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Not Just an Accident, But a Burning Image of Policy Failures

The tragic bus fire in Jaisalmer on October 14, 2025, which claimed 21 lives and injured many, was not a mere accident but a glaring example of India's road safety and regulatory failures. Preliminary investigation found that the private sleeper coach — illegally converted from non-AC to AC — caught fire due to a short circuit and flammable interiors. With no emergency exits or safety tools, passengers were trapped inside, revealing fatal gaps in compliance and enforcement.

India recorded 12,502 bus accidents in 2023, killing nearly 4,000 people. Yet, unsafe vehicles continue to receive fitness certificates, exposing deep flaws, corruption, and weak emergency response mechanisms. Despite existing AIS-052 and AIS-119 standards mandating exits, extinguishers, and hammers, enforcement remains lax.

The revised **AIS 153 Code**, effective as of September 2025, mandates the installation of fire detection systems, multiple emergency exits, GPS tracking, CCTV monitoring, and online fitness testing to enhance transparency and safety.

However, implementation remains the key challenge. States must enforce the **Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019**, mandate third-party modification audits, and establish a **National Road Safety Board**, as recommended in 2007. The Jaisalmer tragedy is a stark reminder that road safety is not just a transport issue — it is a matter of public health and accountability.

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Editor

Abridged from an article appeared in Rajasthan Patrika on October 16, 2025.

The same can be accessed at:

<https://epaper.patrika.com/article/JaipurCity?OrgId=1610cad7628f&eid=20&imageview=0&device=desktop>

Message for our Readers

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Rethinking India's BIT Model: Safeguarding Investors

India aims to boost economic growth by attracting more foreign investment. Budget 2025 highlights the need for a stable investment climate and a modern regulatory framework. A key focus is rebooting India's Bilateral Investment Treaty model. The revised approach will emphasise investment facilitation, ensuring streamlined processes and timely dispute resolution for all investors.



The ASEAN-India Century: Charting a New Asia



India's 2025 engagement with ASEAN, highlighted by Prime Minister Modi's address at the 47th ASEAN Summit, signals a deeper regional cooperation rooted in shared history, culture, and a commitment to sustainable progress. The growing ASEAN-India partnership now stands as a vital pillar of Indo-Pacific stability and development, positioning both blocs at the core of global transformation.

- [India Eyes 26 Markets for ₹1.8tn Rice Exports](#)
Shreya Nandi, Business Standard, October 24, 2025
- [Maritime Vision to Power Blue Economy Boom](#)
Policy Circle, October 18, 2025
- [India Urges Fair Climate Action at G20 Meet](#)
www.newsonair.gov.in, October 17, 2025
- [Gati Shakti Portal Now Open to Private Sector](#)
The Economic Times, October 13, 2025



TRAI Clears CNAP Rollout to Tackle Spam Calls

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has approved the nationwide rollout of the Calling Name Presentation (CNAP) system, which will display verified caller names on 4G and 5G devices. Drawing data from telecom operators' KYC records, the system aims to curb spam and fraudulent calls. Users may opt out through their service providers. Following successful trials, the Department of Telecommunications seeks to implement the whole system by March 2026.



Why India's Competition Regulator is Warning Companies on AI



The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has proposed that companies conduct self-audits to monitor their use of artificial intelligence (AI) and the data used to train AI models. Emphasising the need to prevent anti-competitive practices in AI development and deployment, the CCI's report highlights transparency and accountability as key priorities. However, it also cautions that implementing such audits may pose challenges.

- [How Corporate Social Responsibility Lost Its Purpose](#)
Policy Circle Bureau, October 24, 2025
- [New Cybersecurity Rules Apply Only to Telecom Operators](#)
Economic Times, October 24, 2025
- [Rajasthan Targets Developed State Status by 2047](#)
The Economic Times, October 23, 2025
- [India's Electricity Reforms Must Not Lose Momentum](#)
Mint, October 13, 2025



India's Healthcare to Reach US\$1.5tn by 2030 Amid Access Gaps

India's healthcare sector is projected to exceed US\$1.5tn by 2030, up from US\$638bn. Growing at 19 percent annually, the sector's expansion is driven by rising incomes, wider insurance coverage, private investment, and digital innovation. However, the report warns of deep structural gaps—rural India, home to nearly two-thirds of the population, has access to only 30 percent of hospital beds, highlighting persistent inequality in healthcare access despite strong growth.



Landless, Nameless, Essential: The Story of India's Women Farmers



October 15 is observed by the United Nations as International Rural Women's Day and in India as Women Farmers' Day, given the near-synonymity between rural women and women farmers in the country. Although the National Policy for Farmers (2007) provided a clear and expansive definition of a "farmer", delinking it from land ownership and including various categories of women farmers, this definition has not been implemented on the ground.

- [The US\\$5.5bn Potential of India's Generosity](#)
Priyanka Dutt & Kavita Mathew, October 29, 2025
- [Making Indian Roads Safer for Pedestrians](#)
Hindustan Times, October 13, 2025
- [NHRC Seeks Reports from MP, Rajasthan, UP on Cough Syrup Deaths](#)
www.newsonair.gov.in, October 06, 2025
- [India Giving Day 2026 to Highlight Indian American Impact](#)
Philanthropy News Digest, October 05, 2025

Article

- [Why Indian Philanthropy Must Move Beyond Charity](#)
By Amrat Singh and Pritika Nayak
Policy Circle, November 01, 2025