

Emerging Opportunities in the Transport Sector to Control and Manage Air Pollution in Urban India

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In urban India, the increasing air pollution poses a serious threat to human health, such as increased incidences of chronic bronchitis, cancer of the respiratory tract, asthma, and induced premature mortality. This triggered a strong environmental movement that forced the government to take the matter seriously; evident in the revision of the air pollution standards in November, 2009.

A frenzied motorization accounts for the bulk of air pollution – either direct vehicle exhaust or indirect road dust, along with heightened construction, and a large industrial sector in and around a number of growing cities. The pace of the problem was overtaking the ability to mitigate it. Further uncontrolled growth will generate larger doses of pollution and demand enormous and recurring investments if the city does not integrate strong environmental policies.

While the message is clear; with the air pollution challenge looming large, the cities may have to take a quantum leap. They will have to implement radical solutions ranging from technical, social, policy, to economic, within a short time-frame for long-term gains, via a pathway that is precautionary and preventive. This paper presents a series of possible interventions, along with emissions analysis from 20 cities across India which could effectively result in the air pollution reduction.

Keywords: Urban Air Pollution; India; Health Impacts

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