

Deforestation Due to Pune Metro Handled Poorly



Number of trees replanted at the Vallabh Nagar ST stand are lesser than the number of uprooted trees due to Pune Metro construction.

Image: Amruta Dhume

AMRUTA DHUME & SAMEER MANEKAR
Pune, September 03

MahaMetro (Maharashtra Metro Rail Corporation Limited), a joint venture of the Union and Maharashtra state government, commenced operations on building two metro lines in Pune over a year ago. The two lines, stretching from Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) to Swargate, and Vanaz to Ramwadi, have a combined length of 31.25 kms. While the construction of both the lines is happening simultaneously at a rapid pace, it is resulting in deforestation along the lines.

According to the Detailed Project Report released by Pune Metro in November 2015, as many as 685 trees were likely to be uprooted in the process of overground construction on the lines. However, the same report mentions of 246 and 765 trees being affected due to construction of line 1 and line 2 respectively. The report claims that consequently, there will be an annual decrease in carbon dioxide absorption by 20,230 kg and in oxygen production by 45,472 kg in the city.

A press release dated 18 May, 2018 by Pune Metro stated that for every tree that would be cut or uprooted during the con-

struction process, 10 would be replanted. It also claimed that 3165 trees would be planted across the city in the course of the construction of the metro, while also promising replantation of 195 trees by the end of June 2018. It also claims to have planted 40 trees at the Sant Tukaram Bus Stand in Vallabh Nagar, along with over 125 plants near Akurdi.

According to a report by Times of India, Bhanudas Mane, Deputy Manager, Horticulture Department of Pune Metro claimed "planting 1500 trees near Range Hills campus and another 1000 trees near Akurdi railway station".

Another reality check at Vallabh Nagar revealed that only five trees had been transplanted!

Another allegation is that Pune Metro is not following the right procedure to cut or uproot trees. While speaking with the INK, a Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) official on the condition of anonymity said, "Cutting or uprooting of trees that fall on public land has to be first permitted by the PMC. The rule also requires that the individual or group uprooting or cutting a tree takes a photograph of the same and submits it to the PMC."

According to the official, it is mandatory for the concerned party to pay a certain amount as deposit to the PMC for cutting

or uprooting a tree. "It has also come to our attention that the Pune Metro officials have not paid the mandatory deposits to the PMC, and have still gone ahead uprooting these trees," the official said.

Bhanudas Mane, Deputy Manager,

"Despite being made aware of the norms time and again, Pune Metro is flouting the procedures. Trees that come in the way of the metro lines are being uprooted without the PMC being notified."

- PMC Official

Horticulture Department of Pune Metro refuted the allegations. "Firstly, we do not cut trees. We consider uprooting a tree before actually cutting it. Also, Pune Metro is following every procedure that is necessary to obtain the required documents for cutting or uprooting a tree. All our documents are full-proof, and we have all the permissions needed to go ahead with uprooting."

When asked about the deposit, Mane said, "the Pune Metro project is being operated under PMC, and hence, there is no need to pay any deposit for uprooting these trees."

(With inputs from Sonal Gupta and Shoubhik Ghosh)

Twitter Redressal of Indian Railways a Farce

SUMANT SEN & SAYAN GHOSH
Pune, September 03

After the Narendra Modi government was sworn in, the then railway minister Suresh Prabhu installed a redressal machinery where passengers could tweet their complaints to the railway authorities. This would then be looked into by the railway staff.

In their tweets, travellers had to state their prob-

lem, write down the train number, coach number, and their PNR number and tag it to the official Twitter handle of the Ministry of Indian Railways, '@railminindia.'

In December 2017, the railways set-up a new handle, '@railwayseva,' exclusively for passenger complaints.

However, after the stampede at Elphinstone Station Road (now known as Prabhadevi Railway Station), this redressal system as introduced by the railways came under much scrutiny. Hundreds of Mumbaikars had taken to Twit-

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As Panchayat Fails, Sus Village Repair Potholes on Sus-Pashan Road

DHRITI DATTA & SUMEDH SENGANKAR
Pune, September 03

A recurrent sight during the monsoons on Indian roads is the trauma created by potholes. Every resident of Sus village near Baner in Pune will have stories about how the roads have traumatised drivers and pedestrians with massive traffic jams almost every day. In the rains, it becomes unbearable. For nearly five years, those who use the road have been jostled due to the potholes. The road connecting Mumbai-Bangalore highway to Hinjewadi via Sus gaon has been in shambles for months. This is worrisome since it is highly-frequented road with multiple residential complexes, resorts and educational institutes in the vicinity.

Reconstruction on this pot-holed riddled road was supposed to be undertaken nearly five years ago by the state Public Works Department (PWD). Unfortunately, nothing was done because the Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA) and the Sus gram panchayat got into a wrangle over jurisdiction.

Apurva Amit Nikalje, the Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat at Sus village said that adequate measures were being taken by the village authorities, with little support from the PWD and PMRDA. "The main road in question comes under Public Works Department. But despite repeated attempts and follow-ups with authorities, we have received no response from their side", said Nikalje.

"All we need is some support from the higher authorities. The Gram Panchayat is doing all they

Frustrated by the lack of response to their dilemma, 200 residents of Sus village along with the gram panchayat repaired 100 potholes along a 5 km stretch of the Pashan-Sus Road recently.

can to reach out and bring this issue to their notice. But little is being actually done by the authorities in implementing something," she pointed out.

She said that the Gram Panchayat had shot off two letters to the PMRDA and PWD about this very issue.

Frustrated by the lack of response, 200 residents of Sus village and eight commuters from nearby areas repaired approximately 100 potholes along a five kilometre stretch of the Pashan-Sus Road recently. Since the funds were donated by the villagers, the materials used for the temporary fix were rocks and mud. The longevity of this fix is questionable, however the gapping potholes strung along the Sus village road made this fix an undeniable necessity.

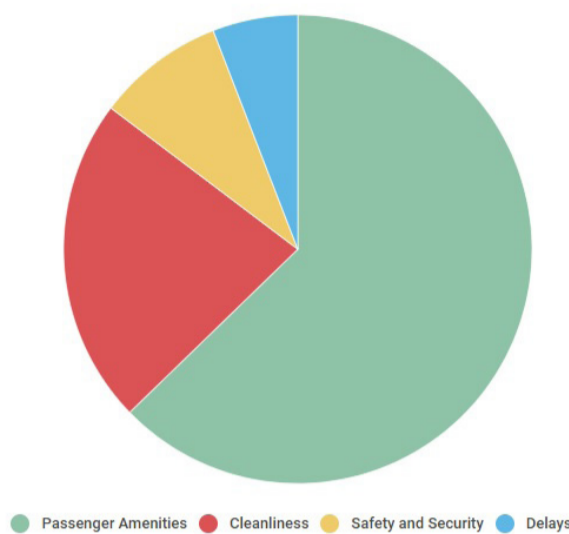
The PWD has allegedly demanded photographs before the repair and after the repair. Only then will they consider paying for the expenses-

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Twitter Redressal of Indian Railways a Farce

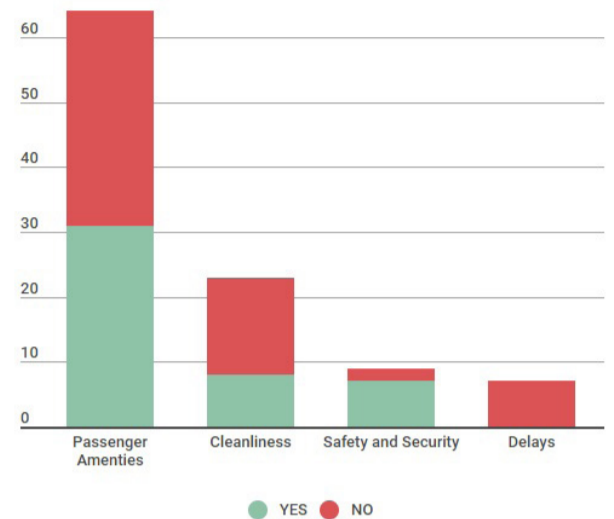


Complaints by Passengers



Sample Size: 100 Twitter Threads

Redressal of Complaints



Sample Size: 100 Twitter Threads

ter to voice their concerns about the overbridge at Elphinstone prior to the tragedy but in vain. Despite their tweets, the railways failed to take any affirmative action to resolve this issue.

Thus, in order to see for ourselves, the ground realities of this aforementioned system, we decided to travel to Panvel. So, we boarded the Pune-Bhusawal Express from Chinchwad.

As the train rattled on its way towards Lonavala, we got up from our seats and walked to the end of the compartment to check if everything is in order.

Nothing seemed out of place at first. However, on opening a toilet door, we were met with an unpleasant site. The washroom was dirty with small puddles of muddy water and faeces on the edge of the toilet-bowl. It was clearly unfit for use and needed urgent cleaning.

We immediately clicked a photograph of the unclean washroom and tweeted it to both @railminindia and @railwayseva handles.

Soon, we received a reply from them, asking us to share

our PNR number. We did that. Within minutes, the railways notified us that the issue was being escalated to the divisional railway manager's (DRM) office in Mumbai.

After some time, we were asked to share our PNR number again, this time by the DRM of Mumbai Central Railway. After we replied back, @drmmumbaicr in a tweet stated that the matter had been notified to the concerned officials. Two handles, '@srdmecogmumbaicr' and '@drmsolapur' had also been tagged in the tweet.

As we approached Panvel, we expected that railway staff would clean the washroom here since Panvel is an important halt on the route. However, no cleaning staff turned up.

At that point, we decided to take a chance and extend our journey to Kalyan, the next big halt. If not Panvel, we were certain that the railways would send the cleaning staff at Kalyan and redress the matter at hand.

However, on our way to Kalyan, it also came to our notice that the gangway connection between the two bo-

gies was littered with plastic wrappers, used cardboards, and vegetable peels. Immediately, we tweeted a picture of the gangway to both @railminindia and @railwayseva to which we have not received any reply to this day.

When we pulled into Kalyan Junction, we knew that we couldn't extend our journey any further. So, we got down and stationed ourselves outside the compartment in case the cleaning staff decided to show up, but there was no action.

As the train was about to leave, we walked inside the bogie, opened the bathroom door, and saw that the condition of the toilet was the same as we had seen it the first time. We got down just in time before the engine sounded its whistle and the train continued its journey towards Bhusawal.

We were on our way up the foot over bridge towards the local train platforms. When the phone buzzed, a tweet from '@srdmecogmumbaicr' read, 'Cleaning done at Kalyan.' That was a lie.

(With inputs from Shrimayee Thakur)

Nepal Battles Water-Borne Diseases

PRATIMA GIRI

Biratnagar, Nepal, September 03



Representational Image

On June 15, a 36-year-old female from Rangeli in Morang of Nepal, visited the emergency ward of Koshi Zonal Hospital, Biratnagar. Her major complaints were loose motions, abdominal pain and vomiting. She was diagnosed with vibrio cholera. Likewise, a 40-year-old man from Dainiya village had high fever, headache and abdominal pain for three days. When brought to the hospital he tested positive for typhoid. The rising number of people affected

by waterborne diseases is causing concern in the Himalayan kingdom.

Every year, as the rainy season begins in the country, the risk of an epidemic increases significantly. Doctors at major public hospitals in Nepal say that, they see a rise in the number of patients suffering from water borne diseases during monsoon. "It is not unusual for hospitals to receive more patients suffering from waterborne diseases during monsoon," says Dr Sangya Gyawali of B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sci-

ences, Dharan. "During this season, blockage and mixing of sewage with the drinking water contaminates the water. The stagnant water further provides breeding grounds for mosquitoes, increasing risks of mosquito-transmitted diseases such as malaria, dengue etc." she points out.

According to the Water Aid web-

Access to safe drinking water is a fundamental necessity for sound health. But majority of Nepalese still lack access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation.

site, one in ten Nepalis lack access to clean water, and about half the population do not even have a decent toilet. The website quotes the Nepalese public health department, stating that around 3500 children die every year due to water borne diseases.

Lack of clean water increases the

risk of diarrheal diseases, cholera, typhoid, dysentery and other waterborne diseases. Diseases related to water and sanitation are one of the prime causes of child mortality in Nepal. Monsoon downpour also leads to landslides and floods.

Every year, as the monsoon approaches, the country looms under the threat of waterborne diseases due to the contamination of water and environment pollution caused by the disaster. FloodList website states that till date 208 families in 20 districts of Nepal have reportedly been affected by floods and landslides.

The monsoon season, starting from March till September, is prone to outbreak of waterborne illness. Diarrheal disease is the most prevalent of all waterborne diseases in Nepal, which gets worse every monsoon because of the increased flooding and overflow of sewage pipes that contaminate drinking water sources. According to the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), diarrheal disease is one of the fifth major causes of death in Nepal.

Dr Dhiraj Tamrakar of Birat Hospital, Biratnagar says that, "water-borne diseases can be life threatening if not treated on time. Most of the patients visit a hospital only when their condition gets worse. It is important to visit hospitals on time and get the right treatment. Awareness is an important tool to reduce the burden of waterborne diseases," he says.

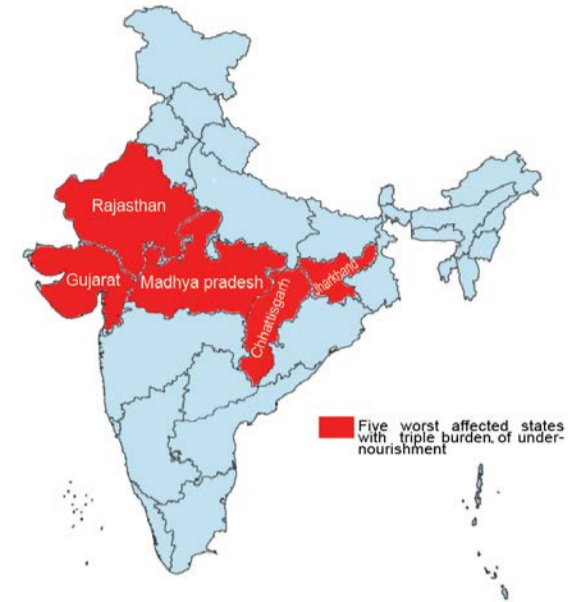
While the risk of getting infected from waterborne disease is high during monsoon, Doctors stress on adopting healthy habits and maintaining hygiene. Dr Sanjila Nepal of Green City Hospital, Kathmandu says that, we can reduce the chances of getting waterborne disease by taking some precautionary measures like chemically treating water with 'chlorine' and iodine or boiling water before drinking and adopting healthy habits like hand-washing. Water should not be allowed to get clogged in or around the home and the surroundings should be kept clean to prevent the breeding of mosquitoes, she said.

(With inputs from Khevna Pandit and Tiyashi Datta)

Imbalanced Diet: Undernourishment Strikes India



Representational Image



University, who conducted a research on the relationship between open defecation and stunting states that poor sanitation decreases a child's ability to absorb nutrients which in turn affects their overall health. The research mentions that open defecation leads to the spread of which make their way into children's fingers and feet through food and water. This exposure gives them infectious diseases like diarrhoea. In the paper titled 'The Nutri-value of Toilets' he explains that, "malabsorption could cause malnutrition of various forms, stunting, and cognitive deficits, even without necessarily manifesting as diarrhea or otherwise observable illness."

WHO and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) encourage countries to develop poli-

Half of the children in Bihar are stunted, while in Jharkhand every second child is underweight. Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, with 48.3% and 46.3%, account for the highest %age of stunted children in the country.

cies and practices that promote healthy feeding practices for children. According to their guidelines, a child must be exclusively breastfed from birth to 6 months. From 6 months to 59 months, breastfeeding along with complementary food should be implemented.

In India, despite the presence of programmes like the Integrated Child Development Scheme which have been operational for 43 years, none of the states have 100 % rate of exclusive breastfeeding on birth. Only 41.6 % children are given colostrum, the first form of milk produced immediately after delivery, at the time of their birth which helps the child to have a strong immune system.

(With inputs from Ishani Vats and Rohini Banerjee)

AAKRITI BHALLA & PEMA GELAY
Pune, September 03

India has the largest undernourished population in the world; every seventh person in the country receives low levels of nutrition. This should be worrying all of us.

Out of 119 countries, India stands 100th on the Global Hunger Index. The worst victims of this crisis are children, especially under the age of five. Around 25 % of the total children in India are undernourished. Recent data released by NITI Aayog indicates that 38.4 % of children are stunted, 35.7 % are underweight and 21 % are wasted.

Undernutrition is a global crisis. The United Nations (UN) defines undernutrition as a condition wherein the diet does not provide enough calories for growth and maintenance.

World Health Organisation (WHO) identifies three parameters to measure the level of undernourishment in children aged 0-5 years, namely stunting, wasting and being underweight. Stunting refers to lower than average height for a child's age, wasting implies lower than average weight for height and being underweight, as the name suggests, indicates lower than average weight.

States like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh are affected by 'triple burden of undernutrition'. This means that the children in these states are affected by all three conditions: stunting, wasting and underweight.

In states like Karnataka and Gujarat, which have better infrastructure, around 26 % of children that are wasted. However, the union territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli has maximum %age of children - 27.6 % - who are wasted. Out of every five children, two are stunted and underweight.

According to WHO, the

40%

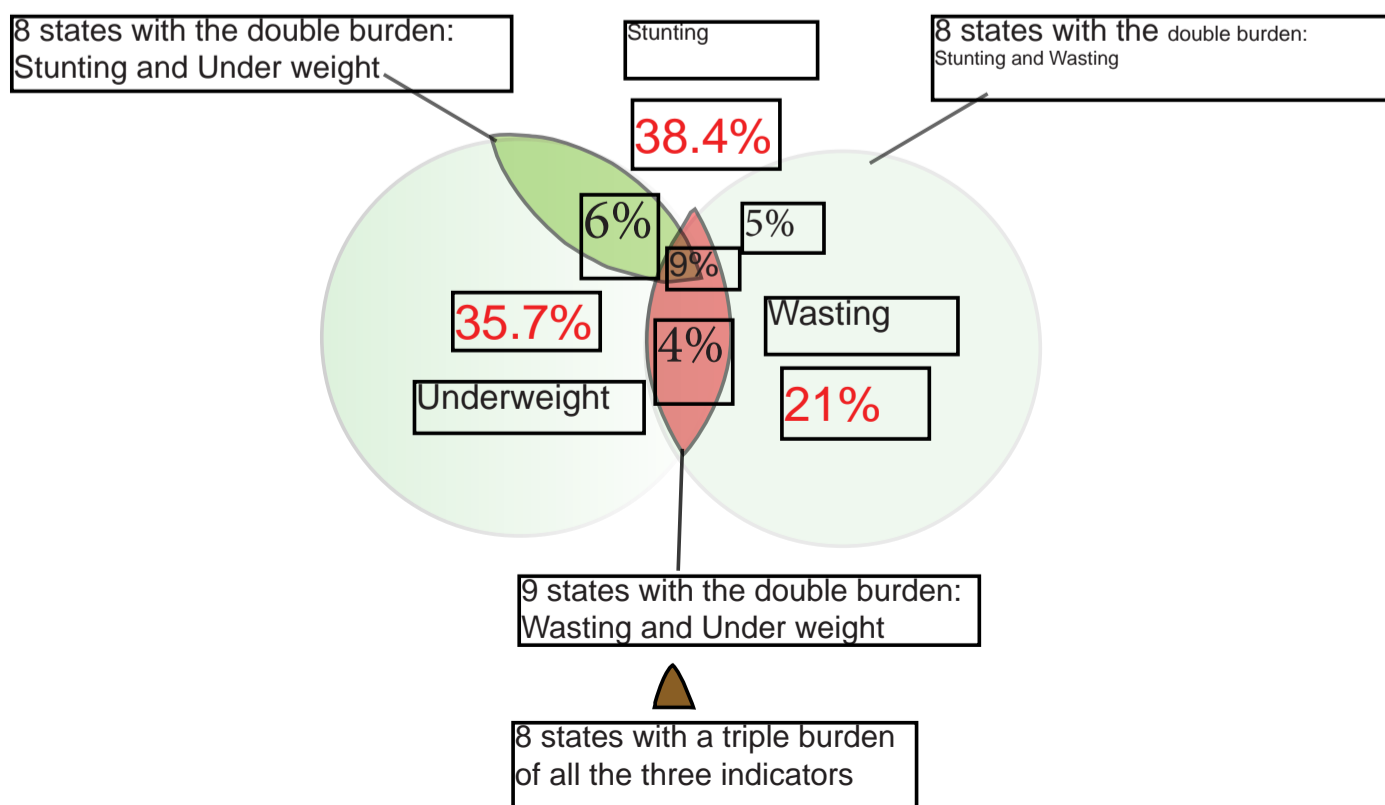
Of India's Population is Malnourished

100

India's rank as per UN Global Hunger Index, 2017 out of 129 countries

main causes of childhood deaths in developing countries are acute respiratory infection, diarrhea, communicable and non-communicable diseases, and undernutrition. Poor hygiene and unsanitized spaces are breeding ground for many of these infectious diseases like malaria, diarrhea.

Dr. Dean Spears, Developmental Economist at Princeton



Many Universities Ignore UGC Guidelines



Representational Image

DIVYA CHANDRA
Pune, September 03

The University Grants Commission (UGC) mandates that every university must have a Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Cell to ensure their upliftment. However, many of the universities have not bothered to comply with the order.

Of the 30 central universities, six do not have the cell. Four do have the grievance redressal form put up on its official website, but do not have the cell in place. Though 20 out of 30 central universities have these special cells, but are not effectively functioning.

The guideline was part of its five-year plan that ended in 2017 to implement the reservation policy in admission, recruitment, allotment of hostels and so on.

Basically, the cell was to strengthen the knowledge and skills of SC/ST students by providing remedial coaching classes and ensuring the implementation of reservation policy. The cell also functions as a grievance redressal platform for these students and employees of the university.

In 2006, the Central Education Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006 enforced 15% reservation for Scheduled Caste (SC), 7.5% for Scheduled Tribe (ST) and 27% for Other Backward Classes (OBC) for both teaching and

“A year ago, I had a tiff with one of my seniors who was a Brahmin. As I am a Dalit, he openly abused me in front of everybody. I did complain to the SC/ST Cell, but it was not seen as an issue. It was probably because the faculty in charge of the cell was a Brahmin.”

- Aarti, a Dalit student

non-teaching posts.

Dalit student Aarti of the Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya at Wardha in Maharashtra witnessed several instances of caste discrimination. “A year ago, I had a tiff with one of my seniors who was a Brahmin. As I am a Dalit, he openly abused me in front of everybody. I did complain to the SC/ST Cell, but it was not seen as an issue. It was probably because the faculty in charge of the cell was a Brahmin.”

The Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya has seen protests by students because of non-functioning of the SC/ST cell. There have been instances when a Brahmin teacher has not forwarded scholarships of SC/ST students and it was seen that it was because of his bias towards caste.

In the case of the Delhi University, the Equal Opportunity Cell (EOC) is primarily responsible for empowering students with physical disabilities but also conducts coaching classes for the SC/ST students. Anil Kumar Aneja, officer on special duty, EOC told The Ink: “EOC works efficiently for the grievance redressal of SC/ST students. We conduct coaching classes for subjects like English and Computer.” On being asked about the number of grievance cases that have come up in his two-year tenure, he said, “I cannot recall of any.”

While on the other hand, Naveen, a physically challenged student of Kirori Mal College, Delhi University is unaware of coaching classes being conducted by the Equal Opportunities Cell. “I have approached the EOC number of times, but I have never seen any coaching classes being conducted for the SC/ST students.”

Talking about the inefficiency of the Delhi University to provide adequate counseling for the SC/ST students, Rocky, student president, Delhi University said, “The student council organised career counseling sessions for SC/ST students who took admission this year as well as the ones who graduated. The university should have organised these sessions. Since it failed to do so, we had to plan them.”

UGC provides a one-time grant of Rs. 5 lakhs to the universities for non-recurring items required for the SC/ST cells such as books and journals, audio-visual and teaching/ learning aid material, computers with printer, photocopier and so on. Since this is a one-time grant for five years, the administration found it difficult to effectively run these special cells.

(With inputs from Swastika Mukopadhyay and Subhiksha Manoj)

Potholes on Sus Road

Continued from Page 1

es incurred by the Gram Panchayat and the citizens. Commuters as well as the citizens of the village are exasperated by the overwhelming traffic caused and aggravated by these potholes. Santosh Owl, a resident at Sus Gaon exclaimed that it sometimes takes vehicles 30-45 minutes to get past a road that would usually take 5-10 minutes.

“The Hinjewadi IT sector traffic which has increased in this area has made a huge difference, both in increasing the traffic and worsening the conditions of the roads,” says Santosh. He is not the only one to feel this way. There appears to be a consensus amongst the residents as they all believe that the connection to Hinjewadi phase 3 through their village’s main road is what is causing excessive damage to the roads this monsoon.



Potholes on the five kms stretch of Sus-Pashan road is causing discomfort to commuters, and leading to long traffic hours.

However, commuters from the IT industry share different sentiments. “The IT crowd is not completely to be blamed. Surely there’s an increase in traffic because of the offices here

but then roads are meant to sustain traffic,” exclaimed Bashitwa Roy, a resident of Hinjewadi Phase 3 and an IT professional, on being asked about the residents’ complaints about the IT sector employees were overusing the stretch of road.

The conditions of the Sus village road are shamefully appalling. Unfortunately, Sus village isn’t the only area in Pune that endures this fate. Potholes are a menace around the city despite Rs. 1,259 crore being allocated by the PMC for the building and maintenance of roads. The repetitive failure of meeting promises is regrettable. However, villages like Sus Gaon which is yet to be taken under the wing of the PMC suffer even more due to lack of proper administration, support and funds.

(With inputs from Sucharita Ganguly and Najooka Javier)

Aladdin's Indian Encounter

APARNA DEB &
CHRISTAL FERRAO
Pune, September 03

The best part of 2018 for Siddharth Menon was being selected as the lead for the Broadway musical, Aladdin. He had surprised his fans with his work across mediums in the past year. His critically acclaimed film, *Loev* released on Netflix in 2015, after which he worked as a celebrity radio jockey. But *Aladdin* was what turned his career around.

Menon talks about the positive audience response saying he relates to the Aladdin song *Diamond in the Rough*. "I am like the unpolished diamond and I like being that," he says. "That is because when people expect the least from you, you end up surprising them more, which makes me even more happy."

In February 2018, Disney India announced that they would be launching an Indian version of their popular stage musical, *Aladdin*. Beginning in April in Mumbai, *Aladdin* has successfully completed 50 housefull shows since then.

Disney has

competently translated a Broadway musical that caters to local sensibilities through sets, costumes, dialogues, songs and choreography for the first time.

"At first, I was like, 'why, why are we doing that?,' being a fan of the film, which released in 1992. But then the thing is, they found a mid-way. It's not completely Indianized, it's just the Hindi part of it, they made it so beautiful.

It's like Genie and Aladdin's secret language which nobody else understands.

stands. Certain things had to be customised because the original Broadway play had many cultural and pop culture references, which won't work here. It's for a niche audience, and the mass audience probably won't relate to it as much," says Menon.

Apart from *Aladdin* the other central character is the bold Genie, played by Mantra. Speaking about his experience on acting with Mantra, Menon says, "it was magical and brilliant casting. We had fun and gave each other a lot of suggestions. I remember the first time we did the Genie scene, all the other scenes, they were taking a little time to come together but Genie and my scene just came instantly and everybody in the cast



Images: Twitter - @sidmenoni

was like this is crazy."

An actor needs to master all forms of performing arts for a Broadway play. While recalling his days of rehearsals, Siddharth said, "the day used to start with vocals, then drama, followed by choreography, and end with workouts, acrobats and action part of it."

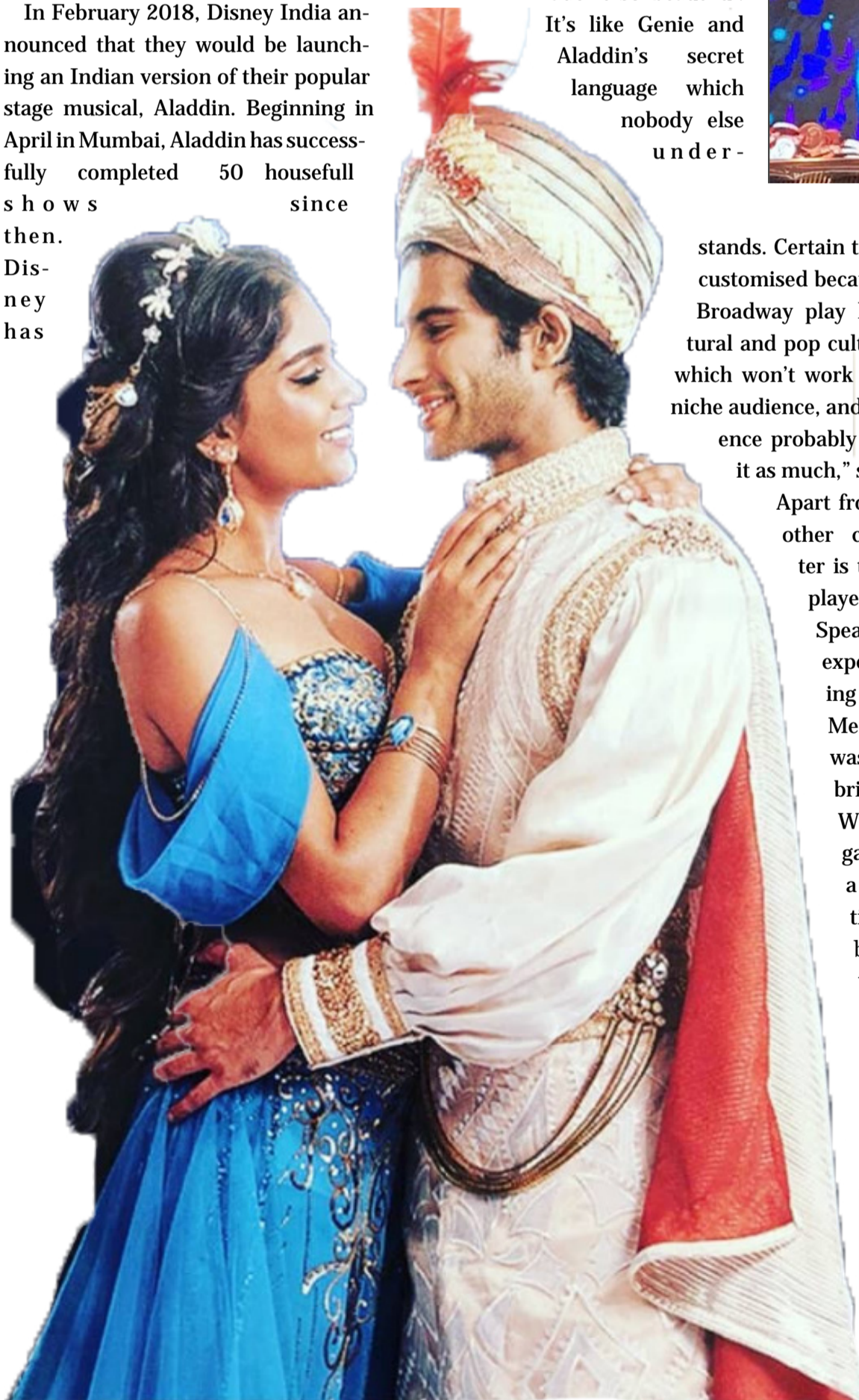
It was during this time that our real-life Aladdin had a magical moment: "We were trying out the carpet scene. I was on the carpet in mid air with Jasmine and suddenly realized that I was on the magical carpet."

Aladdin is not Menon's first experience with theatre; he is also one of the founding members of 'Natak Company', a Pune-based theatre company. "It is our passion project, and we do a lot of experimental work. We want youngsters to come and watch theatre. It is difficult to manage because now many of us have families and responsibilities. But still, to really come together is quite commendable, and now we are thinking of upping the scale after ten years," he says, narrating the transformation of 'Natak Company' through the years.

Speaking about responses from audiences Menon says, "You cannot underestimate kids. They are very sharp. They see things which we adults cannot see. The feedback that they give is amazing. Also, overall response of the audience has been overwhelming." He further said, that this is a phenomenal time for theatre and no other medium can give you an experience of a live performance.

The next performance of the musical is scheduled in Hyderabad this September.

(With inputs from Akanksha Saxena and Ritika Dixit)



Democracy Wall: Exploring Facets of Freedom

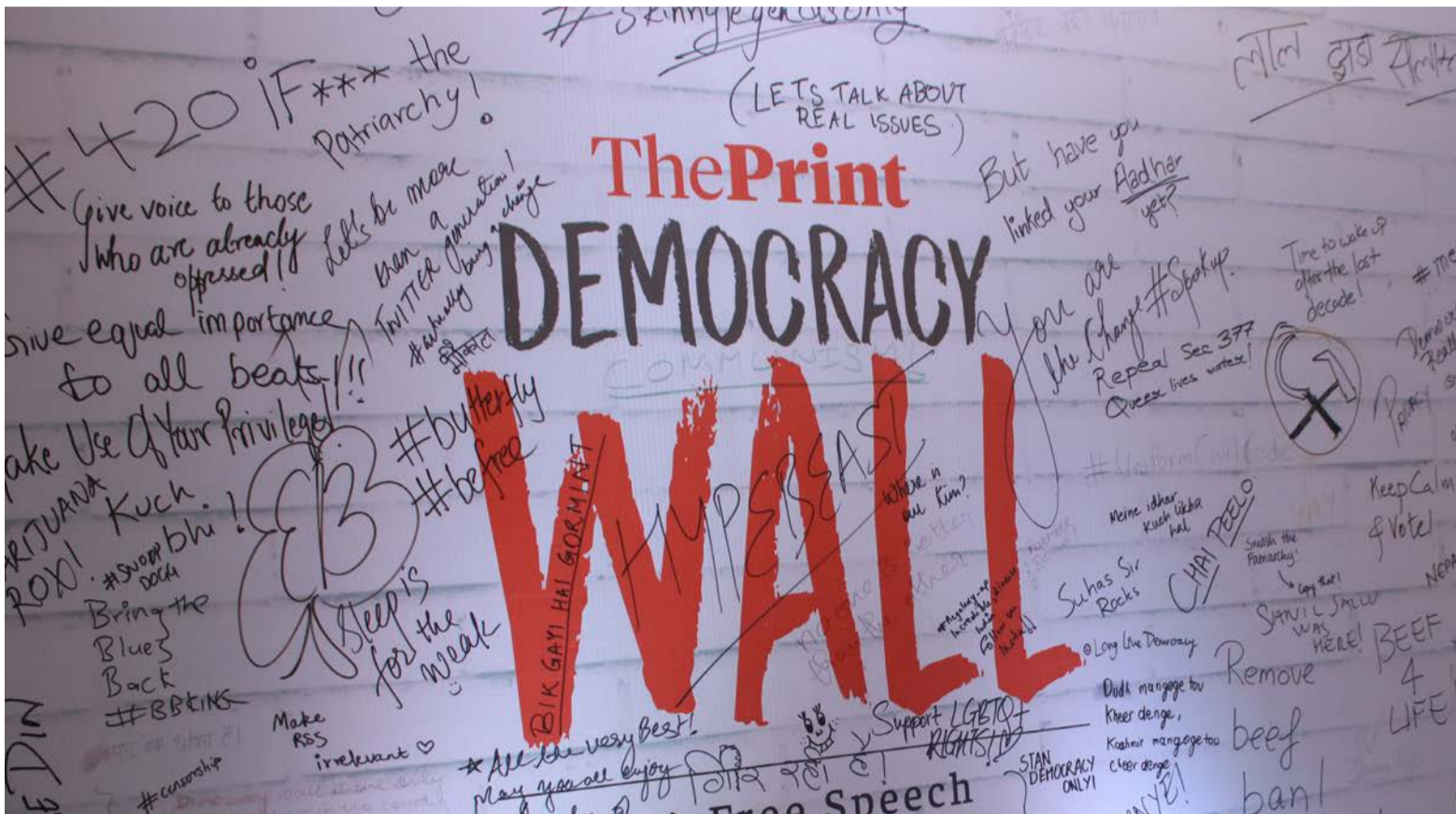


Image: Apoorva Singhal

AMRUTA DHUME &
SAMEER MANEKAR
Pune, September 03

The Symbiosis Centre for Media and Communication (SCMC), Viman Nagar, recently hosted the 12th edition of 'Democracy Wall', a free speech on campus initiative organized by ThePrint, a popular news portal that deals in news and current events. The idea of the web portal was to make the "Democracy Wall" emerge as a "forum of expression and healthy questioning of established ideas and notions amongst students".

tions to the speakers who responded with varied views on the issue of free speech in India in contemporary times.

Menon talked about "freedom existing within boundaries" in public life. When asked of the extent which free speech can be exercised, Menon said, "India is free, because it has boundaries. You are free in your home, because it has walls. If you extrapolate this to the freedom of expression on the national level, you need to build those walls. Only then you can be free within those boundaries."

Rapper Feyago captured the spirit of the event with his upcoming single Why, and Lag Ja Gale, that raised questions

overnight. People are then right to stop me if I say 'I'm just going to be like the west'."

Gupta encompassed the idea of freedom of speech and expression by sharing his experience of founding ThePrint and becoming a "sovereign republic" of a media organization. He also elaborated on how Indian democracy was trapped in a strange situation. "It is very easy these days to take one side. We are going through a strange phase as a society. We listen to only what we want to listen to, and not something we disagree with."

When asked about the future of media and democracy in India, Gupta was of the opinion that "the worst was over". "Media is re-inventing itself with effective use of technology. With strongmen rising and the number of countries drifting into autocratic orbits growing, one might feel like the institution of democracy is under attack. But historically, literate observers will tell you that this phase will end, and democracy will prevail."

AAP spokesperson Chadha accused the prime minister and the union government for the growing incidences of killing of journalists and curbing of free speech in the country. He said that intolerance towards a contrarian viewpoint has been increasing in India rapidly more so since Modi assumed office in 2014. Under his leadership various fringe groups have been attacking journalists, and that has resulted in deterioration and curbing of free speech in India, which is extremely unfortunate, he added.

Elaborating on the extent to which free speech can be exercised on campuses, Chadha said, "In our constitution, there



"You are free in your home, because it has walls. If you extrapolate this to the freedom of expression on the national level, you need to build those walls. Only then you can be free within those boundaries."

- Kay Kay Menon, actor



"We are going through a strange phase as a society. We listen to only what we want to listen to, and not something we disagree with."

- Shekhar Gupta, Editor-in-chief, ThePrint



"You have to understand we are a still very traditional society; ours is one of the oldest cultures in the world. We cannot expect to be like western societies and change overnight."

- Feeyago, rapper



"Nowadays we are seeing extra-constitutional restrictions being put forth by fringe elements level"

- Raghav Chadha, Spokesperson, Aam Admi Party

The speakers included personalities from diverse fields like actor Kay Kay Menon, rapper Feyago, national spokesperson of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Raghav Chadha, and Shekhar Gupta, founder and editor-in-chief of ThePrint. Being interactive in nature, the session attracted students of different media streams like journalism, audio visual and communication management. They posed interesting ques-

on issues like corruption, racism, migration, sexuality, law, societal pressure as well as the aftermath of the partition. Talking about self-censorship that artists have to enforce, Feyago said, "You have to keep your listeners, your viewers in mind. You need your bread and butter, your ego boost, your pride. You also have to understand we are a still very traditional society; ours is one of the oldest cultures in the world. We cannot expect to be like western societies and change

are certain safeguards for free speech, as well as reasonable restrictions on them, such as the speech should not be defamatory, or the speech should not result in an act of treason. But apart from these, nowadays we are seeing extra-constitutional restrictions being put forth by fringe elements."

ThePrint has previously held the event at campuses such as Amity University, Noida, Panjab University, Jain University, Bangalore, BITS Pilani, Hyderabad, KC College, Mumbai, Somaiya Vidyavihar, Mumbai and many others.

(With inputs from Akshaya C. and Vasudha Kaukuntala)