserving our planet, road transport accounts for one-fifth of global CO2 emissions. This threatens to choke cities and raise global temperatures,” he said.

The number of motor vehicles in India has grown 40-fold in 44 years, from 1981 to 2015, the NITI Aayog-BCG report says. The reason: absence of a public transport system, leading to a rapid rise in private vehicle ownership. The four big metros in the country lose “over \$22 billion annually,” on congestion, the report said.

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