

Mumbai Meri Jaan



Forward This To All - And All Forward - Together



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Editorial

Making politics cleaner: ECI, voters, donors—all must act to rid politics of criminality

Nothing is ever done and nothing will ever be done and we have to put our hands up," observed the Supreme Court while ruing over the non-compliance of its directions aimed at decriminalising the polity in "letter and spirit" by political parties.

There is no denying that criminal charges against some may be politically motivated, but the larger point is that the political class needs to be told that criminal lawmakers won't be rewarded with electoral victories.

No wonder, then, that all assemblies covered in the ADR report underscored sharply that members with criminal antecedents had risen in higher numbers this election, compared with the last.

The Supreme Court on July 20th, 2021 rued the fact that the legislature has not acted to curb criminality in politics. An analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms, based on candidate-affidavits in the recent assembly elections in Assam, Kerala, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal, shows that about half the lawmakers elected are named in criminal cases—and nearly a third face serious criminal cases. The proportion of winning candidates with serious criminal cases within the total pool of winners for two national parties, the [BJP and the Congress, was 33% and 41%. The SC's realisation comes after multiple directions to the legislative branch of government to act. The SC has been thwarted because the political class knows 'winnability' matters more in electoral politics than clean antecedents.](#)

No wonder, then, all assemblies covered in the ADR report showed that members with criminal antecedents were in higher numbers this election, compared with the last. A very similar picture exists at the Lok Sabha level.

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OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE



Jennifer Shetty

One but not forgotten, he has left footprints in our hearts.

I am speaking of Gul Asrani, former AGNI Coordinator of A WARD.

I worked with him for 15 years. AGNI meant a lot to him. I recall very distinctly his tough yet impressive personality, a desire to make a change for the better in civic matters. In essence, he was a humble, humourous person with foresight, but someone who would not hesitate to assert himself in a situation of dissent. An admirable quality was his refusal to engage in any criticism of people.

He was in tune with current affairs and made sure he read the daily newspaper in depth. His favorite topic was "Social Auditing" and he wished to kick off the project with much gusto but unexpected circumstances would stall the project permanently.

When we travelled together for Agni meetings, he would often speak about the harsh realities of Partition and the

Our very own Gul Asrani



hardships he suffered during those unspeakably difficult times. But despite the unhappy memories, he always said, "chalta hai, life goes on." Often, he would discuss with candour the many girls who would swoon over his good looks in college—very much the much sought after man-about-town!

There was much to admire and appreciate in Gul, qualities that I will remember for many years.

Jennifer Shetty is AGNI's Coordinator in A ward. MMJ

A Mumbai Memory - A poem dedicated to our frontline workers and the courageous people of Mumbai



Mario Fishery

Mumbai Memory is a modern spoken word poem that takes you through the pandemic in Mumbai. It speaks strongly about our frontline workers and the sacrifices they have made for our city and also warns us that if we don't stay alert and maintain safety protocols then we could be heading



into a third wave and a lockdown. It ends with a

beautiful message: "Mumbai, Maharashtra, India is healing and we determine its faith."

Here is the link to the poem <https://youtu.be/0FY377CtUfU>. Do share and create awareness.

Mario Fishery is an AGNI volunteer from the ALM Bandra (W) MMJ

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THE ICONIC JUHU BEACH-Part 2

👉 Zahida Banatwala, AGNI Trustee

In continuation with my article on Juhu Beach, while I have highlighted what ails Juhu beach there is a lot that can be done to protect the beach and the polluted sea. In the course of monitoring the beach cleaning and the problems faced by the cleaning contractor, there are certain problem areas which if tackled well would bring about sustainable changes to protect this beautiful strip of coastal land.

One of the chief causes of the pollution of land and the sea is the unchecked garbage, sewage and other effluents discharged into the sea. Since we are on the subject of Juhu Beach let me focus on this area. There is the Irla pumping station which was built to prevent the city from flooding, it has gates which are periodically opened to discharge water particularly during the monsoons when there is very heavy rain combined with high tide. What happens in the process is that the debris finds its way into the sea. It was only in 2019, with some research done by the Councillor of Ward 69, Ms Renu Hansraj, that a method was demonstrated whereby trash booms were installed at the mouth of the nullah which helped prevent floating material from entering the sea. While this is being done at snail's pace, the dumping far outweighs the clearing. What could be helpful is if year-long debris are cleared and non-biodegradable material collected to be appropriately disposed of. Even more important is

the installation of a sewage treatment plant to ensure that untreated sewage is not allowed to enter the sea.

As far as the littering by visitors is concerned, if we had sufficient bins for wet and dry waste we would be able to control the waste dumped. However, here the bigger problem is the reluctance of our citizens to comply with the rules or to be conscious of their actions which damage the environment. Food court and numerous illegal stalls simply dump cooked, uncooked food, plastic, glass, and various types of packaging material all together. This is extremely detrimental to the upkeep of the beach. Here CCTV coverage and heavy fines from the BMC would go a long way in curbing this menace. The housing societies, bungalow owners and all the hotels lining the beach pretty much require to be part of the surveillance as they do not hesitate to dump all their tree waste and debris on to the beach. At times even waste from storm water drain and sewage is discharged on to the beach. Heavy fines would greatly help check such actions. At this point I would like to mention that all festivals also generate a huge amount of waste at the beach, with the collection on festival days going up by a few hundred tons. This could be strictly avoided.

Citizens have to behave responsibly to prevent air, sea and land pollution of this great city.

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REFILL, DON'T LANDFILL

👉 Lillian Pais

Today's use and throw culture has resulted in landfills of non-biodegradable waste packaging, from where highly toxic leach percolates into our water bodies causing harm to life. In this distressing scenario we need to rethink "what we shop" to reduce waste reaching landfills.

The "refill concept" is not new to us. Original packaging such as milk bottles, aerated drinks and ink cartridges have long been swapped for lighter reusable packaging which is cost saving, as the refill pouch retails at a lower price than the standard plastic bottle while not sacrificing the quality of the product. A pouch is now an alternative refill pack to a standard plastic bottle and is increasingly popular.

A survey carried out in various grocery stores showed liquid and solid products like laundry detergent, fabric conditioner, skin lotion, razors purchased with refill blades are already sold in refill packs with a substantial difference in the per litre/unit price. Products like Cornflakes, Oats, Horlicks, Tea, Coffee, etc. are often sold in cardboard refill packs.

Worldwide more advanced sustainable refill options have been implemented. Some countries have introduced a "deposit system" where empty packaging is returned for cash back or coupons that can be redeemed for other purchases. Liquid cleaning agents are manufactured

and supplied in a 10x concentration which can be diluted by the customer at home to the required dilution to fill 10 bottles. The "In store self-dispense refilling" option for toiletries, detergents and for tea powder is popular.

We have found that the refill system has myriad benefits for the consumer as well as manufacturers, distributors, and retailers. Refill packaging not only helps reduce the use of single-use plastic but it can also be a great opportunity to reduce household waste as well as reduce the quantity of natural resources needed to package and deliver goods to the consumer. The reduction in transportation costs directly result in less fuel consumption. All these factors contribute to the reduced cost of the product for the consumer. If refillable packaging is designed carefully and applied to appropriate products it would reduce the carbon footprint of all manufacturers.

In India, four years ago the Indian Railways created a silent revolution by coming up with a comprehensive policy about installation of Water Vending Machines (WVMs) at railway stations across the country. Pure drinking water is provided in this manner for lesser price in comparison with packaged drinking water, while also eliminating the use of banned 200 ml plastic bottles used for packaging. Eco-friendly disposable tumblers of approved quality and design and water bottles of PET are used at these water vending machines. Hopefully the concept will be implemented across all railway stations in the country.

Buying a refill pack can save you several trips to that crowded marketplace as also precious time. Adopt that refill habit! **Lillian Pais is AGNI's H/West Ward Coordinator**

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Dementia Centre

👉 Dr. Sheelu Srinivasan

Dignity Foundation has established a new dementia centre at Neral which will admit 80 people stricken with the disease. The Foundation has another 144 cottages for independent senior citizens who do not require assisted

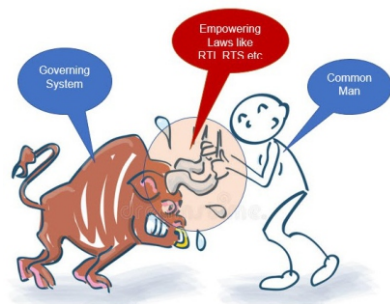


living.

Dignity Foundation activities in Mumbai and seven other cities with a new COO, Dr Sujay Joshi, are proceeding well.

Dr. Sheelu Srinivasan is the Founder Director of Dignity Foundation and a former AGNI Trustee

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Take the Bull by the Horns How to make the Governing System work for Citizens - 10

Shrikant Soman

(concluding part of this series)

Housing Society Affairs

The correct title is Cooperative Housing Society Affairs. But sadly, the management of most housing societies leaves far too much to be desired to qualify them as 'co-operative' ventures. In this article we will briefly deal with the rights of a member and related provisions in a housing society.

1 Every member has a right to receive a copy of the registered bye-laws (on payment of the prescribed amount) of the society as per clause 172.

2 Every member has a right to inspect free of cost books, registers, documents as provided in Sec 32(1) of the MCS Act 1960. These are: a copy of the Act, the rules and the bye-laws, the last audited annual balance sheet, the profit and loss account, a list of the members of the committee, a register of members, the minutes of general meetings, minutes of committee meetings and those portions of the books and records in which his transactions with the society have been recorded. He is also entitled to get a copy of these documents on payment of prescribed fees within one month.

3 Method of Allocation and apportionment of the cost of running the society

As a general rule, the service charges are to be levied EQUALLY amongst all the members, irrespective of the flat size. The cost of running a lift will be borne equally by all the members residing in the building in which lift is provided, but not by members whose building does not have a lift facility.

The following are the exceptions:

3.1 Property taxes

3.1 Water Charges: on the basis of total number and size of the inlets provided in each flat

3.2 Expenses on repairs and maintenance of the building: At the rate fixed at the General Body, subject to the minimum of 0.75 per cent per annum of the construction cost of each flat for normal recurring repairs.

3.3 Insurance Charges: In the proportion to the built up carpet areas of each flat

3.4 Lease Rent (applicable only if the Society is on leased land): The built up carpet area of each flat.

4 Redressal of Grievances

Any member who has grievances against the MC or the Office Bearers can approach Deputy Registrar in matters related to non-issuance of share certificate, non-registration of nominations, non-supply of the copies of records and documents, tampering, suppression, and destruction of the records of the society, Failure in preparation of the annual accounts/ reports the prescribed period, Reconciliation of Accounts, Audit, Audit Rectification Reports, Failure in conducting election/s before the expiry of the term of the Committee as per law. He can also approach the Cooperative Court in matters related to Resolutions of MC and GB, Elections to MC, Repairs, including major repairs, Internal repairs, leakages etc.

However, all said and done, every member and every office bearer of the Society should endeavour in right earnest to resolve the disputes in the true cooperative spirit and mutual respect and trust in each other going much beyond what the law has prescribed. This principle should be at the core of the functioning of any society. **Shrikant Soman is AGNI's Coordinator in R/North.**

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feedback

• Very informative article on GST on Housing Society by Mohit Pande – **B. T. Srinivasan, Senior Executive Vice President, Confederation of Resident Welfare Associations (CoRWA – an all India body), Hyderabad**

• Vaccination and the

Digital divide (MMJ July 2021 issue), a very nice article and true in every Indian State – **Harshala Raghuram, Retd. Teacher, Bangalore**

• Thanks a ton. Covid related articles are useful for all. – **Major Suresh Goel, Delhi**

TARNAKA TIMES

A National Chronicle of Civil Society Life

Tarnaka Times every month has been MMJ in their issue just as below:



Tarnaka Times Hyderabad Page 18 August 2021 issue

An appeal for donations

AGNI 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 400 031
Bank Details for donations transferred electronically:

Account Name: AGNI,
SBA/c No.: 000710210000005
Bank of India, Breach Candy Branch, Mumbai 400 026.

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

A VERY BIG THANK YOU
for Donations received

in the month of July 2021:

Rama Bijapurkar Rs. 15,000/=

Ramesh Narayan Rs. 10,000/=

Roger C.B. Pereira Rs. 10,000/=

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Isidore A. Dantas Rs. 5,000/=

Valerian Pereira Rs. 500/=

M(East) Ward officials support their residents

Asis Thakur

The ALM Members of BKSD Marg, Govandi



East, place on record the contribution of M-East Ward's Staff in tackling serious issues caused by the latest cloudburst in Mumbai.

On the night of Saturday June 31, 2021 a large portion of the compound wall of the B.E.S.T. Deonar Depot Residential Complex fell into the adjacent open nullah, causing disruption of the flow of rain water and water logging inside the complex where about 270 families live. On Sunday some of us along with Shri Anil Awale, the Chairman of B.E.S.T. Society, contacted the concerned person in the BMC Solid Waste Department of the Eastern Suburbs, Shri Pedne, and explained our problems after sending a few pictures of the situation. Despite Sunday being a holiday Shri Pedne visited the site and arranged



for JCB cranes to pull out all the debris lying inside the nullah. By evening all the debris were cleared and there was normal flow of water in the nullah. Similar problems relating to the continuous downpour



were faced in a neighbouring society, the Runwal Centre.

The officials of M-E ward along with the local



corporator were again helpful in resolving their problems. Damaged and open manhole covers have been replaced, while the garden department of the ward has planted saplings to replace the trees which fell during Cyclone Tauktae, thus maintaining the greenery of the ward. **Asis Thakur is AGNI's Coordinator of M/East Ward** **MMJ**

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