

Important Vocab For the Editorial

1. **at a crossroads** (phrase) – at a situation when an important decision ought to be made.
2. **hibernation** (noun) – a state/condition of inactive for a period of time; dullness, lethargy, coma.
3. **fast-paced** (adjective) – developing very quickly.
4. **deteriorating** (adjective) – worsening, declining, degenerating.
5. **seek** (verb) – try, attempt, aim.
6. **address** (verb) – deal with, tackle, focus on.
7. **notably** (adverb) – especially, particularly, primarily.
8. **orderly** (adjective) – systematic, methodical, organized/planned.
9. **mobility** (noun) – transportability.
10. **anti-federal** (adjective) – against the federal system (a system of government in which establishments such as states or provinces share power with a national government).
11. **concurrence** (noun) – agreement, consent, concurrency.
12. **multimodal** (adjective) – multimode; involving more than one mode.
13. **provision** (noun) – term, clause, requirement.
14. **last-mile connectivity** (noun) – it refers to getting people from a transportation hub like a railway station, bus depot or metro station to their final destination or vice versa.
15. **dire** (adjective) – urgent, desperate, pressing, serious.
16. **onus** (noun) – responsibility, duty, obligation.
17. **bribe** (verb) – inducement, pay off.
18. **going forward** (phrase) – from now on, in the future.
19. **incentivise** (verb) – encourage, motivate, galvanize.
20. **point out** (phrasal verb) – identify, recognize, designate.
21. **subsidise** (verb) – support, contribute to, make a contribution to, capitalize.
22. **status quo** (noun) – the present situation, the current state, the existing state of affairs.
23. **vested interest** (noun) – a personal interest in something to get benefit.
24. **sustained** (adjective) – continuous, uninterrupted, constant.
25. **zero tolerance** (noun) – a complete refusal to accept certain behavior (Courtesy: VOA Learning English).
26. **enforcement** (noun) – imposition, implementation, execution.
27. **stringent** (adjective) – strict/stern, severe, tough/rigorous.
28. **bribery** (noun) – corruption, subornation, graft.

At a crossroads: On Motor Vehicles Act

India's transport sector needs reform; changes to the Motor Vehicles Act are a start

India's Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 has remained in hibernation, unable to meet the needs of a large economy that is witnessing rising travel demand, fast-paced motorisation, major shifts in technology and deteriorating road safety. The amendments to the Act voted by Parliament seek to address some of these challenges, notably in forming a National Transportation Policy and a National Road Safety Board, providing for stiffer penalties for violation of rules, and orderly operation of new-generation mobility services that use mobile phone applications. Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari has countered the charge that the changes are anti-federal in character — the proposed amendments were reviewed by 18 State Transport Ministers, and the Bill reflects the modifications they suggested. Also, the Rajya Sabha introduced last-minute changes, making concurrence of, rather than consultation with States necessary when issuing fresh schemes for national, multimodal, and inter-State transport. This new provision also includes last mile connectivity, accessibility, mobility as a whole and rural transport. There is a dire need for reform in these areas, and State governments have tended to ignore these aspects. During the previous NDA government, Mr. Gadkari blamed obstruction by a 'corrupt' Regional Transport Office system for the delay in amending the MV Act. An amendment in the Rajya Sabha allows for RTOs to visit dealerships to register vehicles. This is not much of a change over the practice of dealers taking vehicles to RTO offices. The onus is on States to show that the purchaser will not have to pay a bribe.

Going forward, the Centre must deliver on its promise that the amended Act will help reduce dependence on personal vehicles, and present its National Transport Policy without delay. States must be incentivised to provide clean, comfortable and affordable services for all users, including people with disabilities. It is relevant to point out that the National Urban Transport Policy of the UPA failed to achieve this. Mr. Gadkari's emphasis is on structural reform and an upgrade to subsidised electric buses for low-cost air-conditioned travel. But State Transport Corporations must adopt modern management practices. New regulation can certainly shake up the status quo, facilitating transparent investment by any intending operator and removing vested interests, particularly in inter-State and multi-State coach services. But some of the other amendments are less promising. A sharp increase in

finer has little chance of improving safety. Studies show that sustained, zero tolerance enforcement of even small fines reduces violations, while stringent penalties are either not enforced or lead to more bribery.

Gupta Classes