



April 17, 2026

To

The Hon'ble Chief Minister

Government of NCT of Delhi

Subject: Using the current fossil fuel supply disruption to accelerate public transport and reimagine urban mobility in Delhi

Dear Madam,

Delhi stands at a critical moment.

The ongoing fossil fuel supply disruption is exposing a deeper crisis in Delhi's long-term mobility planning. Delhi has increasingly been dependent on non-renewable, environment-harming fossil fuels for mobility which is expensive and, as the war in West Asia has shown, vulnerable to supply shocks. Recent recommendations by the International Energy Agency highlight that the quickest way to reduce oil demand lies in transport choices, especially reducing private vehicle use and strengthening public systems.

Many of the suggested measures are already within reach for Delhi. Encouraging public transport, enabling work from home where possible, promoting shared mobility, and managing private car use in cities are not new ideas. But this moment gives them urgency and legitimacy. What this really means is simple. If we act now, Delhi can reduce fuel dependence while improving everyday life for millions of daily commuters and bus users.

The Public Transport Forum (PTF), Delhi, has worked extensively on public transport access, conducting primary surveys with bus users and infrastructure audits across the city. Our research, including our study *Riding the Justice Route* (2024) on women's mobility in Delhi buses, the

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Greenpeace India–PTF Survey of Bus Users in Delhi (2021), and our recent audit of 231 bus stops across 10 districts, consistently points to the same conclusion: Delhi's public transport infrastructure is severely under-resourced, and the people who suffer most are those with the fewest alternatives.

On behalf of the Public Transport Forum (PTF), Delhi, we urge the Government of Delhi to take the following steps:

1. Rapidly expand and strengthen public transport

Increase the bus fleet at scale, improve service frequency, and accelerate integration with the metro network. Reliable and frequent service is the backbone of any shift away from private vehicles. The number of buses in Delhi currently stands around 6000 which is less than half of the needed number as per the standard of 60 buses per lakh population set by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. The number of DTC routes has also declined sharply, [from 556 in 2009–10 to 437 in 2018–19](#). In our survey of bus users, more than half identified increasing fleet size as their most urgent demand. Service frequency must improve, and bus routes should be introduced again in areas with no bus access.

2. Invest in bus stop infrastructure and road space for high-efficiency mobility

Our [audit of 231 bus stops across Delhi](#) has found a systemic absence of basic facilities. This is consistent with the findings of *Riding the Justice Route*, where 82 percent and 89 percent of women bus users reported the absence of toilets and drinking water, respectively, near bus stops. Two in three women found lighting at bus stops inadequate. Over half of the women reported that bus stops lack route information in any understandable format. Women in peripheral areas (especially in resettlement colonies and urban villages) report far worse conditions than those in central Delhi.

Dedicated bus lanes, safe walking infrastructure, and cycling corridors can move more people using less fuel while reducing congestion. But they must be accompanied by basic amenities at bus stops, including designated stop, shade, signage, seating, lighting, toilets, drinking water, and route information. Without these, bus travel continues to be an endurance test, particularly for women.

3. Introduce immediate travel demand management measures

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Policies such as car-free days and flexible work arrangements can reduce traffic and fuel consumption in the short term. These are not experimental ideas; they have been tried before in Delhi and elsewhere. A study by TERI and ARAI found that vehicular emissions contribute up to 30% of Delhi's air pollution when secondary particles are accounted for. In addition to the year-round air pollution, the disruption caused by the war in West Asia gives the government both a rationale and the public mandate to act decisively on reducing the use of private vehicles. In addition, carpooling, shared transport options, and efficient goods movement practices should be promoted to optimise fuel use across the system.

4. Strengthen fare-free bus travel and extend it further.

Delhi's fare-free bus travel scheme for women has nearly doubled women's share of bus ridership. Our research with women bus users shows that the scheme has enabled access to work, education, and healthcare that was previously constrained by travel costs, particularly for women earning below ₹10,000 per month. Extending fare-free travel to students, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities, and eventually universally, would deepen the shift from private to public transport and directly reduce fuel dependence.

5. Use this moment to reimagine urban mobility

It is an opportunity to build a transport system that is affordable, clean and accessible for all residents of Delhi. With decisive action now, the city can set a national example in reducing oil dependence while improving mobility and air quality. This moment offers a rare window to move from incremental change to real transformation. We hope the Government will seize this opportunity to put public transport at the centre of Delhi's future.

We would welcome the opportunity to engage further and support this transition.

Sincerely,

Nishant

On behalf of

Public Transport Forum (PTF), Delhi