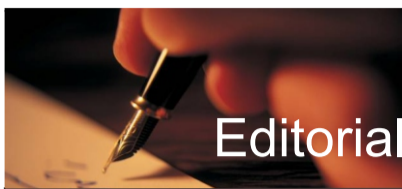


Mumbai Meri Jaan



Forward This To All - And All Forward - Together

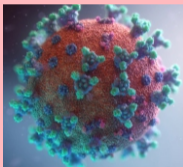


Editorial

Mumbai in COVID 19

Mumbai set a good example as well as a bad one in arresting the spread of Corona Virus (Covid 19).

Mumbai, the second-most crowded city in the world, has fared better than cities across the globe in fighting the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, many world leaders appreciated the strategy of the nation to tackle this virus. This is because, the nation started controlling well in advance and was planning more for the future.



At the start of phase 3 of lockdown, the central government relaxed the restrictions. Accordingly, the Maharashtra State as well as BMC relaxed the restrictions and allowed non-essential shops (including liquor shops) to open. Unfortunately, people started gathering in large numbers in front of liquor shops without following social distancing norms, which was detrimental to the control of spread of virus and the advantages of the lockdown gained was lost. Hence BMC withdrew the relaxation within 24 hours of opening up. This was a bad example.

Hope Mumbaikars will be more disciplined in following the rules of the lockdown which will be better for all, thus avoiding a further extension of the lockdown.

MMJ

IMPORTANT NOTE
Due to National Lockdown, there will be no Print Edition of Mumbai Meri Jaan May 2020 issue, only a NET Edition

Outbreak in slums forces Mumbai to confront its 'shame': Ratan Tata

Nauzer Bharucha

Imagine 8-9 lakh people crammed into a 2.5-sq-km area, and you get a population density that is perhaps the highest anywhere on the planet. That's the unorganised sprawl of Dharavi in the heart of Mumbai, where experts fear the spread of the infection most. Referring to housing policies which have given rise to such slum-dominated neighbourhoods within Mumbai, Tata Group chairman emeritus Ratan Tata described it as "a wakeup call" for planners and administrators struggling to contain the coronavirus pandemic through social distancing.

Tata, speaking at a virtual panel discussion on the "Future of design and construction" watched by several thousands, said the Covid-19 outbreak had served to underscore a crisis in housing which deprived lakhs of Mumbai's residents of fresh air and open space.



"We do design for high value housing and provide the slums the residue. We should be ashamed because we have the image we want to project of ourselves and there's the part we want to hide. We are offended when people criticise it, but we have social responsibilities as architects and builders. The corona issue is a wake-up call of what beholds us. What our concern is that it turns around and bites us," he said.

Tata, a trained architect, expressing regret that he could not practice architecture except for two years in Los Angeles, did not mince words about the condition of the slumdwellers. Their occupants live on top of each other in a manner of speak-

ing, he added, referring to the multistoreyed slum structures in the precinct. "We as architects and developers have been satisfied to do (that)," said Tata.

Tata, who was speaking at a discussion organised by CorpGini, a global innovation platform, also questioned the policy of removing the slums and shifting the occupants into narrow, high-density structures 20-30 miles away. "For the first time, the close proximity, low-value structures we have built are the cause of new problems. The last few months have taught us that we are suffering from close proximity," he said.

"I think there should be re-examination of what we consider to be acceptable standards in terms of quality of life," said the industrialist. While high-value housing is put on slum land, the residue is like "putting the garbage together and calling it **contd. on Page 4**

The Thin Red Line

Austin Nazareth

AGNI in COVID-19

As the march of the Corona became unstoppable, the populace was herded into their pens and locked. Words and more words were heaped on people, unprepared even for the next day. First the life line of Mumbai, the Suburban Rail Network ferrying millions every day was shut by the State's Chief Minister. Then we had the first lock down of 21 days of the entire country, announced by the Prime Minister. And the lock down continues...

Fortunately, it was the mid-March when the shutdown began, and most people had stocked on provisions with the salaries they received beginning of March. But as March ended, the calls for help began to emerge from those at

the bottom of the social ladder. **AGNI** which stands for **A**ction for good **G**overnance and **N**etworking in **I**ndia, works for good Governance and maintains a presence in 16 of the 24 administrative Wards of Mumbai. AGNI Coordinators and Volunteers have always been 'Networkers'.

Rajkumar Sharma, Ward Coordinator led his M East and West teams to give food packets in the slums of Shivaji Nagar and Govandi.

Nutan Bhalla, Ward Coordinator of L Ward led a drive to distribute face masks and shields to health workers in different hospitals.

Willie Shirsat, Ward Coordinator of R North connected providers of food

and rations to the poor in Borivali and Dahisar.

Bulu Saldanha Ward Coordinator of G North particularly in Mahim and Theo D'Souza Ward Coordinator of D Ward area of Girgaum informed of community efforts. Anthony Dias Ward Coordinator of P South supported the efforts of Sr. Clara of Ankur in gifting masks to the poor in Goregaon. Zahida, Ward Coordinator of K/West informed of efforts in Ward and even her personal support to 20 families in the far eastern corner of Mumbai and beyond.

James John Ward Coordinator of K/East, Pamela Cheema Ward Coordinator of S Ward and **contd. on Page 3**

Swachha Mumbai Abhiyaan

AGNI helps hospitals with protective gears

 **Nutan Bhalla, AGNI L Ward Coordinator**

Covid-19 threw us all out of gear, and even though we saw it coming, the impact of it all came with the announcement of National lockdown. We are all pretty comfortable in our homes, and trying to do our bit in these trying times, but my heart always went out to people involved in Housekeeping and Health care.

A few of us got together and helped provide protective gears for some of the Health care staff of Holy Spirit Hospital in Andheri East.

This brought me in contact



with the doctors and, I learnt that face masks and shields were in short supply and it was an area which I felt would need some help.

It came to my mind that M&M (Mahindra and Mahindra) had remodeled their plant to make these PPEs during this period.

I approached them through a family contact and could manage to procure face shields for the following hospitals / dispensary:-

Holy Spirit Hospital Andheri – 400 Face Shields



Millat Hospital Jogeshwari – 250 Face Shields
IIT campus Powai – 250 Face Shields
NITIE Dispensary – 50 Face Shields

The doctor went and collected the items from M&M. after I did all the coordination. I left the distribution of the items to the doctors, except for a last packet which my husband (Capt. Bhalla) and I delivered personally to the CMO of IIT Campus hospital.

All the boxes were sealed and the details like name and quantity of face shields was written on top of each package.

It was very well organised, and at the end of the day, it was a very satisfying experience.

The last consignment from M&M of 500 masks, 500 shields and 4 aerosol boxes were collected for two hospitals Joy hospital Chembur, Smt Diwalibhen Mohanlal Mehta hospital Chembur.

4 aerosol boxes was for L ward medical team

A special thanks to Rajkumar who helped speed up the process from the ward. **MMJ**



AGNI in COVID-19 H/West

Pictures on the left show

- 1) Migrant labour at St. Stanislaus school, 145 beds Freefood and medical treatment.
- 2) YMCA Khar serving food
- 3) Apostolic Carmel school serve bananas, water and food

MMJ



Solar energy, vertical gardens, waste management: Mumbai college teaches green lessons to its students

 **Badri Chatterjee**

The Smt Kamaladevi Gauridutt (KG) Mittal College of Arts and Commerce uses solar energy to cater to 25% of its electricity requirements, which helps it save Rs 27,500 every month in electricity bills.

In order to ensure the environment around them stays green, a college in Malad has adopted numerous eco-friendly measures: generating solar energy, recycling waste, vertical gardens and botanical gardens.

The Smt Kamaladevi Gauridutt (KG) Mittal College of Arts and Commerce, run by the Marwari Vidyalaya Trust in Malad (West) has a sprawling 29,000 square foot campus with 3,700 students. It uses solar energy to cater to 25% of its electricity requirements, which helps it save Rs 27,500 every month in electricity bills.

By recycling waste at source, the college treats its canteen waste through organic composting, thereby generating nutrient rich manure for potted plants and trees on the campus.

“The idea has always been to go green, and now we are fulfilling it,” said Dr SB Arya, director of the college.

It has also developed vertical gardens on its eight-foot-high



compound walls. They also plan to inaugurate a botanical garden, which will be home to 45-50 saplings of ayurvedic plants.

“Having green spaces within the college automatically builds an ambience of being close to nature. We adopted

renewable energy to reduce the dependency on fossil fuels to generate electricity, while waste management is being done to reduce the burden from landfills.”



The brainchild of this green initiative was Rajendra Mittal, secretary of the trust, said Dr Arya.

Spread across 1,500 of 6,000 square foot rooftop space, 58 solar panels with a capacity of 20 kilowatt-power (kWp) generate an average of 76 units per day or 28,000 units in a year.

By May 2020, the college plans to become 'zero energy' (generating its own electricity) by completely depending on solar. It also plans to add another 60 kWp across 4,500 square foot area remaining on their rooftop.

“We calculated that the college is currently saving 14 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions every year by adopting solar. This is likely to increase significantly by May next year,” said Muhammad Sohail Shaikh from MSS Renewtech that installed the solar project. “Solar power helps the college save Rs 27,500 per month in electricity bills.”

Emission from polluting thermal and power industries in Mumbai contributes to 36% of total particulate pollution for the city. **Contd. on page 4**

The Thin Red Line

Contd. from Page 1 Jennifer Shetty Ward Coordinator of A Ward doing their work of helping in sanitization of their wards with the help of elected representatives.

H West JAAG led by Shyama Kulkarni, AGNI Trustee, saw its volunteers join efforts initiated by churches, schools and associations. St. Peter's Church, St Andrew's Church and Apostolic Carmel School on Hill Road, Bandra provided food packets. Dr. Richard and team ran 'Manna on Wheels' to provide food packets to those unable to reach distribution points. Fr. Frazer of St. Peter's shared food, care and shelter available for migrants: 100 men and 25 women. Prof Ernest Fernandes informed of Cipla providing free Personal Protection Equipment to Government run hospitals.

Networking means, first learning and then supporting efforts of all like-minded individuals and associations.

Green Communities Foundation provided ration kits to over 2000 families in Goregaon, Kindness Unlimited gave away a banana each to at least 5000 kids of migrants, slum dwellers, etc. everyday, Salaam Bombay Trust provided ration kits all over Mumbai, PRAJA provided ration kits to families across Mumbai through Councillors

James John, Ward Coordinator, K/East (most active AGNI Ward) informed that K East JAAG was unable to help as they lacked funds. I then circulated their willingness as well as their need and Gaurav Arora of Salaam Bombay Trust responded immediately and had his colleague, Kalpesh contact James John. So Salaam Bombay Trust is a choice.

The next positive response was from Nirmala Mehendale, who has 'gift a banana' project for children on streets and slums.

The third choice is St. Jude Childcare Centres which normally cares for cancer stricken children and houses them and their families when they visit Tata Memorial for treatment. They are now also helping other cancer patients and their families stuck in Mumbai.

-Austin

MMJ

and Ward Officers, The Bombay Catholic Sabha even going beyond Mumbai into the vast Metropolitan Region with cities like Navi Mumbai and Thane, The National Domestic Workers Movement provided financial help and otherwise to domestic workers all over India and in doing so meant emptying its cash reserves of Rs. 50 lakhs, and there are many more such examples of Mumbai's knights rushing in to provide succour to the suffering.

AGNI's men and women stood in a thin line, separated by vast distances and unable to report of their valiant effort but continue undeterred by age or illness.

AGNI's colour is bright red and so are the hearts of everyone in AGNI and those they network with.

As Mumbai readies for the coming onslaught of the Corona, neither AGNI nor those it networks with, will falter and fall back.

This 'Thin Red Line' is of those who will not go quietly into the night, and their love for this city will inspire others to rise and fight fear, hopelessness and beat Corona back.



The Board of Trustees of AGNI, salute to all AGNI volunteers and friends.

MMJ

Dear Citizen Warrior, A report of what we have done in a crisis that has pushed many much more able, into their cocoons. After reading the report, if your heart leads you to decide to help, please do so. The Bank details is given along side and you can do an electronic transfer.

MMJ

AGNI in COVID-19 - R/N Ward



Blue Grotto CHS (LIC Colony) received portable sprayer with sanitization solution from ward No 8 Corporator Mr Harish Chedda Our volunteers sprayed, the solution sanitizing the entire Society

MMJ

Two poems on Corona virus

Pius Gonsalves

GO AWAY !!! GO AWAY

(This poem is dedicated to the victims of COVID-19)

Consequences of the sins are sadly & widely on visual display
Obviously You are the only one; to guard us thru night and day
Rome & Italy are worst affected; thousands die there, everyday
Oh! My God!, You are the best source; we can cling to safely stay.
None other than You alone can heal us; our faith shall not sway
Almighty God! have "karuna"(mercy) on us; we ought to sincerely pray

Are Your children; please keep us all united, in anyway.
In this difficult time, help us to help each other, on our way.
Rising from death, He has proved that it is not a child's play
Ultimately He only can save us; see that we do not go astray.
Saviour will wipe out 'Corona'; let us not become Devil's prey

WHAT A PITY

Morning to night the lock down has been made so tight
U and I have already lost, our usual freedom & living right
Most of us living in fear; there is no clear solution at sight.
Basic needs are difficult; since no free movement of freight
All are sailing in the same boat; future seems not so bright
Ishwar, Allaha & Jesus!, please give us back our lost delight

Corona virus has created the havoc; challenging God's might
It is our hope that; at the end of the tunnel there will be light.
Thousands are leaving the city; companies are closing overnight.
Young and old have lost their patience; there is no will to fight.

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, 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.

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.

MMJ

PLEASE NOTE:

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

A VERY
BIG
THANK YOU

Ratan Tata

contd. from Page 1 a community, making it difficult to survive,” in a clear reference to slum rehabilitation policies.

“Perhaps there ought to be a revision in the terms of the fact that we are dealing communities, we're dealing with populations that need to be a part of new India. We are creating a community which we are ashamed of. We should be really driven by the desire of creating a world culture, he said.

Tata added, “in the last few months, we have been humbled to realise that a disease could run across the globe... I think we have to consider this issue as being our problem and not their problem. We need to concern ourselves with the quality of lives everywhere. We need to ask ourselves, are we ashamed of what we see or proud of what we see? We need to consider urban communities as one We need to look at the possibility of ownership of slums rather than rentals. We need to be ashamed of what we're doing and we need to focus on considerably being proud of what we're doing. Mumbai and Maharashtra need to be proud of the transition that they make. And the transition needs to be real.”

MMJ

AGNI Covid-19 , outreach.

Sr. Clara of Prem Ankur, St. Pius College campus - Goregaon, approached me, informing that she wants to get hand stitched masks, ready for Tribals at Aarey Colony, unit no. 7, Goregaon. She needed some financial help, I immediately gave her cash amount and she arranged for 10 metres of Cloth and tailor and stitched the masks and distributed at Aarey unit no.7. - Anthony Dias P/S



MMJ

AGNI in COVID-19 - K/West

Zahida Banatwala

The K West is worst hit red zone, rise with +tive cases daily, mainly due to extensive slum population. Our elected representatives are on their toes both in terms of providing relief, provisions and sanitizers.

However, one aspect which is not been handled well is proper sanitization of public toilets which are areas of contact spreading infection. 1 toilet seat is used by 200 people on an average.

In our personal capacity as a family we had received news that people in Govandi, Bhiwandi and

AGNI in COVID-19 - A Ward



Fumigation of entire strand organised with Ms Jennifer

Shetty A Ward Coordinator **MMJ**

AGNI in COVID-19 - P/S Ward



Wadala Matunga Sion Forum

Chirag Shah

Appreciate Mr. Krishna Prasad, General Secretary of The Andhra Education Society, Wadala, for preparing daily, since over a month, 800 to 900 food packets and distributing them to the slumdwellers, BMC, Police and many more. **MMJ**

Regular fumigation in Wadala

With the help of the Corporator, Amey Gole, there has been a regular fumigation undertaken by BMC since a month in all buildings in Wadala. **MMJ**

Mumbra are in very bad condition and no food to eat, so we took responsibility to ensure groceries for 20 families and are going to continue to help people in these areas as and when required. **MMJ**

MMJ

Solar energy

Contd. from Page 2 Adopting renewable energy is a cost-effective method to cut down on such emission sources.

Meanwhile, the college generates three-four kgs of discarded food waste every day.

“We use large pots setup at one end of the college and bio-culture [in the form of powder] to breakdown waste. Manure collected in a week is used at the vertical garden, potted plants on campus, and will soon nurture the botanical garden,” said Dr Arya.

BMC's environment status report 2017-18 showed 73% of Mumbai's total discards came from food waste. Treating waste at source reduces carbon footprint, decreases dependency on garbage trucks, which in turn, reduces traffic congestion, suppresses diseases and harmful pests. The impact of the green initiatives has trickled down to students as well. “Rather than throwing plastic bottles, they are using them to plant small saplings at home making the best out of waste,” Dr Arya said.

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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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