

MUMBAI MERI JAAN

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AGNI

Action for good
Governance &
Networking in
India
AGNI

Editorial

Know Your Candidate App by ECI – Will SEC also have a similar one for BMC Elections?

The Election Commission of India has developed Know your Candidate (KYC) Applications for both Android and iOS platforms for informing users about “Criminal Antecedents” status of



candidates. This allows citizens to browse candidates backgrounds and empowers citizens to know about the criminal antecedents of the candidates.

After making it mandatory for political parties to publish why a candidate with a criminal record was selected for election, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has launched a mobile application 'Know Your Candidate' for electors to know the particulars and criminal antecedents of any candidate. The app has been developed to provide wide publicity and greater awareness regarding criminal antecedents of contesting candidates to ensure transparent election.

The returning officers (RO) have to ensure that the right document is uploaded on the app, they should select the checkbox “Yes” or “No” for Candidate Criminal Antecedent and upload the scanned document submitted by the candidate in Encore offline nomination. The Returning Officer also needs to re-verify and ensure that the checkbox is marked appropriately as “Yes” or “No” as per the details submitted by the candidate.

What about BMC Elections?

Will the State Election Commission also introduce a similar App for the BMC Elections? In this connection, in the 2017 BMC Elections, the State Election Commission had kept a flexiboard at every polling stations giving details of candidates in the particular constituency for voters to vote through informed choice. However, at the polling station there is hardly any time to go through them. Instead a similar app for BMC elections will give real time informed choice to the voters. They can see the App before they leave for voting.

The Know your Candidate (KYC) App is available on both the Google Play Store:

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.eci.ksa> and Apple App inStore <https://apps.apple.com/in/app/kyc-eci/id1604172836>

MMJ

POLICE COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE TO MUMBAIKARS

It's a matter of great honour for me to be your Commissioner of Police. And I am writing this first post to you with a deep sense of humility

and responsibility.

While I took charge this month, I have spent last 30 plus

Contd. on Page 4



BMC Elections 2022 in limbo! - Supreme Court ruling on OBC

The Court rejects the report recommending 27% OBC quota in local bodies for lack of empirical study, State cabinet decides there won't be elections without reservation: SEC to take a call

The Shiv Sena led Maha Vikas Aghadi government received a major jolt after the Supreme Court rejected the interim report submitted by the Maharashtra State Backward Classes



Commission headed by Justice (retired) A. V. Nigude, strongly recommended the restoration of 27 per cent political quota in local bodies subject to a permissible upper limit of 50 per cent, excluding statutory reservation for SC and ST.

The Court also directed the State Election Commission to notify the election process in the local bodies where it is due without further delay and to comply with its earlier order by which it had directed that the OBC seats be treated as general category ones. The bench said that the interim report of the commission itself mentioned that the same is being prepared in the absence of empirical study and research.

The State Cabinet chaired by Chief Minister, Udhav Thackeray, within minutes of the order, met and unanimously decided that there would be no elections without OBC quota.

On December 6 last year, the apex court stayed elections to 27% OBC category in local bodies, stating that the state government before deciding to earmark the quota had not followed the mandatory triple-test

laid down by it. The triple test requirement is a three-pronged criteria set up by the top court in previous judgments to mandate OBC reservation.

The three criteria are:-

1. To set up a commission to conduct rigorous empirical inquiry into the nature and implications of the backwardness in local bodies within the state.
2. To specify the proportion of reservation required to be provisioned local body wise in the light of the commission so as not to fall foul of over breadth.
3. In any case such reservation shall not exceed the aggregate 50% of the total seats reserved in favour of SCs/STs/OBCs taken together.

The political parties are firm that they will not allow elections without the OBC reservations. So dates for the elections are in a limbo.

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BMC comes under administrator without elected members after 40 years

The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (Popularly known as BMC) came under a single administrator for the first time in nearly four decades, with the term of the publicly elected general body lapsing on March

7, 2022.

The appointment of the Administrator will be valid till the date of the first meeting of the Corporation to be held after the forthcoming BMC election. Contd. on Page 4



Citizens' Power

 Zahida Banatwala, AGNI Trustee

While the Maharashtra government is still dilly dallying about when the Municipal Elections will be held, we citizens of this great country have time for introspection. We the people of India are the ones who are put to test. You may ask how? The answer is by playing a participative role. Elections will come and go, this year Corporation elections, next year Assembly elections etc.



Our fundamental duty is to vote and urge all others around us to do the same. If we don't vote we lose the right to complain.

Having exercised your vote, the next step is to work with the elected representative, no matter which party he/she may be from. In an ideal world, a citizen is expected to vote, pay one's taxes and be a responsible citizen. However, in the real world it's not so, you also have to be vigilant and aware of your surroundings.



Hence arose the concept of ALMs and citizens' groups to be watch dogs and the eyes and ears of your ward. It's up to citizens to demand the services we are entitled to. In H West and K West a lot has been achieved due to the power of citizens. Many encroached lands have been freed for citizens' use, hawking has been regulated and slums relocated.

Citizens insist on being informed about storm water drains cleaning schedules and monitor the same. So also cleaning and brushing of roads. In K West a very important and crucial area is Juhu beach, it's citizen's victory all the way as



constant monitoring of the cleaning schedule and working with elected representatives has resulted in a spanking clean Beach. To conclude it's imperative that citizens get involved in all aspects of governance and work in collaboration with the elected representative. The results are very satisfying.

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FIRST MEETING OF POWAI ALM

 Pamela Cheema

The Powai ALM had its first meeting on February 26. Six members of the ALM representing housing societies in the Hiranandani complex, Jal Vayu Vihar and MHADA were present at this first meeting. The BMC was represented by officers of the traffic police department, solid waste management and garden departments. The meeting was held in a cooperative and cordial atmos-

phere with the officials of the various departments listening carefully and trying to help.

ALM members complained about traffic snarls and noise pollution. The police official, Mr Sonawane, who was deputed to attend the meeting, listened patiently to the complaints about speeding bikers at night and shared a WhatsApp number which one can call for such complaints and also urged

How to achieve 100% Segregation of Waste

 Lillian Pais

Today we are compulsorily segregating waste and this is no mean feat. Convincing a few can be extremely difficult especially if they have the "I pay my taxes, let the BMC do some work" attitude.

Recently I got a call from a society telling me that after meticulously segregating waste for years, the BMC officer has told them that they are going to be fined. After asking them a few questions I realised that they were segregating waste but the wet/organic waste was being disposed of in plastic bags making this mixed waste.

The word "wet" has confused many and it may be prudent of BMC to call it Organic Waste instead. Similarly, dry waste should be termed Recyclable Waste. These words are self-explanatory, leaving no doubt and would have set us on the right path from the start. So in all this word play how does one achieve 100% segregation of waste at source with the least confusion?

For individual bungalows this is easy but how do we do this in multi-storey buildings? Having a committed Managing Committee and correct infrastructure will ensure success. Colour coding of bins ie. green for organic and blue for recyclable would be desirable whereas labelled bins are mandatory.

The first step is at home where the waste is generated

Having separate containers in the kitchen for organic waste, sanitary waste and recyclable waste is fundamental. Organic waste must be collected in paper bags or bins lined with paper. Sanitary napkins & pampers need to be wrapped in newspaper and a



red cross marked on it. Rinsing food off containers makes recyclable waste more profitable.

The second step is door-to-door collection by a society's housekeeping staff

The housekeeping staff must similarly have separate containers for collection so that nothing gets mixed. Most societies find it easy to use two plastic drums - for organic & recyclable waste and a recyclable sack bag for bathroom waste.

The third step is storage inside the society until collected by BMC

The waste once collected needs to be stored separately in the same manner in the compound. The containers should be duly labelled so that anyone who would like to dispose of waste on their own will know what goes where.

The fourth step is collection by BMC or NGO deputed for the same

The organic waste is collected from the society gate daily. Recyclable waste is collected twice a week from inside the society. Sanitary waste can be handed over separately to both the collections.

Further segregating recyclable waste into plastic, Tetra Pak cartons, electronic waste, hazardous waste etc helps with timely, cost-effective recycling efforts.

BMC has a Call on Debris pay service for **Contd. on Page 4**

citizens to take pictures of such vehicles for further action.

The solid waste department has promised the replacement of old and rusty steel waste bins seen on many pavements and have promised to replace them with new ones when their budget is sanctioned in April. There were also vociferous complaints about dog poop on pavements and leasing of the garden in front of Jal Vayu Vihar

for commercial activities which has led to intolerable noise pollution and unbearable traffic. Equally vociferous were complaints about hawkers and the plethora of hoardings in the area.

However, the meeting was marked by cordiality and the willingness of BMC officials to listen to suggestions and adopt mitigation measures.

Pamela Cheema is AGNI's Coordinator in S ward

MMJ

Locals Adopt Malad Street To Keep Hawking At Bay

Here's an example of citizens stepping in and offering to do their bit for their neighbourhood.

Malad-based Bhoomi Park Advanced Locality Management (ALM) which has been fighting the hawker menace in their locality for the past several years had an adoption event wherein they got official permission from BMC to adopt pavements and a street in their locality and beautifying the same by paintings, placing flower pots and ensuring regular maintenance of the pavement and street to keep hawkers at bay. The ALM will adopt three internal streets — Baf Hira Nagar near Bhoomi Park gate phase 3, Marina Enclave and Jankalyan Charkop Road.

The members held an event and also placed a board stating 'No hawking' below the name 'M'. Many said that if more residents took ownership of pavements and footpaths outside their respective localities, it could keep hawkers at bay from footpaths which could then be used only by pedestrians to walk on.

Shyamlee Duggal, secretary of the ALM, said that the area attracts all kinds of hawkers who sell fast food and even houses garages besides anti-social elements.

"In the past, BMC has taken action against the hawkers but they come back in no time. We therefore requested that we as

residents be allowed to maintain the streets and BMC agreed to the same," said Duggal who got the ALM registered in 2014.

BMC in its permission letter allowing it to maintain the road has stated that the beautification of the footpath should be done in a way that it should not obstruct pedestrian movement. The permission given by BMC is valid for one year and will be renewed on merits, stated the letter.

Local Shiv Sena corporator, Geeta Bhandari, said that it was a good initiative and she also plans to extend her support towards it. "After Covid hit us, many lost their jobs and we found a sudden spurt in hawking. The footpath in the area has hawkers selling everything from vada pav to biryani. Now that the locals have been given the responsibility, I have also told them that I will in future like to give some of my corporator funds for beautification of the footpath," she said.

Another ALM member, Shradha Godya, said it's a baby-step and they are aware that there is a long road ahead. "We want to find a sustainable solution. BMC could identify hawking zones so that footpaths remain only for pedestrians and can be maintained well," she said.

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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,
SB A/c No.: 000710210000005
Bank of India, Breach Candy Branch, Mumbai 400 026.
NEFT/IFSC: BKID0000007

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

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R/N VACCINATION CENTRE CLOSES March 28

 Willie Shirshat

The second lockdown started on May 4, 21. Vaccination centres were started in all wards and in our ward No 8, the centre started on May 11, 2021. In our ward our corporator, Harish Chedda, managed the vaccination centre. Thousands of people took advantage of the centre and got themselves vaccinated.

The AGNI JAAG of the ward and BDJNM presented a bouquet to the corporator and a rose each to the volunteers who managed the centre. We appreciated the systematic management and smooth operation of the centre.

Willie Shirshat is AGNI's Coordinator in R/N

MMJ

Broken grating at Cama Galli naka

 Kishor Chudasama

There is a broken grating on a storm water drain at Cama Gali naka, near Morbivala gathia, at Ghatkopar west. I slipped on this grating, my laptop got irreparably damaged and I have injuries to my leg, hand and elbow.

A little ahead, near SNTD college, there is another storm water drain which has huge gaps along the length of the road. The BMC must rectify this



I had complained on Twitter 10 days ago about these issues but the BMC has not yet repaired these storm water drains.

Kishore K Chudasama is AGNI's Coordinator in N ward

MMJ

Garbage Segregation at Jeevan Bima, Borivli

 Willie Shirshat

Jeevan Bima Nagar, Borivali, started segregation of wet and dry garbage a few years ago. They partnered with Sejal Parikh of Shreeji InnovEdge Solution,



over the years and the BMC staff of R/N has been very cooperative.

Jeevan Bima Nagar proposed to their landlord, LIC, to give them a plot of land for a biogas plant but did not get a proper response. The society is pursuing the matter with senior executives in LIC and look forward to sponsors to accept their proposal.

WILLIE SHIRSAT IS AGNI'S Coordinator R/N

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A chowk and a Road named after 2 Wadala residents

Thanks to the Corporator, Shri Amey Ghole, from Wadala, who helped in honouring two Wadala residents, Mr. Murlidhar Yadav, an active

Contd. on Page 4



BMC comes under administrator

Contd. from Page 1 Corporators become ordinary citizens.

With polls to the Mumbai civic body delayed due to the reorganisation of ward boundaries, the Uddhav Thackeray-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government of Maharashtra approved an amendment to the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act last month, to facilitate the appointment of an administrator. The polls are also likely to be delayed due to the Supreme Court's scrapping of the Other Backward Classes quota in local body elections, and there being a political demand to restore it.

According to the state cabinet's decision, municipal commissioner Iqbal Singh Chahal will act as the administrator. Thus different committees of corporators that used to discuss and recommend proposals for approval to the civic body on matters such as education, land use etc. will cease to exist. The BMC had an administrator once in 1984-85 for a year.

From March 8th, corporators will become regular citizens.

They won't have access to their offices, they won't be able to use their letterheads. If they wish to bring something to the administrator's notice or get some particular work done, it becomes the administrator's choice to give them a hearing, and not a compulsion.

Now the BMC almost functions like an arm of the state government. Thus, all its major policies go to the government for approval. Politically, the BMC is seen as important as it helps in getting a stake in the functioning of the state government.

MMJ

How to achieve 100% Segregation of Waste

Contd. from Page 2 debris generated from home renovations. Such debris should not be bagged and left on street corners.

Small quantities of daily garden waste can be disposed along with wet waste. However, coconut fronds and waste from pre monsoon tree trimming can be cleared for a fee instead of dumping on footpaths.

At the community level it would be good to network with other neighbouring buildings. Joint disposal of garden waste will be cost-effective as also composting

Police Commissioners message to Mumbaikars

Contd. from Page 1 years in Mumbai. And have worked in various positions in Mumbai police. Some would remember me from my Dharavi days in 1992-93 and others when I headed the economic offences in 1996-1997.

While I am familiar with Mumbai, policing has changed from the days when I worked in Mumbai. And it is with this in mind, that I am reaching out to you seeking your support to work towards maintaining safety and security for all in our city of Mumbai.

I am sharing my personal

number 9869702747. You can always reach out to me on WhatsApp/text messages as well as facebook <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100066410464886> or Twitter @sanjayp_1.

Suggestions big or small are all welcome. I will respond to all the messages as far as possible. I too will share with you what work we are doing on a weekly basis on Facebook.

I will look forward to hearing from you and working towards our motto of 'safety and security to all' in Mumbai

Your CP, Sanjay Pandey

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A chowk and a Road named after 2 residents

Contd. from Page 3 Social worker and founder of Murli Dairy Farm and Ms Devika Roy, Trustee & Teacher of Sitaram Prakash High School.

A road where the school is, was named DEVIKA ROY MARG and a chowk was named MURLIDHAR YADAV CHOWK in Wadala. Many members of Wadala (West) Citizens' Forum were present early March this year. for unveiling ceremony by the Corporator.

MMJ

of organic waste.

Let's get started. We have only one Earth

Lillian Pais is AGNI's Coordinator in H(W)

MMJ



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

AGNI Ward Coordinators

WARD NAME	AREAS	AGNI COORDINATOR	PHONE	EMAIL
A	Churchgate, Colaba, Cuffe Parade, Fort, SCT	Jennifer Shetty	9223415069	jenniferagni@gmail.com
D	Malabar Hill, Mahalaxmi, Opera House, Girgaum	Theo D'Souza	9820303940	theomdsouza@gmail.com
F/North	Sion, Wadala, Matunga(E), Dadar(E), Antop Hill	Nikhil Desai	9819930405	n.c.desai2012@gmail.com
G/North	Mahim, Dadar(W), Matunga(W), Dharavi	Bulu Saldanha	9920323831	Bulu_saldanha@yahoo.com
H/East	Bandra(E), Khar(E), Santa Cruz(E), Kalina	Reuben Dias	9930569225	Reuben6947@gmail.com
H/West	Bandra(W), Khar(W), Santa Cruz(W)	Lillian Pais	9920663748	Lillianpais66@gmail.com
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