

## Chapter - 10

### **BIOGRAPHY OF URBAN ROADS IN INDIA**

Roads are the most popular mode of transportation in India as they carry almost 80-90% of the country's passengers and 60-65% of freight. It is a fact that cities and villages situated on good highways and having a good physical connectivity develop very fast economically. Unfortunately, about 40% of India's population does not have access to all-weather roads. During the last 60 years the roads have increased 8 times while vehicles and traffic have increased by 335 times [up to March 2009]. Road is also one of the biggest employers in our country, providing livelihood right from a labourer to the minister. Except grassroot workers, who earn for the job done, most of the other persons in the series above them probably get disproportionate payment for their jobs.

Here I will consider the present conditions and peculiarities about city or urban roads only as the highways or the roads leaving the city have already been considered in the chapter of road accidents.

#### **[I] Making vs digging of roads: An absolute incoordination:**

There are clearly two groups working on roads, one belongs to road-makers while the other to road-diggers. Both work in 'close in coordination'. It is very common to find that once the road is complete, the very next week you see people from another department start digging it again. When you enquire, you find that they belong to either water works, sewer, telephone or from a private company laying their pipes and cables. In Mumbai I am told there are 32 agencies below the roads! Sometimes you think seriously as if these diggers were patiently waiting for the road to be completed. I believe there are clear instructions from the PWD to other departments to keep their hands off till the road is completed. Once the job is done, the PWD people inform and invite others to do their job. The PWD people do not mind this as they again get a fat budget to 'deal and utilize' effectively for road-making.

The PWD people become hyperactive, once the budget of road construction has been passed. They start work without asking other depts. to do the pending work. The situation of the Indian road is in no way different from a poor woman who has just got new clothes to wear, but the very next week someone tore it. Only God knows in a poor country

like ours when she would get the next chance for new clothes and till then she has to continue to wear this repaired one. In India, roads are being raped repeatedly and we all observe it silently without any concern. Literally people in the concerned departments are busy to loot and waste the government money. After all, it is all public money, so none seems to be accountable for it! Perhaps most of the higher authorities are only concerned about their share that they are to get out of the total budget.

Another example of lack of coordination between various departments is that many times roads are made, but the gutters remain unelevated and electricity and telephone pillars and trees remain there after road-widening. All these structures invite people for accidents with open hearts. This defeats the very purpose of road-construction. Even if these jobs are done later, it leaves an ugly and bumpy road. Lack of coordination is only one aspect of road making, one need not to say anything about the quality, life and maintenance of these roads. It is universally known.

It has been seen that engineers after joining the government jobs do not equip and upgrade themselves academically with newer technology. Even if they know, they don't bother or don't have the will and pressure to pursue it. They leave this job to their junior engineers, and they in turn to contractors who get the job done only according to their profit. One may ask these engineers whether they have the same attitude while making their own houses.

### **[II] State of roads:**

While driving, you are not only supposed to manage the chaotic traffic, but simultaneously also to make your eyes vigilant or trained enough to see any potholes and open manhole on the road. To negotiate these potholes, a perfect Indian driver very soon adapts zigzag driving in a serpentine fashion that we often see in hurdle skiing. Potholes are the commonest cause of frequent lane-cutting in India. Remember that the driving pattern to overcome these potholes is different for four and two wheelers. It is advisable that the two wheeler drivers not to follow very closely to a four wheeler as a big pothole may appear suddenly making him take a somersault.

We should not underestimate the depth of potholes. They could be anything from a shallow pothole to a manhole, a ditch, a trench, a dug well that can accommodate anything from your leg to your car. Before making a daring attempt to cross it, I would like to remind you about the national policy for the people who fall in such holes [a sort of well]. I understand, that at present only those who fall in bore wells [i.e. those wells which snugly fit the body and require a parallel well to be dug



*Don't be silly! Of course I saw the 'No Parking' sign. I didn't park it there. It fell in there.*

for a rescue] comes under the 'national priority scheme', where you get all sorts of help, time, budget and compensation very promptly. It seeks attention right from the district authorities to national one and for the media, as per TRP it belongs to the news of the highest priority. However, if you fall in any of the above mentioned death trap, since it is not a national priority, you may not get any prompt help from the authorities. You are at the mercy of passers-by.

These poor road conditions are responsible for a considerable damage to vehicles also. These potholes and rough and uneven road surfaces can break the chassis of heavy vehicles and can affect suspensions, alignment or balance of the vehicles. In fact, within few months after the purchase of a new vehicle, many different sounds start coming from every corner of your vehicle that are difficult to suppress or silence and you may get the comment from your close one that it has become a khatara now. Besides, these bumpy roads are also responsible for many premature deliveries and abortions in India.

### **[III] Encroachments:**

The two MOST important problems responsible for traffic congestion and also the MOST difficult for the government to tackle are the increased number of vehicles and that of road encroachments. The older roads, instead of widening with the demands of the traffic load, are being narrowed by the unauthorized encroachments. They affect a smooth flow of traffic and virtually cause an already congested road to choke. Various types of encroachments that I have seen are as follows:

**[A] Illegal constructions and commercial activities:** Today our country is at the top in the world as far as numbers of shops in a given area are concerned. There is one shop per 4-5 families in India, where as in European countries or even in Singapore [called shopper's paradise] it is one per 20-25 families. Thanks to district development authorities for achieving this record. Once a shop is opened an area double the size of the shop is grabbed outside the shop by putting articles and display boards. Beyond this the remaining space is utilized for parking the vehicles of customers. If it is a shop for eatables, may it be of modern fast food or old-fashioned samosa-kachoriwala, I am sure you do not require any description.

Except in some major cities, virtually there is no control of development authorities over the above. It is very easy to start commercial activity in residential areas or to make an unauthorized encroachment on roads without permission. There is no one to observe and object to it. If at all there is someone, he is easily 'manageable'. Although there

is a separate section in the district development authority whose only job is to check illegal constructions and encroachments, God knows what their eyes look at the whole day. They probably feel it is better to wait till the illegal construction is completed. The reason is that more unauthorized construction would mean a bigger 'deal'. In the course of the construction period they would also get a regular installment for keeping their eyes closely shut. After all, what will they get if they stop illegal work at its inception? They are like those clever fellows who let burglars steal and then catch them for money. In Uttar Pradesh a total of 55,775 constructions have been declared illegal [up to March 2009], however, despite the demolition orders, only in 1.3% cases [742] action has been taken so far. Even in these cases, the demolition is mainly confined to papers.

**[B] Ramp culture:** Unlike old houses, now people prefer to make very high platforms of their houses. These houses, like a slide, join the main road with a long and wide ramp occupying the 20-30% width of the road [the exact size depends upon the height of the house and nuisance value and clout of the owner]. People do not like to waste an inch of their land for constructing the ramp. Due to these ramps a relatively narrow track remains for vehicles to pass. The logic behind the high platform could be, in the event of sewer blockade or flood in the city, even if the whole city is submerged, their house is intact.

**[C] In the name of religion:** This is the safest and the surest way to capture government land, including roads. The government is also quite generous and does not mind it! One fine day an idol is kept on a small platform and after a few days a canopy is erected over this. This structure swells like a huge balloon. Within few years there starts a regular grand pooja grih and organization of a religious fair. The total number of places of worship (temples, mosques, churches, etc) is more than 24 lakhs and according to surveys this number is more than the combined numbers of schools, colleges and hospitals in India. I would like to know about any data showing that out of total number of shrines and temples constructed in recent years, how many of them are on private or on personal lands?

**[D] In the name of greenery:** This is a little polished way of encroachment on the road. If the government, keeping in mind the future load of traffic, happens to leave relatively more space on either side of the road, some of the residents occupy it. The colony people without realizing its importance, start making iron-cage like fences and plantation on it. The logic behind this shrewd fencing is that it is just to protect the plants from the cattle. We have hardly seen any one removing the

iron fences once the plants and trees grow tall enough. To top it all, on one fine day the actual boundary wall is demolished and a new one is constructed capturing that piece of road that was 'adopted in the name of plantation and beautification'. The colony people do not interfere in such encroachments for various reasons: they themselves intend to do so, do not want to sour their relations and do not dare due to occupiers' nuisance value.

**[E] Temporary Occupiers:** Vendors, hawkers, rickshaw-pullers, tempo-drivers, petty shopkeepers on pavements are some temporary occupiers who gather at places and corners where maximum customers and public movement are expected. They really make the situation worse in peak hours. Sometimes when you pass through the same road late at night, you feel surprised to see how wide the road actually is without this occupancy.

#### **[IV] Poor Town Planning:**

Except metro cities, in most of the cities town planning is on short-term basis and usually haphazard. A poor town planning, in places where the population density is not evenly distributed and without a proper road network, leads to chaotic traffic. It also creates problems regarding basic civic amenities, like water and electricity. When a city expands, instead of planning for a larger area simultaneously, only small colonies with corresponding smaller road networks are added to the outskirts of the city. But in a few years these colonies expand covering several kilometers beyond the starting point. The roads leading to them still remain narrow and tortuous. The same road that was leading to 50 houses initially now becomes the main road for the 500 houses without any parallel road network. Not only this, due to increased commercial value, more and more shops are being opened on this narrow and so-called main roads, thereby affecting traffic more adversely.

It may not be fair to blame a poor town planning in relation to areas and colonies that were established in the 50s and the 60s, when the number of vehicles was not a problem. But now we have a strong reason to blame the authorities for areas that had been established about 10-15 years ago i.e. even after the boom in vehicular traffic. It has been seen that if the township is developed by a government agency or by a relatively a big private group, then a better township is expected. If it is left to small private colonizers, they cannot afford a big investment and go for much smaller projects one by one, where compromises are made with road space, commercial and market space, parks and the community services.

**[V] Traffic jams: Type I - spontaneous:**

In India, on an average, we have to waste 2-3 hours in a week in traffic jams. If we talk in terms of money, in a single big or metro city each year on an average a 100 crore rupees go waste due to fuel losses. There is no need to calculate it for the whole country. Traffic jam is not unusual on busy roads, especially in peak hours of the day and with the passage of time it is going from bad to worse. As time is passing, this dragon that was confined to smaller roads of the city, has started crawling around the widest road of the city about which perhaps we did not expect five years ago. Sometimes the traffic jam is so severe that it requires hours to get rid of it. Those who suffer can really know how horrifying an experience it gives. In most of the cities and at most of the places it is common to find traffic running at the speed of 20 km/hr and that too turns into bumper to bumper traffic in the peak hours.

Above all, our clumsiness and derogatory and poor civic sense make the jam more horrible. None of us shows patience in these circumstances and everyone tries to cross the bottleneck first. You see, instead of the required one row, some people break the row and come forward to make a second row and some people go further to make a third row. In other words, virtually they occupy whole width of the road, leaving no space for the traffic that is supposed to come from the opposite side once the jam is cleared. Even if the cause of the jam is removed, traffic still cannot be resumed as no one likes to budge an inch. We feel insulted and it becomes a prestige issue for all, not to reverse the vehicle in such situations, no matter how long we have to wait. The situation at railway crossing barrier is equally deplorable. Here also you may see many rows of vehicles on either side of barriers as if they are preparing for kabaddi or mahabharat or just waiting for making gadar, once the barriers are lifted. This again causes an unnecessary delay in resuming a smooth traffic across the railway lines.

If you face the jam while going to office, you suffer a loss in your business while if you face it on returning home, you lose your personal time. In other words, the time that is really meant for the family. In big cities where even if there is no jam, routinely a considerable time every day is lost on roads owing to long distances. You can hardly afford to waste extra-time in a jam. Mainly due to jamophobia, your activities are limited only to a small area and you think twice to go to a distant place for any function, to meet relatives, to do shopping or to enjoy a special cuisine.

Besides increased number of vehicles and encroachments, there are several other common causes like erratic parking, work in progress,



*The car driver? The traffic takes such a long time to move. The driver got tired and asked if he could go and have a cup of tea and come. I said O.K.*



processions of religious and political parties, etc, that are responsible for the jam. Seasons of marriages take a heavy toll on commuters on roads. It is quite common that people dance on roads in Baarats causing a jam. In Delhi it is not unusual to have around 36,000 weddings on some auspicious day.

There are also a few advantages of traffic jam and traffic congestion, e.g. the chances of head-on collision and accidents are negligible. This probably explains the lowest death rate in road accidents in Kolkata among all metro cities [and probably also the reason for being the worst polluted city in India]. one doesn't know whether this is good or bad. Sometimes you make a good use of 'jam excuse' for convincing your wife or your boss when you turn up late. Some mobile companies even provide background sounds of traffic jam that help to convince a suspicious wife.

**[VI] Traffic jams: Type II - Intentional Jams or bandh:**

Road block or 'chakka jam' or 'rasta roko' is a powerful way of protest in India. In India there are two important areas for political somersaults. One is inside Parliament and State assemblies and the second is on the road. I may not be wrong in saying that the road to Parliament starts from the 'road' itself. Traffic jam is often used as a weapon by political parties to show their power or nuisance value. Besides political parties, there is an increasing tendency to use the traffic jam by the public also as an effective weapon to express their anger and demands. Traffic jam is now being considered a very effective key to any problem of any kind in the country. For example sometimes people cause road block for their demands like water, electricity, compensation for accidents, irregularities in exams, police enquiry in murder cases, etc. They do not prefer to do this in an open ground, instead, they prefer to show all this forcefully on road whether people are interested or not. The worrying thing about it is that the administration, which otherwise would not lend them a sympathetic ear, responds to their demands quickly to such a protest. That encourages others to follow the same. Nowadays there is mob culture i.e. the more the number of the protesters on the road, the more the chances that their demands would be met, doesn't matter whether they are genuine or not. Vehicles are forcefully obstructed by pelting stones and hitting the bonnets with sticks. They are not bothered at all whether a sick person is going to lose his life in the jam or someone is going to miss his exam or train due to jam. A seriously ill four year-old child died in Shimla [Sept. 2007] on the way as the ambulance got trapped in a traffic jam due to a bandh. Though the father ran towards hospital holding his son in arms, his only child succumbed to illness before reaching

the hospital. In similar situations a cardiac patient in Ambala and a burns victim in Kanpur died in the ambulances before reaching the hospital [August 2008] and a delivery occurred on the road in Patna. In all these cases the 'rasta roko' was caused by political parties.

The more worrying fact of this protest is that in recent times these protesters easily go uncontrolled and turn violent even on slightest provocations and indulge in loot and arson and do not even hesitate to seriously injure or kill others. People are injured or killed but no one can be held responsible in a mob fury as there is no punishment. So this encourages anti social elements. In recent times, the Gurjar Andolan of Rajasthan [2007-08] is a perfect example of violent demonstration where they not only caused extensive damage to the property but also torched police stations and caused the death of many policemen. In Dharmपुरi a few years ago a bus was set on fire by supporters of a political party causing deaths of 3 girls who were returning from a tour. Is it a democratic way of protest where inhuman and violent activities are indulged in? Probably this is the side-effect and misuse of democracy which gives us liberty of expression. Our democracy is very accommodating. This is really a sad aspect of the democracy.

It is a matter of great concern that political parties justify such jams. It is very disgraceful that in spite of a ban by the Supreme Court [1998], these bandhs are sometimes openly declared and sponsored by State Governments on whose shoulder lies the responsibility of proper execution of the law. Instead of going by the rule of law, State Governments do not bother or even ensure that traffic is disrupted totally during such bandhs. Now to whom should we complain about it or who is to blame? There is no real and straight answer except one, there is something rotten in the system. It would be very optimistic, if we expect a decent behaviour from the politicians on roads, who cannot behave properly even in Parliament or Assemblies, as many times the helpless Speaker of Parliament has to ask to stop recording to save the prestige of the highest House of the country.

The police in this situation remain mute or spectators. The reason being if any political worker among the protesters gets injured, all parties, like rainy frogs, unanimously make great hue and cry and get the concerned police officer suspended or transferred. A mad buffalo is dancing on the road and if you hit her with a stick on her buttock, immediately the Netaji would ask the police chief 'meri bhains ko danda kyon maara'. On the contrary, so many innocent people are killed in these incidents, but political parties hardly condemn it or ask for an enquiry. The court appears to be the only agency that seems to be interested. Besides

banning such jams, recently the Orissa High Court has given a historic decision in a case where a traffic jam caused the death of a 14 year-old boy. It asked the government to recover the compensation from the political party which sponsored and organized the bandh. In case the government fails to recover, then it itself should provide this compensation as it failed in its duty to clear the road at the time of the jam. In case students cause it, it should be endorsed in their character certificates, and compensation should be recovered from their parents and guardians. Supreme Court has also given a ruling in 1998 stating that no political party or organizations can resort to bandh, hartal or chakkajam under the guise of exercising their democratic right to express dissent. However, much would depend on the political will to implement it effectively and efficiently. I believe authorities should take an undertaking from the leaders who call the bandh and can be held responsible for damages and deaths. In every city, a place should be allotted for such activities and protests.

**[VII] Stray animals on roads:**

All kinds of stray animals can be seen on Indian roads. In the morning as well as evening you may see big groups of dairy animals. In such situations you have to go towards the extreme sides of the road to allow their parade to finish. Sometimes a buffalo that had just taken a black mud-bath wearing small pieces of pistia plants can suddenly spoil the dresses of pedestrians. Otherwise, the 'buffalo walk' is very cool with short and steady steps and it seems to be in no hurry. One or two fellows among the care takers of these cattle, walk behind them to collect the recently passed 'precious gobar' on roads, not because they believe in keeping the city clean, but because they really need it. If you are unlucky you may be forced to see a bull fight on roads or a bull chase for a cow in the mating season.

Another interesting animal on the road is the pig that is very dangerous for two wheeler riders. It jumps suddenly in front of your vehicle with such a perfect timing and force that you are led to think seriously that either it has a suicidal tendency or it wants to clear some accounts of your previous life. Another peculiarity of this animal is that it is 'accident proof'. After 'doing its job' in an accident, it swiftly disappears and you are left lying on the road, crying for help. In one of such incidents, one of my father's colleagues, one Mr. Chaddha on a dark night was coming fast on a bicycle down the hill from a railway flyover. Suddenly he had a severe jolt on the head and fell down. Later he realized that he was between the legs of a camel and some wooden object that was hanging down caused injury to his head. Similarly a 'cat walk' across the road is known to stop superstitious drivers more effectively than traffic police men.

One good thing about animal driven carts is that as I have observed, these animals carefully observe the surrounding traffic and obey the traffic rules and commands of their 'riders'. That obedience we sadly miss in 'motorized vehicle riders'.

**[VIII] VIP movement:**

At the time of VIP movements, all of a sudden the roads are sealed in the name of security causing traffic standstill. It is mainly a problem of capital cities. The roads that hardly can afford a few seconds' halt of the traffic are deserted for several minutes leading to great chaos and suffering to the public. Equal time is taken to get it cleared even after the road is reopened. During a visit, on seeing the deserted roads and city of Agra, USA President Bill Clinton asked whether this is 'a city of ghosts'? In other countries like USA or UK, even the movements of the top government officials causes less inconvenience to the public as compared to movements of lower cadre politicians in India. There are no guidelines as to who is a VIP and why he needs a security. The beneficiaries of this free security are mainly politicians. In my opinion the most eligible persons for security in India are the witnesses who testify against dreaded criminals, corrupt officials or politicians and thus help judiciary to arrive at the right decisions.

In a democratic and republican country like India, everyone is supposed to have equal rights to security. Any VIP enjoying the security by ignoring the safety of the people or by causing inconvenience to them cannot be justified. Just for information, only the SPG spends every year around Rs 200 crore of public money for causing inconvenience to the people only, needless to mention about the total expenditure on security by other agencies of Central and State governments.

**[IX] Increasing level of roads: A threat to ecology:**

Every time when the road is being made, its level is raised by several inches. Frequent road-making during the last 30-40 years has caused a significant increase in the level of roads in the cities. Thus the old residential areas by default are becoming more and more at a lower level. Now there is the compulsion for extra land filling for the every new house being constructed in the city. Supposing, the road level in the city is elevated by 2 feet, considering the fact that in an average Indian city the road area is about 15% of the total city, you can calculate how much soil would be needed for filling the rest of the 85% city areas. No need to say that this soil would be taken from the outskirts of the city that in addition to financial burden would also affect the ecology of that area. Of course, it will be spread over a long period, but it would affect us.



*He knows, sir, you are a VIP and can't be stopped! But he says there is a VVIP around somewhere.*

This elevation also causes difficulty and increased cost of maintenance of previously laid sewers and water supply. In old houses a reverse or down hill slope not only affects their surface drainage [as in rains] but also causes a reverse drainage due to choked sewer. Unlike others the owners of the old houses get frightened whenever they see that road is being resurfaced one more time in their area. Thus the importance of making a strong road that lasts for a longer time cannot be over-emphasized not only for economical reasons but also for preserving the ecology of that area. If at all, road-making is required, the same road building materials should be recycled.

**[X] Pampering and discrimination among the roads:**

In every city, roads where VIP movements occur or have the residence of senior officers, get a special attention and are made more frequently. The reason behind this drama is to show a good 'face value' of the city, and secondly, even a slight jerk in the spine of the VIP on the road might cause the suspension of the concerned official. Many times, just to consume the pending budget, they do a carpeting sort of road treatment for 'not so bad' roads in the city. Such unnecessary carpeting over a well-made road does not last long and gets de-gloved and detached very soon, making the road even worse than before. Sometimes when you find that a road is being made even during the night time, central channel is being painted, you may immediately guess that either some VIP is coming to your city or the budget is going to lapse the very next morning.

**[XI] Water logging or Sewer Overflow:**

Any thing from a puddle to a pond can be seen on roads just after rains. Depending on the severity of water stagnation, your area may look like Venice or a group of islands like that of Maldives. In such a situation in addition to vehicles, you also wish to have a small boat with you. In the city of Agra, right in front of the office of the Municipal Corporation, huge water collection during and after the rains is a regular feature every year. I have been observing this since my childhood till this day. Despite spending enormous amounts of money over the years to solve this problem, the fact today is that my daughter is enjoying the same scene over there and I believe with the tardy way in which such problems are tackled, my grandchildren probably would also enjoy the same.

Water is the third important enemy of bitumen roads [other two being human and heavy traffic]. Water destroys the road within a short time, no matter how strongly it was made. This causes a significant financial burden on road maintenance in urban areas. If water collection

is the cause for the road damage, unless we tackle it properly, every attempt at repair will go futile or waste. Mostly water-logging is due to poor drainage system of the area. In cities this problem is mainly due to the local residents who cover and encroach upon the open drainage channels running on either side of the road. We should realize that the proper drainage of water does not depend on the slope of the road surface but on proper slope of open or closed drains running on either side or underneath the road. We cannot make the slope of all roads of the city into one direction only [like that of a hilly town] on the contrary, it is the drains that have to be made so. Thus in the road it is the widthwise slope towards both sides rather than the lengthwise slope is important for preventing any water collection on roads. Unfortunately, when houses are constructed on either side of roads, people do not care for the sideways slope of roads and that are lost by making ramps and covering the side drains. As a result all the waste water gets collected in the middle of the road so that the road itself becomes a big drain. For intractable water-logging it is better to go for a cement concrete roads.

**[XII] Road: As an ideal dust bin or garbage bin:**

Indian roads play a great role in garbage collection of the city. If the road is a little wider at some place or escape encroachment by land grabbers, this area is converted for filth or garbage collection without putting a bin or containers. Due to the inefficient Municipal Corporation very soon heaps assume the dimensions of a hill of filth, over which cattle, dogs and pigs are found rummaging through it to extract some edibles. Litters and rubbish choke the drain. We are concerned only with the cleanliness of the 'interiors' of our houses and damn care for the real exterior outside our houses. We do not realize that everyone in the garbage cycle from its formation to its final disposal is responsible for maintaining its clean and safe disposal.

We often observe that people from the so-called civilized society can throw from their windows on moving vehicles anything anytime on any one. It is no surprise if an item, like plastic bottles, beer can, empty poly pack of wafers and juices strikes you like a bolt from the sky. If it is a bad day, you may be greeted with used baby pampers. It is really nasty and disgusting to see drivers opening car doors of a moving car to blow out pan masala or tobacco peek slobber.

**[XIII] Road as a shelter for the poor and homeless:**

One can imagine how unlucky are the pavement-dwellers in the world who spend their night on footpaths. Some of them are ill fated for whom footpaths become a graveyard, a deathbed by mad, errant, drunken

drivers. I am of the view that treating human beings like insects and vermin is the most heinous crime against humanity. We should have sympathy for them. There is a class that encroaches upon the road by making jhuggis and jhoparies. Considering their voting power, the government hesitates to remove them and frequently regularize their shelters. No one is against providing shelter to them, but it should not be done at the cost of the road size and civic facility of the area.

**[XIV] Road for Relieving [kya? pressure aur kya]:**

You may frequently find, people relieving themselves on road sides. Sometimes you find a group doing a number two job with gossiping on latest street politics. Both the relievers and passersby feel embarrassed, but it is irony that they have to compromise with it. What the relievers can really do is to cover their face to passersby as they know that their species is recognizable only by the face and not by the base. In India after many five years plans even in urban areas only 30% houses have access to sewer system. Perhaps India needs more people like Pathakji.