

PAPER NO. 225

**TRANSPORT POLICY AND
ALLIED ISSUES**

BY

ENGR. MIAN GHAS-UD-DIN

TRANSPORT POLICY AND ALLIED ISSUES

BY

Engr. Mian Ghias-ud-Din

1. ABSTRACT

Transportation is the crucial and dictating factor towards the sustained development of national welfare and economy. Feasible and adequate Transportation facilities cannot be catered for the absence of an enlightened National Transport Policy framed by knowledgeable experts and engineers belonging to this field of national economy.

Transport Policy does not mean the creation of infrastructural facilities and projects which in fact are misnomer of the real Transport Policy. The Transport Policy has to be a short and concise, declaration of principles assigning judicious roles to various Modes of Transport such as RAILWAYS, ROADS, AIRWAYS, SHIPPING, INLAND WATERWAYS, PIPELINES AND ROPEWAYS, etc. Such a Transport Policy has to be based on the principle of Integrated Planning, making use of the most beneficial and economical modes towards well-being of common man and national welfare.

Once the 'MODEL SPLITS' have been decided based on reasonably appropriate forecasts, then the task of the Planners for conceiving Infra-structural facilities and Projects would be rendered easy and practicable. The Paper describes and postulates the principles of a comprehensive and feasible Transport Policy narrating the history of Transport Development in PAKISTAN, citing its pitfalls and failure during the last half century.

2. INTRODUCTION

Transport Policy is the fundamental document which spells out the development of Transport in any country. Without such a framework, the development activities in this vital sector of the 'National Economy' would be like a rudderless ship, adrift on the High Seas. But, alas, no Government in Pakistan since its inception on 14th August, 1947 has been instrumental to frame such a valid transport Policy till today. Heckneyed and half-hearted efforts made during various regimes could only bring about at best, modal lists of projects and works such as Communication Ministry devising schemes in the Road, Shipping port and Inland Waterways sub-sectors, Defence Ministry contriving mega projects in the Construction of Airports and allied infrastructure and P.I.A. singing its own song of purchase of New Airliners, etc. Railway Ministry and Railway Board promoting the purchase of New Locomotives, Passenger Cabs, Welded Railway tracks laid over concrete sleepers duly maintained through machines, etc. and finally installation of modern electronic signalling system including C.T.C. and modem

Ex-General Manager, Pakistan Railways and Consultant World Bank

Telecom facilities. But all these developmental schemes and facilities sub-sector wise were conceived, planned and constructed / procured in the absence of an overall integrated comprehensive framework of Transport Policy. The Planning Commission of Pakistan also failed to deliver the goods resulting in duplications, lopsidedness and waste of valuable scarce resources. The present sorry state of Transport in the country almost presenting a DOOMS DAY Scenario, to a large extent, is due to absence of a clear policy document to channelise its development along sound scientific lines.

3. WHAT IS TRANSPORT POLICY?

A close and careful appraisal of such documents from the developed countries reveal that the Transport Policy is primarily the political philosophy of the regime in power duly tempered with the latest scientific, technological-cum-economic knowledges in this field keeping in view the following pertinent considerations:

A comprehensive integrative approach resolving conflicting claims / goals of the major transport modes viz: Road, Railways, Inland Waterways Shipping including coastal shipping and Airways, etc.

The promotion of efficient and environment friendly transport modes keeping in view Economy for the user and national exchequer, Efficiency, Safety, Comfort, speed and frequency.

The promotion of inter-modal and multi-modal solutions for transport problems.

The implementation of higher environmental standards-Setting of framework conditions right by targeting the structure of supply and demand for mobility.

It may, however, be clearly understood that Transport Policy is not a PLAN of works, Schemes and Projects. The major area of difference is that whereas Policy has its origin in POLITICS implying benign knowledge related to Transport - Economics — Science and Technological advancement on global level. The Plan on the other hand is almost explicitly established science having its own structure.

4- THE UNDERLYING PHILOSOPHY

The National Transport Policy sets forth the Policy considerations that should underlie the Federal Governments' response to the national transportation needs as briefly hinted in para above. The transport policy is an evolving process that reflects and builds on existing laws, precedents, programmes, public perceptions and indicates the changes that are required to move towards a better Transportation Systems consistent with other important national priorities and aspirations. The policy also helps towards a more useful

definition of federal responsibilities viz-a-viz the provincial, local governments and the private sector. The cornerstones of the Transport Policy are basically as under:-

Political Acceptance means in accordance with the Manifesto of the Party in power and aspirations of the general public..

Resource Realistic means within the frame-work of the available resources .. both men and materials in the given time frame.

Socio-Economic compatibility means it should suit the genius of the general public and to be in line with the socio-economic conditions prevailing in the country.

Usefulness of Existing Investment means the existing infrastructure shall be fully utilized and integrated with the new systems,

PLANNING should cover short, long term plans including perspective planning for 20 to 30 years. AH these plans will indicate:

i) Various schemes and Projects modal-wise, inter-modal-wise and multi-modal-wise, ii) Design features iii) Cost Estimates iv) Year-wise allocations v) Completion Target dates vi) Performance auditing right from conception stage.

EFFICIENCY INBUILT—One of the most important goals is to run the entire transport system and each individual transport mode with utmost efficiency and economy.

DEREGULATED means the participation of both public and private sectors,

WELL-COORDINATED The transport sector by virtue of its very nature is fragmented. It is, therefore, very essential to ensure maximum coordination at City District, Provincial and national levels by having institutional statutory authorities who will watch implementation, operation and maintenance of respective systems of Transport.

SELF-SUSTAINING -means must pay the full cost of transportation facilities except where the public dictates a subsidy from the public exchequer.

R&D SUPPORTED Since Transport like other economic activity is a dynamic phenomenon which coupled with extremely rapid pace of technological changes,

need constant local R&D Support.

QUALIFIED MANPOWER BASED -Quality manpower is the most precious resource of any nation and its development and nature must, therefore, receive the highest priority in National Transport Policy. In the present age of Science and Technology quality manpower has assumed even greater importance for planning, design, execution, operating and maintaining an efficient and demand responsive transport system. Effective application and modernization of the transport system can become possible only when cadres of high quality Engineers, Scientists, Managers and other Technical Experts / Personnels as well as trained system.

5- IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Last but not the least is the implementation considering past record, the country has unenviable reputation of writing and approving lofty sounding documents which were never intended to be put to actual operation. In order to ensure that this document does not have the same fate, it is imperative that proper institutional, financial and operation reforms are built in this document. The measures needed in this regard are:

- i) Formation of a Ministry of Transport at the Federal level. All divisions, departments and institutions dealing with various Transport modes such as Roads, Road Transport, Railways, Airways, Inland Transport, Ports, Air as well as Sea or Dry, Shipping, Pipelines and Ropeways should be placed under the managerial umbrella of Ministry of Transport (MOT). This will facilitate the compliance of vital principle of Management viz: Unity of Direction, which means all businesses having similar purpose and objective should be placed under one umbrella of Managerial Authority to avoid pitfalls of waste of scarce resources, duplications and lopsided development. All the modes intended to achieve common objectives will have in-sights based on comparative study of their projects keeping in view the Economic cost to the user and national economy, safety, efficiency, etc. etc.

All the modes shall frame their short, long and perspective Transport plans to be discussed jointly under the overall umbrella of MOT. The Inter-modal, Multi-modal and integrated Transport plans on the national level, provincial and city shall be thus devised for consideration by the

- ii) National Transport Advisory Council to be headed by the Chief Executive of the country.
- iii) Provincial Transport Advisory Council to be headed by the Chief Executive of the Province in respect of Transport Scheme.

- iv) Metropolitan Transport Council to be headed by the Lord Mayor of the city in respect of urban transport schemes.
- v) Regulatory bodies on statutory basis will be created to monitor and oversee the comfort, safety and economic aspects from the common users' point of view whose verdicts on various issues of public interest shall be binding on the respective managerial authorities running the public Transport systems in the country.
- vi) The Ministry of Transport (MOT) may be made incharge to ensure coordination and implementation of the above stated institutional, financial and operational reforms.