

MUMBAI MERI JAAN

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AGNI

Action for good
Governance &
Networking in
India
AGNI

Editorial

Zero flooding despite heavy rains for 4 to 5 days continuously at 2 chronic places in Mumbai – FIRST TIME IN MUMBAI'S HISTORY!

Indeed, BMC (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai) should be CONGRATULATED for the success of its efforts to contain flooding in Mumbai during monsoon.

For decades Mumbai used to get flooded at the two chronic spots, Gandhi Market at King's circle and Hindmata in Dadar East even with the slightest rain and it was a nightmare for shop keepers of both the areas with traffic coming to a standstill at both these areas. This time, despite very heavy rains continuously for over a week there were no flooding. This is for the FIRST TIME in the history of Mumbai. The Municipal Corporation need to be applauded for finally succeeding after so many years of trying to mitigate this menace. However, this year, they have a reason to rejoice as there were zero flooding despite continuous heavy rains for almost a week. They don't have to keep their goods at higher levels as before.

Thank you, Mr. Chahal, the Municipal Administrator and the BMC team in achieving this success.

In Wadala too, where there were floods at Wadala Station and R.A.K Road, this year it was conspicuously absent. The Wadala West Citizens Forum members felt good work and good results should not go unnoticed and unappreciated. They appreciated the BMC team for the good results due to their efforts.

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Two Chronic Water-logging Spots Become Flood Free This Year After Dedicated Efforts By Civic Body

The BMC introduced a fresh proposal that involved constructing an RCC open drain with grating on both sides of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Road. They also connected the drainage line at the King's Circle railway station to the Gandhi Market pumping station. These additional measures increased the total project cost by ₹7.25 crore, bringing the overall cost to ₹21.78 crore -FPI

This year, the Gandhi Market in Matunga and Hindmata in Dadar East, which were once notorious for chronic flooding during the monsoons, have been successfully removed from the BMC's list of worst flood-prone areas. The commendation for this achievement goes to the civic body's thorough and dedicated flood mitigation efforts

implemented in these two locations.

According to a report by Hindustan Times, during a meeting in Delhi last week, the civic chief Iqbal Singh Chahal shared a surprising revelation with an IAS officer from the Punjab municipal corporation. He informed **Contd. on page 3**

422 MPs, MLAs in Maharashtra since 2004 with serious criminal offences, shows analysis

Swati Shinde Gole / TNN

The average assets of each of the 1,326 MPs and MLAs elected between 2004 and 2023 in Maharashtra were Rs. 10.6 crore with forty of them rich enough to be rupee billionaires.

An analysis of the MPs and MLAs elected in this period showed that 715, more than 50%, have criminal cases with 422 candidates involved in serious criminal offences.

The Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), a body of professors, economists and academicians from prominent institutes that conducts Election Watches, and the Maharashtra Election Watch, released a report of an analysis of 14,117 candidates in Maharashtra who contested the elections and those who were elected during the two decades starting from 2004 in the Assembly, Lok Sabha elections and the bypolls.

The members of ADR, including its co-founder Ajit Ranade, stated that an act to bar tainted individuals from contesting elections was the need of the hour considering the pattern of candidates contesting and winning elections in the last two decades studied by the group. Ranade is also the vice-chancellor of Gokhale Institute

of Politics and Economics in Pune.

The report also said that the number of elected candidates having maximum criminal cases came from BJP with 227 representatives who declared their criminal backgrounds followed by Shiv Sena with 200 such candidates in two decades.

BJP scored over other parties with Rs. 14.39 crore as average

OVER 50% TAINTED MPS, MLAS



Of the elected 1,326 MPs and MLAs of the 14,117 who contested, 715, or more than 50%, have declared criminal cases against themselves

PARTYWISE				ASSEMBLY AND LOK SABHA SEATS	
	CRIMINAL RECORD	SERIOUS CRIME	CLEAN		
BJP	227	129	159	<p>➤ Forty of the 14,117 candidates are rupee billionaires</p> <p>➤ Twenty-six of the 1,326 MPs and MLAs are rupee billionaires</p>	
CONGRESS	95	45	172		
SHIV SENA	200	125	83		
NCP	107	64	143		
CPI (M)	4	3	2		
MNS	11	9	4		
SP	7	6	0		
INDEPENDENT	41	25	22		
OTHERS	23	16	26		
			TOTAL	715	422
				611	

assets among their elected candidates. Of these, 10 were rupee billionaires.

Ranade said the purpose of this detailed analysis is to keep the voters informed about the backgrounds of the candidates contesting elections and make an informed choice. "Creating voter awareness about candidates, we feel, is of prime importance so that we see the best candidates in the fray," he added.

The ADR **contd. on Page 4**

Each one forward this to all Mumbaikars on your email and whatsapp list

Visit to Irla Pumping station

 Zahida Banatwala, AGNI Trustee

There has been a huge public outcry with the amount of debris that the Arabian sea has been spewing since the last 3 weeks. Everyone knows about the methods adopted by the BMC and the efforts by the elected representatives to contain trash and plastic waste on the beach.

Unfortunately, all efforts have failed, hence it was decided to take a site visit to the Nallah, along with MLA Shri Ameet Satam, local citizens and BMC officers. We were informed that daily 1.5 tonnes of waste is collected from the Nallah and 6 Tonnes during monsoons. Mind boggling figures!

The question that arises, should we spend money in collection of garbage and cleaning the beach or should we concentrate on prevention of garbage being dumped into the nallah. Obviously the latter.



Hence after much deliberation it was decided to have to covers to the nallah and prevent the debris from entering the sea. There are about 100+ minor and major nallahs. We can cover the major nallahs, and screens to be installed on the smaller ones.

While the government bodies work on this, we as citizens have to take responsibility too. There is no regularized garbage collection in the slums, no segregation at all. Dumping of anything and everything, as was observed when we visited the Nallah. A marathon effort is required to correct these old

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Stalwart of Sanitation H/West Prakash Gohil transfered

 Mario Fishery, MMJ Editorial Board member

The Stalwart of Sanitation and Community Engagement in Bandra West, was given a warm farewell to Prakash Gohil, JO & IC Supervisor in H West ward. It's only fitting that we take a moment to appreciate the sheer magnitude of his contributions to our community. Prakash is moving on to D ward and while we are sad to see him go, we cannot help but feel a sense of pride in the remarkable work he has done in our area.

Prakash's tenure in Bandra West, covering areas like Chapel Road, Waroda Road, Mount Mary, Band Stand, and Bazar Road, has been nothing short of transformative. His relentless commitment to maintaining cleanliness and his

innovative strategies to improve waste management have made a significant impact on our quality of life.

One of the key highlights of Prakash's work was his close collaboration with ALM (Advanced Locality Management) team members from all areas. He understood that the best solutions often come from the people who experience the problems first hand. His approach to getting input from the community, and implementing their suggestions, led to creative and effective strategies for keeping our neighbourhood clean.

Prakash's initiatives were not limited to the usual responsibilities of his role. He went above and beyond to introduce

contd. on Page 4

Stories of Good Governance

Hospital Healthcare Delivery - Poor Patients - Part 2

 Shrikant Soman, AGNI Trustee

In many hospitals there is no separately earmarked Ward for patients under the Indigent Scheme in violation of Law. In these hospitals the fake poor patients occupy regular Wards. However, in our hospital, we have specifically earmarked a separate Ward for patients under the Scheme.

Sometimes we were not able to filter out such patients (due to perfect documents, though fake). These patients then would try to 'influence' us to get located in a regular paying Ward (while at the same time enjoying the benefits of free treatment). It was really a headache to control such pressures.

Let me tell you a radically opposite story. There was a really very poor patient. He was admitted to the Indigent Ward. He has no documents with him. He had a really haggard appearance, torn clothes, malnourished and illiterate. Really speaking he was the right candidate to get benefits under the Scheme. But he was neither aware nor could understand what we were talking about the Scheme. Our staff were reluctant to admit him because of the fear of being pointed out in the audit of the Charity Commissioner for lack of documentation. At my personal responsibility, I admitted him under the free scheme. He was well treated and got discharged a few days.

He had given his address as some shop in Byculla. I sent my staff to locate his residence so that we could help him in getting the proper documentation. We had a hard time locating him. Finally we located him under the Byculla Bridge. He was staying on the pavement. It was next to impossible to get his documents.

In our governing system nobody is



seriously interested in helping such people. At institutional level, we were 'sitting ducks' for statutory violations. The authorities have the least sensitivity for humanity. But I decided to dare them. The file of that real poor patient remained incomplete with respect to supporting documents.

The routine audit was done by the Charity Commissioner. We made special efforts to draw their attention (आ बैल, मुझे मार 😊) about the lacuna in documentation and explained the circumstances of this particular case. It was a legal dare given to the authorities with very few chances of winning it.

But to our pleasant surprise, they allowed it (I won't say approved it, but they simply looked the other way). My conviction was validated that sometimes even tweaking the law is necessary by a person in authority in order to impact the positive change for delivering the benefits of the Scheme to the real people for whom it is intended. One needs to have a conviction and guts to do it.

There are several schemes by the Government to help the poor in various fields like education, food, employment etc. The benefits under these schemes do not reach out to the intended population. Very large budgetary provisions are made and the taxpayer is squeezed to fund them.

We need to have a fresh look and out of the box solutions to make our dream concept of 'Welfare State' really functional.

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R/N LACC MEETING

 Willie Shirsat, AGNI's R/North Ward Coordinator

As promised in last Inaugural LACC MEETING held on 1st July' 2023, the Asst. Commissioner Vengurlekar that he will conduct next Meeting on 15th July 2023, so be it today LACC MEETING was conducted in Pathare Chowki.

Apart from Asstt. Commissioner Vengurlekar and his team of officers, heads of Departments, the meeting



was packed with citizens representative, NGOs NGOs Associations/ Federation office bearers, Activists Our citizens representative's attendance.

Vengurlekar welcomed the citizens and informed his officers that this LACC institution had long decades of outstanding record of serving the community, It's an institution that gives us



feedback on issues in R/ N WARD & we need to resolve these issues. Clear cut examples he gave was that these Citizens work free voluntarily whereas we are paid to work to solve these issues and on a serious note he advised his Officers to involve in LACC so that all issues are addressed successfully.

Citizens Representatives'



group is administered by three Coordinators Representatives of AGNI, BDJNM & NLRRA. Since last 20 years. Coordinators, had to start LACC after Covid times of more than 2years. With experience of last several years they have made an Undertaking to be signed by all members. It's a CODE OF CONDUCT to maintain discipline during the proceedings of LACC. CITIZENS issues are addressed on complaint forms. Every complaint is given token No for reference to follow up.



Complaint form constitutes Complainant's name Mobile No, Issues with brief details of location and exact nature of issues.

This complaint forms are given to BMC CONVENOR of the Meeting. Next meeting follow-up is taken on complaint.

Several responses came from Citizens. They were well addressed by the Asst. Commissioner Vengurlekar Few of the responses were:

- Garden dept. trimming of trees
 - Several Apps are available Service providers digging up and not resurfacing.
- many more issues came up.

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Social Media Toolkit for Social Activists

 Mario Fishery, MMJ Editorial Board member

Social media has become a powerful tool for social activists to amplify their voices and spread awareness about important causes. The AGNI team conducted a Social Media Awareness drive with



all its coordinators in Mahim to showcase the tools used by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).

The Training Covered:

- Twitter
- Instagram
- MyBMCAApp and website
- MyBMC WhatsApp
- WaterBill and Property Tax Payment

With the ability to quickly and easily connect with a large audience, social media has allowed activists to voice out their concerns, coordinate with other activists, and garner support from people around the world. Social media platforms

such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram have enabled individuals to share their



stories and experiences, raise awareness about social issues, and hold those in power accountable.

Through the power of social media, social activists have been able to create real



change and make a significant impact on the world. If you are interested in learning more then there will be a follow up advanced session with a deep dive into using Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and other Government apps in the next session. Connect with your local coordinator for session dates.

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Mumbai floods this year

Contd. from Page 1 the officer that Mumbai did not make headlines for flooding this monsoon season. Chahal attributed this achievement to the successful construction of holding tanks in Gandhi Market and Hindmata, which efficiently suck out water from these areas and transfer it to an underground tank.

The pumping station can pump out 2.33 lakh litres per minute

Chahal elaborated on how the introduction of a mini pumping station was instrumental in keeping Gandhi Market free from flooding. The pumping station boasts an impressive

capacity to pump out 2.33 lakh litres of floodwater per minute. It consists of a pit and a storm water drain line, responsible for transporting the water from Gandhi Market and the main arterial road up to Bharat Nagar railway nullah near King's Circle. From there, the water is further carried into the sea, effectively preventing flooding in the area. The positive impact of these measures has been evident, as residents and shopkeepers in the vicinity have attested to experiencing a significant change after nearly five decades.

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A VERY BIG THANK YOU
Mr. Vijay Menon
for your Donation of
Rs.10,000/=

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Stalwart of Sanitation H/West Prakash Gohil transfered

contd. from Page 2 house-to-house garbage pickup, a service that significantly improved the cleanliness of our streets. He also implemented banners displaying pickup times in various areas, helping residents better manage their waste disposal.

Perhaps the most impactful change was the introduction of dry waste pickup across Bandra, a significant step towards recycling and environmental sustainability. Prakash also took a stand against open dumping, removing various open dumping sites that were previously blights on our community's landscape.

His involvement wasn't limited to his professional duties. He was always available to address any concerns, and he was an enthusiastic participant in local community events, such as wall painting etc. His vibrant personality and earnest dedication to his work fostered a sense of unity and pride within our local community.

Prakash has set a high standard for his successor in



the H West ward. The tangible transformations he achieved here are a testament to his skills and dedication. As he moves into his new role in D ward, we are confident that he will continue to excel and lead with the same fervour that he demonstrated here.

Prakash's departure is undoubtedly a loss for the H West ward, but we are excited for the residents of D ward who will now benefit from his leadership and commitment. We are grateful for his service and will miss working with him dearly.

As Prakash Gohil takes on his new responsibilities, we extend our heartfelt thanks for his outstanding service and wish him all the best for his future endeavours. His legacy

422 MPs, MLAs in Maharashtra since 2004 with serious criminal offences

contd. from Page 1 team felt that money power and muscle power have a large bearing on the outcome of the election results. Fake news, hate speech used by candidates for popularity

"Lately, along with money and muscle, it is also the media presence of candidates

increase popularity by candidates," Ranade added.



that is contributing largely these days. Fake news, hate speech, and other such tactics are used as gimmicks to

The analysis shows 227 of the 386 MPs and MLAs elected on BJP tickets since 2004 have declared criminal cases against themselves, whereas, 95 of the 267 representatives elected on Congress tickets since 2004, 200 of 283 Shiv Sena representatives, 107 out of 250 NCP representatives and 41 of 63 independents have declared their criminal cases.

State coordinator of Maharashtra Election Watch Sharad Kumar said voters should be aware that there is also a NOTA option during polls and they should exercise it after carefully studying the background of the candidates.

"The onus is on the voters to choose. If parties do not take the right step, voters definitely have the option," he said.

He added, "If NOTA wins, the election commission will have to conduct the elections again. It means that the parties will have to field able candidates."

The study also found the correlation between criminal cases declared by candidates and their chances of winning through a formula __ there are 19% chances of winning an election for those with criminal cases while those with a clean record had just 6%.

Stalwart Gohil

in Bandra West will continue to inspire us, and we are certain that he will make an equally significant impact in D ward.

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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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