

# MUMBAI MERI JAAN

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AGNI

Action for good  
Governance &  
Networking in  
India  
**AGNI**

### Editorial

#### CP Pandey gallops ahead with his citizen-centric activities

Ever since his appointment as Mumbai's police commissioner, Mr. Sanjay Pandey has been galloping ahead with many citizen-centric activities. He started with sharing his personal WhatsApp number, facebook and twitter handles to Mumbaikars in his messages to them so that citizens can directly contact him for any problem.



He also proactively started traffic violators being fined and showed them videos to educate them on violations. He also had discarded vehicles picked up from the streets of Mumbai and confiscated them. He also had a meeting with NGOs and mohalla committee members on April 30th.

What next Commissioner?

MMJ

#### Police Commissioner meets ALMs and Mohalla Committee members

For the first time in the history of the city of Mumbai, the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Sanjay Pandey, held a conference of ALMs and Mohalla committee members

Commissioner, Mr. Rebiero for a better relationship between the police and citizens. The auditorium was filled to capacity with hundreds of ALMs and MCs.



at the National Centre for the Performing Arts auditorium. Mohalla Committees of every police station were introduced by former Police

The AGNI team led by Trustee Rajkumar Sharma, Coordinators Lillian Pais (H/West), Bulu Saldanha (G/North), **Contd. on Page 3**

### BOMBAY HIGH COURT DELIVERS LANDMARK JUDGEMENT IN POWAI LAKE CYCLE TRACK CASE

 Pamela Cheema, Asstt. Editor, MMJ & AGNI Coordinator, S Ward

*In a far-sighted judgement the Bombay High Court's verdict on May 6, 2022 on the Powai Lake cycle track case has not only saved the lake but will impact all judgements on the stressed environment of the country*

May 6, 2022 will be a memorable day for Mumbai when the Bombay High Court declared that "the work of the cycling and jogging track being carried out by respondent MCGM inside the

Lake, Mumbai and its catchment area." The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai was directed to "immediately remove all construction carried out in furtherance of the cycling and

#### Activists distributing sweets at Powai Lake after judgment



boundaries and the catchment area of Powai Lake is illegal and respondent MCGM is restrained from carrying out any reclamation or construction for the project of cycling and jogging track or for any other project inside Powai

jogging track.....and restore all reclaimed sites to its original position."

This judgement is historic for the city as well as the Mumbai Metropolitan Region where wetlands are being constantly encroached **Contd. on Page 4**

### Revival of ALM meetings by BMC

 Zahida Banatwala, AGNI Trustee

Almost all the municipal corporation wards were invited to attend a meeting for ALM representatives. The enthusiasm was visible and everyone congratulated the Assistant Municipal Commissioner, Shri Prithviraj Chauhan, of K West for the initiative. There were about 25 ALM members from across K West each one sharing their complaints which were unique



to their areas. There was full representation from BMC officials.

The AMC addressed each one's problem by approaching the officer **Contd. on Page 3**



## Citizens Forum with CP, Mumbai Shri Sanjay Pandey

 Mario Fishery, MMJ Editorial Board member & H/W JAAG

The first citizens' forum was held at the NCPA hosted and chaired by the Mumbai Police Shri Sanjay Pandey. The main focus was the future of Mumbai and how best to empower community groups like ALM's and Mohalla committees. It was a jam packed auditorium and being a data guy as you all know I went around the venue asking the following questions to get a pulse of Mumbaikars. Here are few key takeaways from the event:



### Why are ALMs in the forefront of the Mumbai Police plans?

- Credibility
- Work and Goal Oriented
- Stakeholders are working professionals/Homemakers or Retired folks with a true passion for improving the quality of life in Mumbai.

### What you think is the sustainability of this program?

- Commissioner of Police has a plan
- Let's wait and watch
- Must not put the brakes on what we do as ALMs and Mohalla committees with additional work but only provide support needed.

- Hope the election process does not become another political plan.

- Safety of ALMs and their workers

### What was the message you received from today's program?

- The 2 hosts Rajesh Khopkar and Santosh Kalapahad had the most important job to keep the event neutral and spread happiness
- Vishwas Nangre Patil set the stage for the event with his speech and he spoke on the spirit of Mumbaikars and very well captured what community is supposed to be like.
- There was certainly excess appreciation for Mumbai Police by the speakers but as soon as CP took the stage his intentions were clear let's talk about work.



- This is just the beginning and there is a lot more to come in the short time we have
- Promises were made on a citizens' bill and WILL have an end result.
- ZERO tolerance for trouble makers
- Mumbai Police has switched from reactive to PROACTIVE
- MyBMC needs to collaborate



with Citizens and have a similar platform the way Mumbai Police have lead this initiative. No passing the buck and we should all operate as one unit

This is the overall pulse I was able to capture at the citizens' forum

So what's next? Interactions and connections with The youth of Mumbai? and a draft on a Citizens Bill. More soon Mumbaikars....

### LACC meeting R/North



After a covid gap of almost 32 months, a Pre-LACC Meeting was called for by the convenors Mr. DK Kosambe, Mr. Willie Shirsat & Mr. Harish Pandey on Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022. Around 20 members attended the meeting. MMJ

## Active Contribution of ALM Members for Development of BMC's Garden

 Asish Thakur, AGNI's M/East Ward Coordinator

A marnath Patil Udyan situated at BKSD Marg (Govandi Station Road) in M-East ward is an important BMC recreation and playground which has a very footfall of residents from Deonar,



Govandi and surrounding areas. This ground has diverse facilities like a children's playground with amenities for them, an open Gym, jogging tracks, a cricket pitch, a senior citizens corner and toilets for women and men. All these facilities are used throughout the day extensively from early morning to late evening by children, elderly persons, adults, young boys and girls for their recreation. Due to the active interest taken by ALM Members over time and the support of the BMC ward office, the local corporator and M.L.A. this garden has a become very important open space for residents of this area.

Shri Mahindra Ubale, the



former executive engineer of M East Ward, on promotion to Assistant Municipal Commissioner took charge of



the ward and visited the garden and checked its maintenance. During the course of his visit ALM Members appreciated the efforts of the maintenance staff and brought to his notice a few major works needed for further development of the garden. The AMC assured the members that development work would be carried out subject to the availability of funds, else funds would be arranged from local corporates. MMJ



## ALM meeting Of P/South ward

 Anthony Diass, P/South Ward Coordinator

After Covid we attended the first ALM meeting at P/south ward Goregaon. It was conducted by Mr Pimpri and Mr Makwana (senior and junior engineers). Mr Santoshkumar Donde, the AMC



could not attend. Eight ALM members and 10 senior and junior engineers attended the meeting.



The meeting avidly discussed the segregation of wet and dry waste in the ward. About 270 tons of waste are segregated at P ward. Removal of debris and the safe disposal of hazardous waste was also discussed. I also highlighted the problem of hawkers in the ward. Meetings will now be conducted in the third week of every month. MMJ



# feedback

It is interesting that you mentioned vagrancy in your meeting with the Police Commissioner.

Vagrancy has always been a problem of big cities all over the world. In Bombay children's vagrancy has been featured in many Hindi films. Remember Boot Polish?

One of the solutions put forth to tackle children's vagrancy was the establishment of borstals.

I remember when I was in school watching a great Hollywood movie called Boy's Town which featured an establishment for vagrant children run by the Church in the US.

In India the problem with hostels for vagrant children is that quite a few of them are run badly and even turn out child criminals. For girls they become sources of prostitution. You may recall the bug scandal that erupted in Bihar a couple of decades ago when influential politicians were using the poor girls in such hostels for this purpose.

With the large number of orphans and widows resulting from Covid deaths in the last two years vagrancy has become worse.

**- M. N. Sachitanand**

Very informative, very good, thanks. I read it regularly.

**- Uday Bobade**

Trash for Cash. Good one

**- Harshala**, Retired Teacher Kendriya Vidyalaya

Hats off to the Police Commissioner Mr. Sanjay Pandey and the rag pickers for their respective social work.

**- Nirmala P. Kumar**, Retired Teacher

preserve the Earth. Thanks to these batteries, neighbours can now share solar and wind power. What do Americans care more about, the environment or the economy? How to get past climate change and take powerful climate action. From COVID-19 to blockchain, energy, global governance and more, explore and monitor the forces shaping our world. This week, explore expert insights from around the web on some of the secretive aspects of Russia's war on Ukraine. Discontent but no real threat to Putin: how Kremlin insiders view the war. As hackers see it, Russia is now fair game for cyber attacks. Staggering but unlikely to fail: the economic impact of sanctions on Russia. The Quiet Pandemic: What to do about antibiotic-resistant bacteria in our latest Radio Devon podcast.



Tarnaka Times - May



Page 18

## Police Commissioner meets ALMs & Mohalla Committee members

**Contd. from Page 1** Nikhil Desai (F/North), Ashish Kumar Thakur (M/E) and Mario Fishery from Bandra's ALM and a member of MMJ's Editorial Board, and Mr Dileep Yeole (M/E).



Mr Rajkumar Sharma said that at least in the last two decades they have never seen any police or civic chief hold such an open house. "It was a good initiative. As citizens, we always keep talking about our rights but there are also certain duties. If the authorities work along with the citizens, the outcome will always be more fruitful," said Sharma.

Pandey in his address said that he had some issues in mind such as traffic movement, noise pollution, drug peddling and hawking, and after attending one ALM, he thought of bringing mohalla committees and ALMs together to resolve public problems.

Mr. Pandey while thanking for the feedback and participation in our citizen forum at NCPA, he said it's now time for an action plan and we are working on



setting up a team to work at the Regional (25 Members) and Zonal (10 Members) areas. These persons can be nominated by ALM as well as Mohalla Committee members.

Mr. Dinesh Ahir, AGNI Convenor congratulated the AGNI team which participated in the conference.

MMJ

## Revival of ALM meetings by BMC

**Contd. from Page 1** from the concerned department and asking him/her to resolve the issue in a time bound period.

Sandra Alex and I along with two other members represented ward 69. While most ALM members complained about irregular garbage collection, storm water drain cleaning, tree trimming and encroachment and also the menace of stray dogs, we complained about the random and free use of plastic bags and the influx of hawkers with hand carts. We have a regular designated hawking area, despite that about 20 hand carts crowd narrow roads in a 1 km area. The AMC referred us to the concerned officers to look into the same. There has always been

ambiguity about the departments which have to collect garden waste and tree trimming waste. Clarity on the same was sought and we were informed that the garden department is to clear the same. The hawking issue was widely discussed. The AMC informed the meeting about the Supreme Court order and asked the concerned officers to take action on the same. We were informed about the work undertaken towards monsoon preparedness. The meeting carried on for almost two hours, nobody was complaining about the same, everyone was eager to get their issues addressed and resolved.

Looking forward to the next meeting and finding out if the issues were resolved.

MMJ

## ACTIVE VRIKSHA SANJIVANI ABHIYAN

**Willie Shirshat, AGNI Coordinator, R/North Ward**

Mission Green Mumbai organised a 'Tree Walk' an initiative inspired by BMC's Vriksha Sanjevani Abhiyan from April 18-April 24. On the first day Mr Janardhan Mane ASG led the campaign while Mr Ghule, the Deputy Superintendent of Gardens, was the Chief Guest.

AGNI's R/N JAAG participated in this drive along with

members of the Green Army Club, students of St Francis Management College and the Mumbai River March NGO.

Nails were removed from the trees along with stones, debris and plastic. Soil was loosened and compost was added in the tree basin. The planet is our only home, hence we need to look after the planet and future generations.

MMJ

## 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. NEFT / IFSC: BKID0000007**

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 April 2022:**  
**Mr. Keith A Rodrigues Rs.5,000/=**

**Tarnaka Times,**  
**Hyderabad May 2022**



# BOMBAY HIGH COURT DELIVERS LANDMARK JUDGEMENT IN POWAI LAKE CYCLE TRACK CASE

**Contd. from Page 1** upon due to abysmal ignorance and shocking greed, with a cynical disregard for the well-being of the city and its surrounding areas.

Very importantly, Bombay High Court emphasised that though Powai Lake has been notified as a wetland in the National Wetlands Atlas “it essentially requires a notification. Powai Lake must and necessarily be notified to be a wetland in accordance with the notification dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2017 issued by Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Government of India, New Delhi.”

Wetlands are crucial for Mumbai and according to a study conducted across the country by a non-profit, Wetlands International South Asia, which was published in January 2020 by Hindustan Times, among 22 Indian cities Mumbai has lost the most wetlands, about 71%, in 44 years from 1970 to 2014.

The learned judges at the Bombay High Court also

pointed out that in part VII of sub-regulation 3.3 of Regulation 34 in DCR 2034 a specific regulation for Powai and Vihar Lakes has been made which is that “in order to prevent erosion of soil and silting in lakes, an exclusive green belt of 100m shall be provided around the periphery of Vihar and Powai Lakes in which no construction whatsoever will be allowed.”

The Judges were also not impressed with the use of 'Gabion Technology' for the construction of the cycle track and pointed out that MCGM had not filed any material to prove the success of the technology. Nor were they impressed by MCGM's claims of “rejuvenation and reinvigoration” of the lake after scrutinising photographs which showed land filling, reclamation, metallic frames being raised on the water body and the laying of a tar road at the periphery of the lake.

If the judgement of the Bombay High Court is historic, the two IIT Bombay students,

Omkar Supekar and Abhishek Tripathi who filed the PIL, have blazed a path in activism which must be emulated in this era of climate change. Omkar is studying for a PH.D in Indian philosophy and environmental ethics while Abhishek has just completed his PH.D in chemistry and is presently a Post Doctoral Fellow at the IIT.

The two young students live in Hostel No 13 facing the Renaissance Hotel across Powai Lake. They observed curious activities around the lake and finally discovered that the BMC was slowly entering the lake area. Intrigued, they questioned the police who blandly replied that no illegal activity was occurring in the lake. With no response from any authority to their queries, the students filed a PIL in the Bombay High Court on October 14, 2021. And the rest is history!

Did the students receive any support from the IIT? “Both yes



IIT students  
Omkar &  
Abhishek

and no,” replied Omkar and Abhishek. “While we did not get any support from the IIT, we got moral support from the faculty and immeasurable support from our Guide, Professor K Ramasubramanian, Chair Professor, IIT Bombay. For money, we had to fall back on our Fellowship funds. We also had a very strong supporter in Shyam Saksena who lives in the Hiranandani Complex and helped us a lot with our documentation.”

Both Omkar and Abhishek believe that “young people should not be afraid. This is the first ever PIL filed by any IITian across the country for an ecological cause. We are just two PH.D students who filed a PIL and received a favourable decision in just seven months. We now have to lead the way.”

MMJ

Board of Trustees

Convenor

Dinesh Ahir

Trustees

Capt. Joe Lobo

Rajkumar Sharma

Sharad Kumar

Zahida Banatwala

Editorial Board

Sharad Kumar [Editor]

Pamela Cheema [Asstt. Editor]

Mario Fishery

Shrikant Soman

Email: mmj.agni@gmail.com

https://sites.google.com/site/agnimumbaimeriyaan/

Published by

AGNI

Chadha Bldg. 1st Flr, Plot No. 95,

Wadala (W), Mumbai - 400031

agni.mumbai99@gmail.com

Ph: 2416 5956

www.agnimumbai.in

Printed at

Audumber Press, Wadala

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
K/East	Vile Parle(E), Andheri(E), Jogeshwari(E)	James John	9324086140	K_james_john@hotmail.com
K/West	Vile Parle(W), Andheri(W), Versova, Jogeshwari (W)	Sandra Alex	9820602521	sandraalex2357@gmail.com
L	Kurla, Nehru Nagar, Chandivli	Nutan Bhalla	9819171015	Nutsie59@gmail.com
N	Ghatkopar, Vikhroli	Kishor K. Chudasama	9821051346	Kishorkc_shantu@rediffmail.com
P/South	Goregaon(W)	Anthony Dias	9821291660	diasapvoice@gmail.com
R/South	Kandivli (East & West), Charkop	S. K. Nangia	9322258038	Sknangia2004@yahoo.com
R/North	Borivli, Dahisar (East & West), IC Colony	Willie Sirsat, Shrikant Soman, Glenda Almeida	9820213392 9324228946 9820291563	Shirshatwillie382@hotmail.com Shrikant.soman@gmail.com Glenda.almeida@commerzbank.com
M/East	Deonar, Mankhurd, Govandi	Ashish Kumar Thakur	9820346359	Asisthakur1941@gmail.com
M/West	Chembur	Krantikumar Sherkhane	7039030255	Krantikumars@gmail.com
S	Bhandul, Kanjurmarg, Powai	Pamela Cheema	9820150748	pamelacheema@gmail.com
T	Mulund	Laxmidas Thakkar	32911966	l.thakkar@yahoo.co.in