

YASIN MALIK'S
CLEVER PLOY

JKLF's Yasin Malik is trying to play upon the emotions of soft-hearted Indians through his affidavit submitted in the TADA/POTA court in which he says that he doesn't wish to contest charges of his involvement in the murder of Kashmiri nurse Sarla Bhat and would embrace capital punishment. One is not sure about the impact of such an affidavit on the trial but he is surely trying to make a political speech by cleverly choosing to implicate important personalities from India's right wing in being in touch with him after his release from the jail. The evidence against him is overwhelming. Being the chief of the JKLF, he is involved in all the killings carried out by his group those days. Moreover, though the court is yet to finalise his trial in the case of the assassination of Sq Leader Khanna and other IAF officers in 1999 in Srinagar and Dr Rubiya Saeed abduction case, Yasin Malik has come to realize that he is sure to be given very harsh punishment including the death or life imprisonment by the court. Malik is a self confessed killer of six unarmed officers of the IAF – he said so boisterously in a BBC interview – and he has also been identified in the court by the surviviours. He was personally involved in the Rubiya Saeed's abduction, which trigged mass insurgency in Kashmir.

Yasin Malik deserved a fair trial but no public sympathy. He is trying to invoke sympathy from political and left-wing circles in his favour as a last resort for his escape from the court trial. Why did he bring his personal life into what should be a legal document. Again by seeking to divorce his Pakistani wife, he is trying to play on peoples' emotions. Law is not a joke and will take its due course in this case too. While Yasin Malik can do what he wants to media and analysts must refrain from jumping the gun and diverting from the main issue – terrorism.

India's steel sector and decarbonisation

Gopal K Sarangi | Suhani Yadav | Shubhi Goel

There are compelling reasons why the iron and steel sector has become a critical experimental ground for India's compliance carbon market. The steel sector constitutes a critical sector of importance to the economy and positions India as the second-largest crude steel producer globally. Importantly, the steel sector is under policy scrutiny due to its heavy dependence on coal-based production routes and the energy-intensive nature of ironmaking. High carbon intensity has put the sector under stress in the emerging context of global environmental trade measures such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). Given the strategic importance of India's steel exports, decarbonisation of the steel industry is no longer a policy choice but an implementation necessity for its business viability. The challenge, therefore, is not whether India should produce more steel, but how it can produce more steel with progressively lower emissions.

GEI targets for the iron and steel industry under CCTS

In this context, the recent notification of the emission intensity targets for the iron and steel industry under India's Carbon Credit Trading Scheme (CCTS) merits a deeper examination of its emissions implications for such a critical sector. Greenhouse gas emission intensity (GEI) targets, built on the mechanism of emissions per tonne of equivalent product, are very much in alignment with the developmental aspirations of the country. This strategic approach is designed considering the economic reality of India's developmental trajectory, where absolute emissions reduction could jeopardise the much-needed industrial expansion of the country. An intensity-based approach instead seeks to improve the carbon efficiency of every additional tonne of steel produced, allowing economic development and climate action to advance simultaneously. The framework, therefore, attempts to reconcile two



objectives that are often portrayed as competing priorities: sustaining industrial growth while steadily reducing the carbon footprint of production.

The inherent design principles of GEI for the iron and steel sector, based on the facility-specific emission intensity targets, appear to be fitting to the sectoral context, characterised by a large degree of heterogeneity in many operational aspects. India's steel industry is far from homogeneous in its use of technology, fuel and other critical aspects of functioning. Integrated blast furnace-basic oxygen furnace plants, coal and gas-based direct reduced iron (DRI) units, electric arc furnaces (EAFs), induction furnaces, ferro-alloy producers, and rolling mills differ substantially in their production routes, energy sources, raw materials and emissions profiles. Hence, applying a uniform emissions benchmark across such diverse technologies would impose a disproportionate compliance burden on facilities. Facility-specific targets instead recognise technological diversity and firm-specific heterogeneities while ensuring that every facility contributes to the sector's decarbonisation journey according to its operational realities. By bringing 255 obligated entities under the CCTS, the government is extending the compliance framework across a

substantial share of India's steel sector rather than limiting it to a pilot initiative. Collectively, these facilities account for approximately 149 million tonnes of equivalent product output and 359 million tonnes of CO2-equivalent baseline GHG emissions based on FY 2023-24 data. According to the proposed targets, the framework could deliver an estimated 20 million tonnes of CO2-equivalent emissions reductions by FY 2026-27, representing roughly a 5.6 per cent production-weighted improvement in emission intensity. More importantly, the notification marks the gradual evolution of India's industrial climate policy in tune with the overarching goal of 'Viksit Bharat' by 2047.

MRV becomes the key

The real innovation, however, lies not in the numbers themselves but in the institutional architecture governing the GEI. Effective carbon markets are built on trust in reliable and credible emissions data. Facility-specific baselines, transparent methodologies, and robust measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems form the foundation of any credible emissions trading mechanism. Without them, carbon credits risk becoming accounting exercises rather than drivers of genuine emissions reductions. Establishing consistent MRV systems across hundreds of facil-

ities with diverse technologies and operational practices will require institutional capacity-building, integration of digital reporting systems, development of technical expertise, independent third-party verification, and strong regulatory oversight.

Beyond domestic policy, the notified GEI targets carry important international implications. Export-oriented industries are facing growing pressure from investors, multinational buyers, and regulators to demonstrate transparent carbon accounting and measurable emissions reductions. Besides, mechanisms such as the European Union's CBAM indicate that carbon intensity will increasingly shape access to global markets. Improving emissions performance is therefore becoming an economic necessity rather than merely an environmental responsibility. The facility-specific GEI targets, while offering considerable flexibility and reflecting the operational realities of sectoral emissions, could create distinctive impacts for the MSME sector. Many small and medium-sized facilities may face higher compliance costs associated with emissions monitoring, reporting systems, process improvements, and technology upgrades. Without complementary measures such as technical assistance, capacity-building programmes, and targeted financial support, the transition risks widening the competitiveness gap within the sector. Ensuring that decarbonisation remains inclusive will therefore be essential to the long-term success of the framework. InstallSolar Panels

The GEI targets should also be viewed as the beginning rather than the culmination of India's carbon market journey. As industries adapt to emissions reporting and intensity targets, future compliance cycles are likely to introduce more ambitious benchmarks, broader sectoral coverage, and a more active market for Carbon Credit Certificates. The credibility established during this initial phase will therefore determine the effectiveness of future market expansion and India's ability to position carbon markets as a central pillar of industrial climate policy.

THIS TEACHER'S DAY, GIVE TEACHERS THEIR TIME BACK

Sakshi Sethi

Every few months, schools seem to discover something new that instructors must do: a fresh report, another portal, photographs from an activity, updated data, responses to messages and much more. Individually, each request sounds perfectly reasonable. Collectively, they are quietly changing the profession.

With Teacher's Day approaching, educators are frequently honoured as foundational mentors who guide future generations. Nonetheless, a more crucial question is how much of their daily time is genuinely allocated to teaching. A regular school day is a never-ending balancing act for teachers. A teacher walks between classes while juggling a slew of obligations, including tracking a troublesome pupil, remembering an ill child, grading notebooks or assignments, completing reports and notifying parents. Even the regular lunch break rarely provides relaxation. Instead, teachers use this time to help children, monitor corridors and playgrounds, manage playground conflicts and organise future activities. By the time these immediate responsibilities are completed, the break is over and the next bell rings. The unopened lunch box merely



demonstrates a common systemic issue: the belief that a teacher's time is endless. Technological improvements have hastened this expectation.

Although parent communication and administrative efficiency are critical, the convenience of digital messaging has created an expectation of a fast response. As a result, professional responsibilities extend well beyond dismissal. Furthermore, the modern emphasis on compliance paperwork has reached a crucial point where documenting educational achievements actively undermines their delivery. It is

teachers who photograph activities, upload evidence, maintain records and prepare reports. Yet some of the most important work in a classroom is precisely what cannot be photographed. Nobody documents the moment when a teacher notices that a normally talkative child has become unusually quiet.

No portal entry captures the extra explanation that prevents a ten-year-old from deciding, 'I am bad at maths.' No photograph captures a teacher choosing to correct a child privately because public embarrassment might stay with the child

longer than the mistake. These are small decisions. They are also education.

This is why teacher wellbeing should not be treated merely as a workplace benefit. A teacher's attention is part of a child's learning environment. So are patience, preparation and emotional energy. When these are constantly fragmented, the cost does not remain in the staffroom. It eventually reaches the classroom. This is not an argument against accountability. Teachers must be accountable. Parents deserve communication. Schools require systems and records.

However, successful systems should allow teachers to teach more effectively rather than making them busier proving that they have taught.

Perhaps this Teacher's Day, we should avoid expecting teachers to do more. Instead, school officials, policymakers and even parents might address a more difficult question: Which aspects of a teacher's workload truly benefit a child's education, and which have just become routines that we no longer question?

While presents, flowers and speeches on September 5 are well-deserved, the most effective way to thank a teacher is to give them the time and mental peace they need to focus on their children.

Ensuring public health through regulating food items

Subhash Chandra Agrawal

News reports about schoolchildren falling sick after taking food served under the Mid-Day Meal Programme. News reports frequently surface about insects, frogs, lizards, rats, etc., as well as substandard raw materials like rice and pulses, with many foreign ingredients reportedly used to cook mid-day meals in schools. Schools should serve only packaged food, preferably baked food, to ensure hygiene. It will also accommodate the peculiar food habits of some children, such as avoiding onion and garlic. Thirty Parliamentarians once appealed to the Government to replace cooked food in the Mid-Day Meal Scheme with packaged biscuits procured from reputed companies recommended by the Mumbai-based Biscuits Manufacturers Welfare Association (BMWA). The Government can save money by encouraging big packaged-food manufacturers to sponsor the programme in return for publicity for their trade names. Corporates can also be asked to fund the Mid-Day Meal Scheme with packaged food supplied under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), which is mandatory for large companies.

Extend scope of IRCTC widely to prepare packaged food for schools and trains

Units of Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) should be set up in every district of the country and should also produce baked items. IRCTC can provide packaged food products as mid-day meals in schools and to train passengers, where there are frequent complaints about freshly cooked meals. IRCTC products can then be sold in the open market to foster healthy competition with private companies and offer quality products at economical prices. IRCTC can raise initial funding for such a mega-project through long-term, tax-free bonds. It will also provide large-scale employment, even in rural areas, preventing migration to cities in search of employment.

Opening many IRCTC units in every district will create significant employment, preventing rural youth from rushing to urban areas in search of work. Funds for setting up such a large number of IRCTC units can be generated from special long-term, interest-free IRCTC bonds that are mandatory to disclose unaccounted black money.

Appreciable steps taken by FSSAI Food Production

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) deserves praise for taking steps to make it compulsory for all eateries to display hygiene ratings on their doors. But it should be ensured that the hygiene rating is not based only on cosmetic aspects of the dining area. The rating should also cover kitchen and storage areas. It is common for rats to be in eatery stores, and kitchens to be unhygienic.

FSSAI has also taken another important step to regulate the reuse of cooking oil through repeated frying, since repeatedly fried oil is a serious health hazard. The time has come for FSSAI to make it compulsory for every eatery, however small, to install RO water purifiers and prominently display information about their installation. FSSAI should also take steps to ensure that kitchenware for vegetarian and non-vegetarian food is kept separate in eateries to respect the sentiments of vegetarian people. This aspect should also be displayed prominently and compulsorily in all eateries.

Adulterated Honey
The Supreme Court on 19.04.2021

had sought comments from the Central and State Governments on reports of adulterated honey being marketed in India, even in popular brands of renowned companies, where some special type of sugar imported from China, mixed with honey, bypasses tests as required by the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

Research by the Centre for Science and Environment says only three out of 70 samples of honey marketed in India could pass the internationally accepted NMR spectroscopy test. If the report is correct, then it is playing with the lives of Indian people because diabetic people consume honey, as it is otherwise considered safe for diabetic people. FSSAI should adopt the internationally accepted NMR spectroscopy test for giving sale permission for honey.

Brown sugar should be compulsory

India is experiencing a severe diabetes epidemic, often termed the "diabetes capital of the world", with an estimated 101 million people living with diabetes and another 136 million with prediabetes as of 2025-2026. The best way to control such a diabetic epidemic is to make it compulsory to use

brown sugar for all commercial and medicinal purposes (syrups, etc.) instead of normal white sugar. Recently, a famous confectioner of Chandni Chowk (Delhi) introduced a specially prepared sweet for diabetic people. As demand for brown sugar grows, sugar manufacturers will divert production to it instead of white sugar.

Famous branded companies marketing packaged water bottles and cold drinks have dual pricing for the same product: one normal price for open-market sale, and a higher one for sale on flights, in theatres, and in five-starred hotels, etc. This anti-consumer practice must be stopped. The best is to set up water-bottling plants of Rail Neer, marketed by IRCTC, in different parts of the country.

Check use of harmful oils and animal fats

Harmful oils and animal fats are commonly used at roadside dhabas and in some eateries in the name of butter. Central and State Governments should take necessary steps so that such spurious 'butter' cannot be used. After the shocking incident of adulterated ghee being found in the holy prasad of laddoos at Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam during the earlier regime, it has become necessary

to take preventive steps to ensure that confectioners and eateries do not use such adulterated desi ghee. Manufacturers of desi ghee must mandatorily share the brand name and other details with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). Instead, such information can be made public by directing confectioners, eateries, etc., to display details of branded raw goods, including ghee and oil, at prominent places. Chemistry

Taking cognisance of alleged incidents of spitting and mixing urine in eateries in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath rightly directed that the name and address of operators, proprietors and managers be displayed at all food centres, making it compulsory for chefs and servers to wear masks and gloves, besides making the installation of CCTV cameras compulsory in hotels and restaurants. Even Minister Vikramaditya Singh of the Congress-led Himachal Pradesh government wanted to follow the same pattern.

With so many Rohingyas and Bangladeshis present in India, such steps should be mandatorily taken by all States, keeping aside pseudo-secular politics.