

MUMBAI MERI JAAN

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AGNI

Action for good
Governance &
Networking in
India
AGNI

Editorial

Have you registered with the Keralam CoRWA for the 13th NCRWA, November 14 & 15?

It's just less than a month away. If you have not registered, please register right away without any delay. Contact : P. C. Ajith Kumar 9446211614 email<corwakerala@gmail.com>



Accommodation has been arranged in Ernakulam free of cost, for delegates attending the 13th CoRWA National Conference on 14th and 15th November 2026.

AC berth-type accommodation will be provided. **MMJ**



'Clean Worli, South Mumbai doesn't mean entire Mumbai is clean': Bombay HC pulls up BMC

The Bombay High Court told the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) that keeping Worli, Nariman Point and South Mumbai clean was no indication that the city as a whole was being maintained properly, pointing to garbage and filth littering western suburbs.

"Only because Worli, Nariman Point or South Mumbai is clean doesn't mean entire Mumbai is clean," a bench of Justices Girish Kulkarni and Neela Gokhale remarked, expressing concern over the civic body's failure to maintain hygiene across all 26 wards.

Garbage concerns in western suburbs

The judges said they had themselves witnessed garbage being dumped on roads, footpaths, open spaces and hill slopes while travelling through the western suburbs towards

Mumbai doesn't mean clean': Bombay HC



Uttan last week. Jogeshwari and Malad, they said, were particularly bad.

"We are concerned with the lives of citizens, their health, their hygiene. We don't find much improvement in health standards," Justice Kulkarni said. He added: "Dumping of garbage on the streets is purely a local issue. Ensuring all wards are clean is the responsibility of the corporation."

Court seeks ward-wise measures

The bench directed the BMC to file an affidavit detailing measures taken in every ward to prevent dumping of garbage. It also sought data from KEM Hospital and other civic and State-run hospitals on patients admitted with contagious diseases, **Contd on Page 4**

After crack down, FDA now plans Eat right campaign

PTI

Maharashtra Food and Drug Administration will launch the 'Eat Right' movement to promote food safety, improve eating habits and educate people about the food they consume, its commissioner Tukaram Mundhe said.

The initiative would include programmes such as Eat Right Schools, Eat Right Places and Eat Right Worshipping Places, along with digital campaigns, to encourage people to make informed food choices. The commissioner said the FDA had inspected around 15,000 to 16,000 establishments, with nearly half of them having major compliance deficiencies.

"Ultimately, it is not about



regulation; it is about eating habits, what we eat, what we consume day in and day out, what our children eat and consume. We should know what to eat, how to eat and how much to eat," Mundhe said at the India Today Conclave Mumbai 2026. He said the food and drug regulator would launch information, education and communication activities over the coming months to help people identify safe and standard food products and understand the importance of proper food handling.

Citing the example of refrigerators in house holds, Mundhe said many people might not know how to store different food items properly, which could lead to contamination and cross-contamination. "These activities will



take place in the next few months. I want it to be a people's movement, not just a government movement. Do participate, give suggestions, and we will act on them," he added.

Mundhe urged citizens to raise their voices on food safety issues instead of limiting their support to public events, saying sustained public participation was necessary to ensure that enforcement measures continued beyond the tenure of individual officers. "Raising your hand here is very easy, but when it matters, you have to raise your voice, you have to raise the issue. It may be against me. I am not saying raise your voice against somebody. What I am saying is, raise your voice on the issue, for your benefit and my benefit," he said.

The FDA commissioner asked consumers to question the safety and quality of food served at restaurants and sold in shops, and said the responsibility of ensuring food safety could not rest solely with the regulator. He said the FDA would provide information to help people understand food labels and make informed decisions.

Responding to a question on the number of ingredients listed on packets of snacks sold in India compared with similar products in other countries, he said the issue is not the number of ingredients but whether manufacturers disclosed them accurately and transparently. "Having more ingredients does not necessarily mean bad, and having fewer ingredients does not necessarily **Contd on Page 4**

Strengthening RWA & Civil Society Participation in Urban Governance - Towards a Fourth Tier of Participatory Governance

 **Sitaram Dhulipala, President, UFERWAS – Telangana**

Background

The Constitution of India provides for democratic governance at three levels—Union, State and Local Governments. The 74th Constitutional Amendment further strengthened urban local governance with the objective of decentralisation and meaningful people's participation in local affairs.

However, effective decentralisation cannot be achieved without involving the citizens who live and work at the grassroots. Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs), civil society organisations and community-based organisations are closest to local communities and possess first-hand knowledge of civic problems and priorities.

There is therefore a strong case for developing a structured framework through which these organisations can function as a “Fourth Tier of Participatory Governance”—not as another level of government, but as an organised and responsible interface between citizens and government.

Contribution of Dr. Rao VBJ Chelikani



Dr. Rao V B J Chelikani has made a significant contribution to the RWA and civil society movement in India through UFERWAS, CoRWA, the monthly Tarnaka Times, and several books and writings dealing with the



roles, responsibilities and participation of RWAs in society.

His work has promoted the important principle that citizens should not remain mere recipients of government services, but should become active partners in governance, community development and public accountability.

It is necessary to carry this vision forward and strengthen the RWA and Civil Society movement in a structured and sustainable manner.

Policy Proposals

The Government may consider:

1. Institutional recognition of RWAs and civil society organisations as important stakeholders in urban governance.
2. Strengthening Ward Committees and Area Sabhas in the true spirit of the 74th Constitutional Amendment, with genuine citizen participation.
3. Regular consultation mechanisms between Urban Local Bodies, elected representatives, officials, RWAs and civil society organisations.
4. Citizen participation in local planning and prioritisation of civic infrastructure and development works.
5. Community monitoring and social audits of civic services, public works and service delivery.
6. Greater transparency and public disclosure of municipal budgets, projects, tenders, expenditure and implementation status.
7. Capacity building of RWAs and civil

Contd. on Page 4

'Pedestrian First' campaign

20 Illegal Structures Demolished, 15 Stalls Cleared Across 8 Km Of Borivali West Footpaths

 **Shefali Parab-Pandit**

To reclaim public footpaths for pedestrians, the R Central Ward civic team launched an aggressive encroachment removal drive in Borivali West, demolishing 20 unauthorised structures and clearing 15 illegal stalls.

The crackdown was carried out along Lokmanya Tilak Road, Market Lane and Borivali Subway Road, where encroachment had been obstructing pedestrian movement and restricting access to footpaths.

The action marks the first phase of the 'Pedestrian First' campaign, under which the civic authorities have begun clearing encroachments from six major footpaths covering nearly 8 kilometres across Borivali. The move is aimed at restoring pedestrian space and ensuring that citizens can walk without being forced onto congested roads.

The operation is particularly significant for commuters using Borivali West railway station, with the cleared stretches expected to provide more open and



obstruction-free access for thousands of pedestrians travelling through the area every day.

The BMC deployed 2 JCB machines, 5 dumpers, more than 10 officers and civic staff, and 20 workers for the demolition and clearance operation. To maintain law and order during the drive, more than 15 police personnel were also deployed.

The pedestrian first initiative focuses on footpaths connecting railway and Metro stations, schools, colleges, hospitals, civic and government offices, religious places and other high-footfall areas. As part of the drive, the civic body is clearing encroachments, unauthorised structures, hawker obstructions, stored materials, signboards, banners and other impediments to ensure safer and unobstructed pedestrian movement across

MMJ

Legal Grievance Redressal Forum, Kerala

CoRWA Keralam proposes to establishing a Legal Grievance Redressal Forum, Kerala, in collaboration with the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), to resolve local disputes and minor cases at the local level without the need for lengthy court proceedings.

The forum will be constituted at the district, taluk, and panchayat levels to facilitate amicable settlement of disputes and provide accessible legal assistance to the public. This

initiative aims to help resolve cases that have been pending in courts for years, wherever legally permissible, thereby reducing the burden on the judicial system.

Furthermore, the initiative will help families avoid the financial burden associated with prolonged litigation, including legal fees and other related expenses. Through this forum, CoRWA Keralam seeks to promote accessible, affordable, and timely justice while fostering harmony and peaceful dispute resolution within local communities.

MMJ

'Bandra Bay waterfront transformation begins; BMC, Godrej properties start phase 1 promenade project

Bandra Bay is set for a major waterfront transformation, with Phase 1 of a new promenade now underway. The BMC, in collaboration with Godrej Properties Limited and RC Group, has begun work to

recreational offering.

"Bandra's waterfront is among Mumbai's finest natural assets and now has the potential to become a vibrant community space," said Vishwas Mote, Deputy Municipal Commissioner. He



unlock underutilised bayfront land and reshape it into a vibrant, more functional waterfront district.

New Recreation and Green Spaces

Phase 1 will bring a new mix of recreation, green space and public amenities to Bandra Bay. The development will feature a bayside walking track, landscaped gardens and expansive lawns, alongside a lifestyle hub with a pet park, literature zone and amphitheatre. The transformation will expand in later phases, with plans for a mini-golf course and a dedicated activity and sports zone, further broadening the waterfront's

said the development will create spaces where people can walk, spend quality time with their families and take part in a range of community activities.

Focus On Sustainable Design

Sustainability and thoughtful design will underpin the transformation of Bandra Bay, said Rohit Mohan, Chief Design & Sustainability Officer at Godrej Properties, stressing the focus on creating a durable, well-designed public realm that delivers lasting value to the neighbourhood. Anup Singh, Head – Design & Regulatory at RC Group, said community aspirations have been central to the design approach, with the project envisioned as a new landmark and destination for the Bandra neighbourhood. **MMJ**

Changing City: Mumbai's new flyover in Juhu coming soon. Will commute get faster?

The new flyover over Mumbai's Juhu Vile Parle Development Scheme (JVPD) circle is likely to be commissioned for vehicular use by December 2027. The new flyover in Mumbai's Juhu will allow commuters coming from the western suburbs to bypass at least five congested traffic junctions, including the



JVPD circle, cutting travel time down from 45 minutes to just 20 minutes. **MMJ**

BMC to relocate garbage bins from low-footfall areas, focus on busy streets

 **Devashri Bhujbal**

The steel wet and dry bins installed by the BMC almost every 100 metres across Mumbai may soon be removed from low-footfall areas and locations with narrow footpaths.

The BMC has now decided to change its norm and install twin garbage bins on high-footfall roads and on a requirement basis, after conducting a ground survey across 26 wards.

The decision comes after its present norm of installing bins at uniform spacing failed to yield the desired results and resulted in avoidable clutter, obstruction to pedestrian movement and an unaesthetic streetscape.

Survey To Determine Bin Locations

An urban planning firm will be appointed for the survey and finalisation of the location and spacing of litter bins on roads with footpaths across Mumbai's wards. An Expression of Interest (EOI) has been floated for the same by the civic Solid Waste Management (SWM) department.

Deputy Municipal Commissioner (SWM) Kiran Dighavkar said, "At present, the wet and dry garbage bins are placed every 100-200 metres. However, they are found to be insufficient for high-footfall areas and installed more than required in low-footfall areas. Accordingly, we have floated an EOI to appoint a firm to conduct a ground survey across 26 wards in Mumbai and finalise locations to install twin garbage bins on high-footfall roads and on a requirement basis." The administration observed that the present norm of uniform spacing of 100 metres does



not adequately reflect the varied character of Mumbai's roads and footpaths.

Uniform spacing fails to meet needs

On several stretches, particularly narrow footpaths, residential lanes with low footfall, or roads running along open spaces, installation of bins every 100 metres resulted in avoidable clutter, obstruction to pedestrian movement and an unaesthetic streetscape.

Conversely, on stretches with heavy pedestrian and commercial activity, such as market areas, transport hubs, commercial high streets and institutional precincts, bins placed 100 metres apart are found to be inadequate and result in overflowing bins and littering.

BMC Seeks Rationalised Bin Placement

The civic body now seeks to achieve rationalised and contextual placement of litter bins that reduces unnecessary street clutter, improves the pedestrian and streetscape experience, ensures adequate bin availability in high-footfall and high-generation stretches, prevents overflowing bins and littering, and results in a defensible, well-documented, ward-wise bin location and spacing plan that can be adopted uniformly by all waste collection and transportation contractors across Mumbai. **MMJ**

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

After crack down, FDA now plans Eat right campaign

Contd from Page 1 mean good. What is in the packet has to be authentically put in print, and people must read it and then make a right choice," Mundhe added.

He also referred to misleading advertising claims and said consumers needed to be able to read and understand the information printed on food packages.

Responding to questions about judicial scrutiny of some of the department's actions, he said the FDA took the court's orders seriously and would correct mistakes if officers had erred in procedure, interpretation or implementation. However, he said the department would use the legal remedies available to it if it believed its position was correct.

The commissioner said the FDA had inspected around 15,000 to 16,000 establishments, with nearly half found to have major compliance deficiencies. Around 600 establishments had their licences suspended, while approximately 5,200 were issued improvement notices.

He cautioned against treating the proportion of

non-compliant samples collected during targeted inspections as an indication of the overall prevalence of unsafe food, explaining that officials focused on high-risk establishments and products. Mundhe also cited drug enforcement figures to highlight the department's action against violations. Between June and August 2026, drug seizures in Maharashtra amounted to ₹11.41 crore, compared with ₹13.64 crore during the entire previous financial year, he said.

Asked whether the enforcement drive would continue after his transfer, Mundhe said lasting change depended on institutionalising systems rather than relying on individual officers. "Institutions are permanent; persons manning those are temporary. The system has to be built in, stabilised, strengthened and then become part and parcel of the institution," he said.

Mundhe acknowledged that building and stabilising such systems required time, effort and planning, adding that their long-term success would

Strengthening RWA & Civil Society Participation in Urban Governance

Contd from Page 2 society organisations on municipal laws, urban planning, environment, civic responsibilities and public finance.

8. Networking of RWAs at city, district and State levels to share experiences, best practices and constructive solutions.

Expected Outcome

A structured citizen-government partnership will help governments understand local priorities

depend on public support.

On speculation about a possible political career amid growing public attention and a large social media following, Mundhe said politics was not his preferred field.

"Politics is not my cup of tea. I am a public servant. I am trying to perform this role as of today," he said, adding that he preferred to focus on the work before him rather than speculate about the future. Mundhe said the objective is to improve the system's functioning and make Maharashtra a better place to live.

better, improve service delivery, monitor public works, protect public assets and enhance accountability.

For citizens, it will provide a legitimate platform to participate in decisions affecting their communities while encouraging responsible citizenship rather than merely service-based demands.

Way Forward

The objective is not to create a parallel government, but to strengthen democratic local governance by institutionalising the participation of organised citizens.

The pioneering work of Dr. Rao VBJ Chelikani and the organisations associated with the RWA movement provides a valuable foundation. It is now necessary for governments, elected representatives, RWAs and civil society organisations to collectively take this movement forward.

A strong RWA and Civil Society network can become an effective Fourth Tier of Participatory Governance—complementing the three constitutional levels of government and bringing governance closer to the people.

"Good governance is not merely governance for the people, but governance with the people."

Clean Worli, South

Contd from Page 1 including dengue, malaria and H1N1.

The court also questioned what steps the BMC had taken on October 2, Gandhi Jayanti, which also marks the observance of the Centre's Swachhata Abhiyan.

Petition scope expanded

The bench said it had widened the scope of the petition, initially concerning the Kanjurmarg dumping ground, to monitor health and hygiene across Mumbai's wards.

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

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