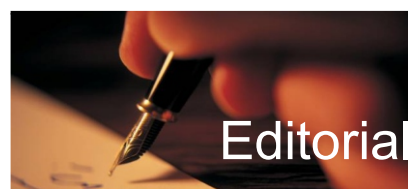


Mumbai Meri Jaan



Forward This To All - And All Forward - Together



Editorial

Citizens cooperate with nationwide lockdown to fight COVID 19

A survey done in the nation showed that 60% of citizens joined in the lockdown announced by the Prime Minister for 21 days. That's how India's positive cases as well as deaths were less compared to other countries in the world. In fact, World leaders praised India's initiative in fighting this menace.

During this lockdown period apart from STAY HOME STAY HAPPY, social



distancing was introduced. Social Distancing is the only way to avoid going to the 3rd stage, as there is no vaccine as of now for COVID 19. As per WHO it will take 18 months to come out with vaccine.

Despite most citizens cooperating with the rules of the Lockdown, there were a few violators and the government came down heavy by filing FIRs against them.

It is the success of this 21-day period that will determine how the country faced this Corona Virus pandemic. This will also help government to formulate a policy on this fight for COVID 19.

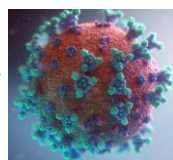
MMJ

Lessons to be learnt from the Corona-Shock-1

Only in times of crisis is that we can understand and assess our strengths and weaknesses in the progress of humankind. Let us identify them, so that we can strive to strengthen those forces in future.

1. We have to understand without any further demonstration after the onslaught of the last Sunami and the current COVID-19 that all countries in the world are inter-dependent and inter-connected. We have to be global in our outlook and egalitarian in our outlook.

2. We are one with each other, starting with our neighbours. Hereafter, we have to make more efforts to maintain higher standards of environmental hygiene in tune with our personal hygiene, since one cannot be isolated from the other; nor can we expect others to do it for us. The health of all residents in the country, whether they are immigrants from one town or the other,



Dr. Rao VBJ Chelikani, President, CoRWA (Confederation of Resident Welfare Associations in India), Editor, Tarnaka Times – A National Chronicle of Civil Society Life, is a quiet crusader for socio-economic democracy and has worked for over 2 decades to shape the resident welfare associations in India into what they are now coming to be accepted as the fourth tier of self-governance in Indian polity. Dr. Rao has been associated with UNESCO, Paris for 35 years, as president of Association Internationale pour le Partenariat Entreprises-ONG, International Association for Human Development, Coordinating Committee for International Voluntary Service and the Standing Committee of NGOs affiliated to UNESCO, Paris.



one state or the other and one country or the other is important to us; whether one is a servant-maid, manual labour, assistant, manager or boss, since we live in touch with each other.

3. History is not going to repeat itself. Poverty cannot kill anybody. There are no more fatal deaths due to hunger. There is complete food-security not only in terms of statistics, but also in the mind of the people. Enough quantities of food is available any time and everywhere as we have efficient and fast distribution system, including

in the far off villages. Not only we produce enough but the country is rich enough to deliver it free for anybody in the country in need

4. We are in the midst of a continuous information revolution with no final agenda since its infrastructure is in constant evolution. In the domain of **contd. on Page 4**

IMPORTANT NOTE
Due to National Lockdown, there will not be a Print Edition of Mumbai Meri Jaan April 2020 issue, only a NET Edition

Road Safety - Our Roles & Responsibility

Lillian Pais, H/West Ward Coordinator

On 16 January an interactive session was organised by Together VCAN (V Citizens Action Network) with Mumbai Police, Traffic Division Sri Madhukar Pande, IPS, Joint Commissioner Traffic Police met with citizens at Royal Bombay Yatch Club to discuss Road Safety - Our Roles & Responsibility.

Varied topics were addressed from ways to minimize traffic congestion, odd and even parking, fancy numberplates and the need to obey traffic rules to ensure safety. It was

abundantly clear from the discussion that "Our safety is in our own hands".

As representative of AGNI the following points were made

1) Traffic Wardens are doing an amazing job at various junctions in H/West Ward notably at the junction of Lilavati Hospital Bandra West and in front of Khatwara Darbar on Linking Road Khar.

There should be an increase in the number of wardens across the city to help ease traffic.

2) To implement fines for jay walkers who do not use the

footpath. We do have some footpaths that are usable!

3) Parking of vehicles in no parking areas or double parking as long as the driver is inside should be stopped as it causes traffic chaos.

4) Unauthorized rickshaw stands at corners of roads blocking traffic at intersections, for example, Rickshaw stand at the junction of Rebello Road and St John Baptist Rd Bandra West.

5) Pedestrian friendly footpaths by working hand in hand with **contd. on Page 3**

Swachha Mumbai Abhiyaan

Silver lining for the silvers (seniors)

Much before the Janta curfew or the National lockdown was declared, the Wadala West Citizens' Forum decided to step in to help senior citizens of Wadala.

Chief Minister Udhav Thackeray declared on 12th March that all malls, theatres, gyms, swimming pools in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thane, Nagpur, Pimpri Chinchwad to be closed from midnight till 30th march. On 19th march – Prime Minister addressed the nation and announced janta curfew on 22nd March 7 am to 9 pm.

However on 20th March, before PM's Janta Curfew and Country's lock down for 21 days, Rajul Shah, a retired teacher from J. B. Vachha School in Dadar Parsi Colony and a core committee member of Wadala West Citizens' Forum, sent out a WhatsApp message as under: -

"Today the only way we all can save our country is by total isolation. The most vulnerable group is above 60 years of age. I am sure that in our area also there will be many such elderly persons who are living alone. I think, as a group, we should take up their responsibilities as fetching their meds and groceries so that they do not have to step out. Let each one of us take the onus of this noble task on us at least for the people in our building and if any we know in the surrounding buildings. Please join if anyone is willing to volunteer for the same. I am sure we all will come out of this, stronger and more humane."

Chinmay Shah, another core committee member, responded immediately, and even undertook to take a lead in this initiative **silver lining for the silvers "seniors"**. Within minutes another seven, Paresh Gala, Chirag Shah, Sangini Lalwani, Niloo Sahni, Shilpa

Shah, Chirag Dedhia, Chirag Shah chipped in. Within an hour there were 9 and the list of these 9 was posted in the WhatsApp group of the forum with the names and roads).

Dear Friends

We would like to inform all senior citizens living alone in Wadala west to contact any of the numbers below either through call or whatsapp in case you need any groceries, milk or medicines. We will make sure that it reaches you without you needing to step out of your house. The amount can be paid to the person delivering it to your house. Kindly do not step out as the age group of 60+ years is the most vulnerable. Stay safe, stay healthy.

P.S. Anyone who wishes to volunteer for the same can contact any of the below numbers.

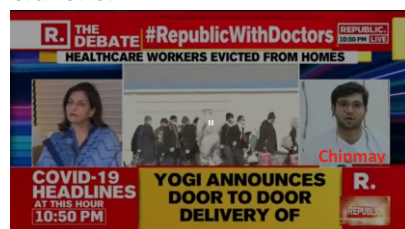
**The Strength of a People.
The Power of Community.**

Contact nos.

1. Rajul S	: 9920958870 (Noble Chemist Lane)
2. Chinmay S	: 9930661894 (David Baretto Rd)
3. Sangini L	: 9820670606 (Bansidar School Lane)
4. Shilpa S	: 9969708027 (David Baretto Rd)
5. Chirag D	: 9323366945 (Forward House Lane)
6. Chirag S	: 9322380383 (Jain derasar Lane)
7. Paresh G	: 9820427707 (Noble Chemist Lane)
8. Nitoo S	: 93222 11549 (David Baretto Rd)
9. Varun R	: 7304606087 (Sakar Panchayat)

Within days there were more volunteers from neighbouring areas added to the initiative - Matunga 1, Dadar 1, Sewree 2, Parel 2. This was later extended to senior citizens staying alone in Juhu, Santa Cruz, Andheri, Goregaon.

On 24th March, Chief Coordinator, Chinmay Shah was invited by Republic TV to join the panel for a discussion. Chinmay was asked about the project of helping senior citizens.



Later other groups like Round Table housing societies formed similar groups to help senior citizens in their areas. **MMJ**

Mumbai group launches free delivery service for senior citizens

Round Table India has launched a free home delivery service for senior citizens living alone. "We understand it is not safe for elderly people to come out at this situation," a statement from the organisation said.

Housing societies pitch in to help senior citizens Anjana Vaswani

With the city under lockdown and domestic helps not being able to show up at work, residents are looking out for elderly neighbours, offering to cook for them, run errands and even boost their morale

With many societies restricting the entry of maids and the lockdown making it difficult for domestic workers to commute, many seniors, who rely heavily on the support of helpers even for basic tasks like bathing and cooking, have been left in the lurch. Gautam Saigal, who acts as the co-ordinator for Raheja Hillside society in Chandivali, said that the situation has escalated so fast that it's every man for himself now. "No domestic worker has turned up for work, so there's no question of restrictions with regards to letting them in at the gate. As a result, even senior citizens have to manage on their own, whether it means taking care of themselves or grocery shopping. They have had no time to make arrangements or request the police to give special permission to their helpers," said Saigal.

The residents of some societies are, however, doing all they can to care for their elderly neighbours. At Oshiwara Tarapore Garden in Andheri (W), a complex which houses 10 buildings and 294 families, the secretary and committee members have listed the names of all the senior citizens and the kind of support each one of them needs. The complex's secretary Yatindra Pal said: "We have set up a canteen within the society, run by a member, to provide lunch and dinner at a nominal cost. We have a seven-day meal package for Rs 2,000."

In addition, the complex's housekeeping and security staff



have been asked to stay within the complex – their meals are being provided by the society. "The house keeping staff has been helping senior citizens to clean their homes and bathrooms once a day. If a senior citizen requires medication, since pharmacies are not delivering medicines, our staff goes to the pharmacy to purchase for them. The same is true for groceries," said Pal. A vegetable vendor visits the society twice a week. Additionally, three committee members have volunteered to organise whatever assistance their elderly neighbours may need. "For those who can't walk or need physical assistance regularly, we have given their helpers special permission to enter the complex, and I am applying for permission from the police to ensure that these helpers' movements [around the city] are not restricted" he said.

Meanwhile, at Bandra's Cozi Home, Madhu Poplai, a resident said, "We have requested people in the building to assist their elderly neighbours – be it grocery shopping or supplying food. I have an 86-year-old as a next-door neighbour and a 97-year-old in the next block. Although they have live-in helps, all the neighbours have offered to pitch in if they need anything. Aside from the elderly, someone prepared morning tea and another person prepared food for the security guards, too."

At this point what the isolated elderly people need more than ever is a morale **contd. on Page 3**

Housing Societies

contd. from Page 2 boost. At Byculla's Rustam Baug, this aspect is given due consideration. "At 6 pm every day, I sound a gong from the compound, and all the neighbours come out on their balconies to join in a prayer. It gives the elderly something to look forward to, and keeps the community spirit alive," said Hutoxi Doodhwala. She had to rush to the aid of a 70-year old with a special-needs child when she sought her help, crying inconsolably. "Staying locked in can depress people," said Doodhwala, who chatted with the neighbour from a distance of three metres, until she managed to cheer her up.

Doodhwala, who coordinates the activities of the baug that houses 33 buildings and some 330 apartments, said that in addition to the daily prayer ritual, "at the end of which, we may soon introduce games people can play from their balconies," younger members of the Byculla residential complex have volunteered to 'adopt' their isolated elderly neighbours, to take care of them. "If anyone is frail and needs help to move about, if they need food or someone to pick up their groceries or medicines, residents have volunteered to help them with that, too."

Kasber Augustine, president of Thane Citizens Foundation, added that many housing societies in the area have seen volunteers stepping up. "Neighbours are going out of their way to help senior citizens to shop and cook for them and to even offer emotional support. This is not extraordinary—it's just a basic, humane thing to do," said Augustine, speaking for societies like Vedant, Dosti Vihar, Kores Nakshatra and Laxmi Narayan Residency. "Neighbours have to be neighbourly," he said. **MMJ**

An appeal for donations

AAGNI is a movement managed and run by volunteers. Being a voluntary movement, AGNI needs the support and contribution of every citizen to continue its work. Citizens are invited to contribute their indispensable ideas, time, effort and financial support. Send Cheque / DD in favour of "AGNI" to any of our Ward Coordinators as listed on Page 4 or to AGNI Office: Chadha Bldg, 1st Floor, Plot no. 95, Wadala (West), Mumbai-400031

Bank Details for donations transferred electronically:
Account Name: AGNI, SB A/c No.: 000710210000005
Bank of India, Breach Candy Branch, Mumbai 400 026.
NEFT / IFSC : BKID0000007

BMC nod to fell 159 trees, transplant 151 more for Metro 2A corridor

Tree Authority also approved the appointment of a consultant for implementing plantation through Miyawaki technique on select locations across the city

The civic body's Tree Authority gave nod to fell as many as 159 trees and transplant 151 others for construction work on Metro 2A (DN Nagar to Dahisar) corridor. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) had issued a public notice stating that 304 trees would be removed for the purpose and asked residents to submit their suggestions and objections by November 8 last year.

The work on 18-km Metro 2A corridor is being carried out by the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC). An official of BMC garden's department said the trees are to be removed from Oshiwara, Kandivali and Dahisar.

"There are 1,223 trees on the site, but only 304 need to be removed. As per the HC order, we have asked the BMC to make sure that the survival rate of these transplanted trees is good. It was found that 74 per cent of trees transplanted under other Metro projects had died," Yashwant Jadhav, Shiv Sena leader and member of Tree Authority, said.

In August, the civic body had published public notices for removal of 1,600 trees for infrastructure projects, including 1,000 trees for the Mumbai Trans-Harbour Link (MTHL), which is being constructed from Sewri to Nhava Sheva. Last year, the city saw several protests over a

proposal to remove at least 2,600 trees for the Metro car shed project at Aarey Milk Colony.

The Tree Authority also approved the appointment of a consultant for implementing plantation through Miyawaki technique on select locations across the city. The Miyawaki technique was developed in Japan by botanist Akira Miyawaki to build dense native forests in urban areas. The initiative will be undertaken at several locations across the city to increase green cover in Mumbai.

Jadhav added he has asked the administration to ask the consultant to train staff from the civic body on this technique as well. "If they don't provide technique then again after some years we will have to appoint a new consultant for a similar project," he said. **MMJ**

Road Safety - Our Roles & Responsibility

Contd from Page 1 MCGM. Please give MCGM directions on which footpaths hawkers can be placed for commercial activity where at the same time pedestrians can use the footpath instead of walking on the road blocking traffic.

Some first in H/West Ward-
1) The first woman traffic warden in Mumbai is Anita Lobo and she spares no one whether politician or movie star for breaking traffic rules.
2) As of today the NGO Khar



Residents Association sponsors four Traffic Wardens.

Proactive Citizen groups in H West ward lead the way in bringing change for we believe "together we can". **MMJ**

You can get the e-edition of Mumbai Meri Jaan on your WhatsApp or email, Send your WhatsApp number or email ID to mmj.agni@gmail.com Forward MMJ to all your Mumbai contacts

AGNI is a Charitable Trust. Donations are eligible for exemption under 80G of the Income Tax Act.

Once you make a donation, kindly email us your Name, Amount and the Contact details to agni.central@gmail.com so that we can issue the 80G Certificate.

A VERY BIG THANK YOU

for donation received in March 2020 from:-

PLEASE NOTE:

Due to National Lockdown, AGNI office has been closed and hence we have not been able to access the donors for the month of March 2020. This will be incorporated in the next month issue.

Lessons to be learnt from the Corona-Shock-1

Contd. from Page 1 health, we are sharing best health practices, information about scientific and medical research, solutions, treatment and technology backed tools and devices for experiments, testing and treatment.

5. Unlike in the past, now we are capable of attempting to face any man-made or natural pandemic or calamity or disaster without passively submitting ourselves, where ever it might start, since there are now certain global physical and economic consequences, apart from humanitarian considerations. Firstly, not just bilateral agreements, there are international and inter-governmental organisations, which are specialised and internationally-funded to predict, prevent and to act in such emergency circumstances. Secondly, during these extra-ordinary circumstances, there are other international and regional international organisations, such as the IMF, the World Bank, G-7 or G-20 who intervene in order to not let deteriorate physical, human,

organisational infrastructures in the country, such as financial institutions such as banks, digital communications and 'social media', transport and travel, research institutions, hospitals and education. There is no scope for allowing total and long 'lock-downs' or institutional collapse or economic depression to happen invariably. Private businesses are supported to operate and maintain employment. Some popular welfare programmes, such as MNREGA or Jan Dhan are kept active. There is effective international cooperation for safe-guarding the human rights in all circumstances of the vulnerable groups, in the low-income countries. Trillions of dollars are being pooled and administered carefully. There is an almost implicit understanding for humanitarian intervention by external forces within national frontiers of any country, in case of any human suffering. In the past, the Super-Power rivalry and the Veto-Power used to prevent this happening quickly.

6. The Prime minister and the chief ministers and the Executive staff are talking directly to the people, as they are finding it more and more effective and efficient to deal with the help of the Administration, since the citizens are responding directly as stake-holders without being promoted by the politicians, since the latter do not represent anything precise or bring anything more to the citizens. If they intervene that would only add an additional layer or obstacle to direct communications for the governmental executives. Anyhow, since their elected representatives are part of the Executive branch as Prime ministers and chief secretaries and their ministers, democratic norms are respected. However, it is the civil society organisations like the Red-Cross, the RWAs, NGOs, the senior citizens organisations, activists of RTI, Human Rights, consumer associations and the individuals like the doctors, scientists, nurses, cooks, drivers, police, domestic

helpers who are directly participating in the governance in times of crisis

7. Unfortunately, our political structures which are conceived in the spirit of the Nineteenth century political context in England, did not find a place for the above active social forces in the field to be represented in the Rajya Sabha, in the State Legislative Councils and in the local self-governing institutions, such as the municipalities

8. Indirectly, in India, we are entering into a phase of direct democracy. Informally, many leaders who would like to be influential beyond their vote bank in one's own constituency and even beyond the national frontiers are resorting to social media channels like Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and even their own websites to talk directly to their constituencies and beyond and share their views and policies, without having to consult or associate and refer to any other representatives. They are proud of announcing the number of their followers. **MMJ**

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To volunteer in AGNI or to form Advanced Locality Management (ALM) contact your respective Ward Coordinators below

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