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WHO GETS TO MOVE?

SPATIAL INEQUALITIES IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS ACROSS DELHI

Public transport access in urban India is shaped by geographic power relations. Rahul Goel's research asks: Who gets to move in Delhi, and how? He presents a current geospatial analysis of public transport access in the city, and relates it to the socio-politics of housing and transportation sectors through a mobility justice framework. The analysis reveals a strong spatial and socioeconomic gradient—public transport access declines both with distance from the urban core and with falling neighbourhood socioeconomic status. The study traces these spatial patterns to historical housing development that undersupplied affordable stock, and to slum evictions from the urban core. These processes, which continue to this day, shaped the peripheral growth of localities led by private developers, who bypassed municipal byelaws of street hierarchy, effectively undermining transit provision. The gaps left are being filled by informal and private operators such as e-rickshaws. The resulting patchwork of land use and transit infrastructure has fragmented the public transport system. The findings highlight how work towards mobility justice in Delhi requires transformations to the political economy of urban governance that go beyond equitable spatial development of transportation.

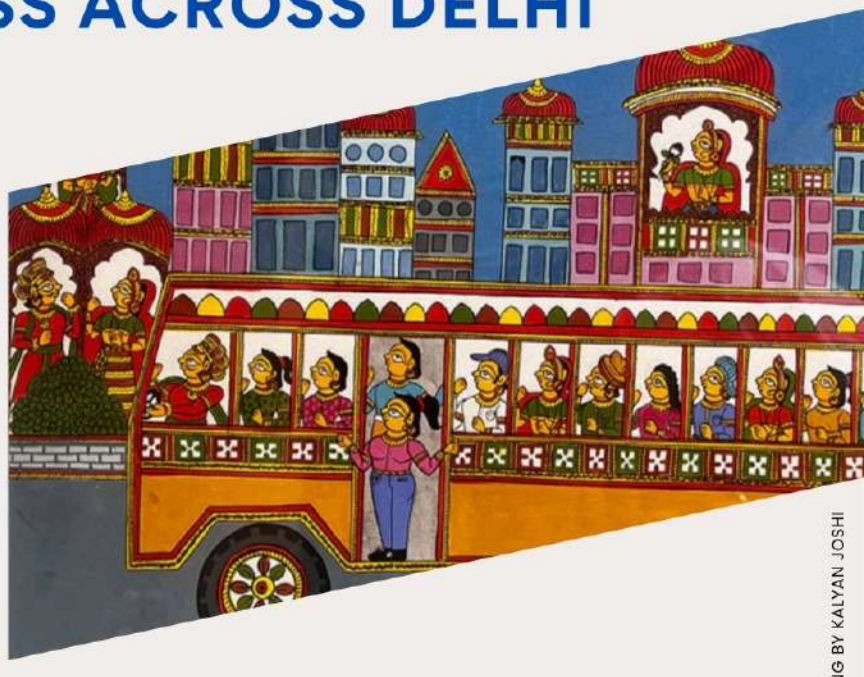

ILLUSTRATION: PHAD PAINTING BY KALYAN JOSHI

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Rahul Goel is an interdisciplinary researcher interested in the multi-dimensional question of the human experiences of transportation infrastructures, including sociopolitical and infrastructural determinants of travel behaviour and the health impacts of transport. He works at the intersection of public health, urban planning, and transportation engineering through use of innovative use of data sources.

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