

# MUMBAI MERI JAAN

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF AGNI

Action for good  
Governance &  
Networking in  
India

# AGNI

### Editorial

## Wadala MLA Kalidas Kolambkar sets National Record for most consecutive terms in metropolitan constituency

**K**alidas Kolambkar, a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) from Wadala, has been named in the World Records Book of India, a local keeper of records, for winning the maximum consecutive terms from a metropolitan constituency in the Maharashtra legislative assembly.



Kolambkar, who is from the Bharatiya Janata Party, won the constituency for the ninth term in the recent elections. He has been representing Wadala (earlier called Naigaon) since 1990 and has served as a minister in the state government.

He started his political career in the Shiv Sena. Praja Foundation, which rates MLAs from Mumbai on the basis of their attendance and participation in legislative sessions, ranked him 22 out of the 36 members from the city.

World Records Book of India, in a statement, said that Kolambkar has become the first MLA to win the most number of consecutive assembly elections from an Indian metropolis. The World Records Book of India honoured Kolambkar with a medal and a letter of appreciation in the presence of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

MMJ

## India's first Undersea Tunnel to revolutionize high-speed

**Kamal Mishra**

**R**ailway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inspected the undersea tunnel work for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Corridor and expressed satisfaction with the "good progress" being made on this ambitious project.

The 21-kilometre tunnel, which includes a 7-kilometre stretch beneath the Thane Creek, will connect the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) station to Shilphata. It is India's first undersea rail tunnel.

Speaking at the project site in Ghansoli, Vaishnaw highlighted the advanced



technology and design enabling two trains to pass through the tunnel at speeds of up to 250 km/h. For single trains, the speed can reach a maximum of 320 km/h. He emphasized that the tunnel incorporates measures for environmental protection along with

Contd. on Page 2

## India to get its first AI university in Maharashtra soon

**M**aharashtra is all set to become the first Indian state to lay the foundation of the first AI university. The state government has formed a dedicated task force that will be looking into the project, announced by the IT minister of Maharashtra, Ashish Shelar.

The task force includes experts from academia, industry and government which will ensure a stronger approach to the establishment of an AI university.

Experts from IIT Mumbai and IIM Mumbai, along with several representatives from Google India, Mahindra Group and L&T. This committee will show the path to research innovation and industry partnerships.

Designated officials of the Indian government's Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology who will be accompanied by the Rajiv Gandhi Science and Technology Commission and Data Security Council of India are going to participate in the task force.

While addressing the press, IT minister of Maharashtra



Ashish Shelar said, "The AI University will be a centre of excellence, fostering collaboration between industry, academia and government. This initiative will not only position us as a global leader in AI but also contribute to India's technological advancement".

He further added to the media that the task force has held two meetings and is working on finalising the roadmap for the university's establishment. The government's decision reflects its commitment to making Maharashtra a hub for technology and innovation.

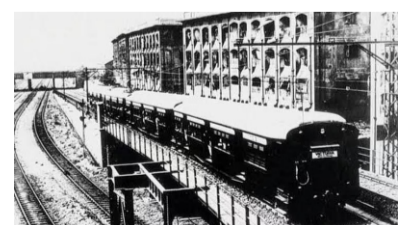
AI experts believe that with the rise of AI and the establishment of such a university, it will place Maharashtra at the forefront of technological progress. Apart from India, several other countries have already installed AI education systems with top AI universities in the US, UK, France, and China.

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## Mumbai's Iconic Local Trains Complete 100 Years

**E**lectric Multiple Units (EMU), also known as local trains in Mumbai, have completed 100 years. On February 3, 1925, history was made when India's first electric train, consisting of four coaches, ran between Victoria Terminus (now Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus, CSMT) and Kurla on the Harbour Line.

On that historic day in 1925, Sir



Leslie Wilson, then Governor of Bombay, arrived at Victoria Terminus with Lady Wilson in a regal horse-drawn carriage to grace the inauguration

Contd. on Page 4

## Hospital Tales - New series - Shades of reality behind the curtain **Tale 1: The Price Tag on Life Part C**

Continued from  
December 2024 issue

 **Shrikant Soman, AGNI Trustee**

When the doctor presented a new line of treatment involving a newly discovered drug that needed to be imported, the family faced a real dilemma. The medication was expensive and offered only a 50% chance of success, turning their decision into a gamble. What if the drug failed to help Dilip recover? Was it worth risking their financial stability for this uncertain hope?

Such thoughts felt almost sinful; they now found themselves weighing money against the chances of recovery and the rightful need for Dilip to have his savings spent on him. It was a dirty equation of life, forcing them to confront the harsh reality that life had a price tag. The notion that life is priceless seemed a distant memory. Instead, they grappled with the realization that their emotional attachments were being measured against the dwindling cash in their pockets. This was a new awakening, one that none of them had anticipated.

After due deliberation, the family decided against the expensive treatment. They opted to restrict all medical care to the bare minimum, focusing only on keeping Dilip comfortable. A few days later, Dilip passed away, leaving behind a family that was now teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. His departure marked not only a profound personal loss but also the financial strain that had come from their desperate attempts to save him.

The story does not end here. My own journey becomes inextricably entwined with Mr. Dilip's story.

Having spent years navigating the complex world of

healthcare, I had anticipated this probable outcome. With the wisdom gained from countless experiences and discussions with medical consultants, I had sought to indirectly and tactfully caution the family about the financial aspects of their decisions. But instead of being seen as a guiding hand, my words hurt them. They felt betrayed, as if I cared more for money than for the sanctity of human life.

In the unfolding drama, as the reality set in, it became a painful realisation that ultimately, I was proven right. I wished fervently to be wrong. "I would rather be a fool than a prophet in this case," I thought to myself, grappling with the knowledge that my foresight had not been a blessing but a burden.

This narrative encapsulates the core theme of this article: "Life has a price tag." We often romanticize life with poetry, morality, and the lofty teachings of ethics and religion, but we must confront the harsh realities that finance imposes. The cold, hard truth is that the financial constraints often overshadow the emotional and moral landscapes of our lives.

"In the end, we only regret the chances we didn't take, the relationships we didn't nurture, and the decisions made from fear rather than love." Yet, in Mr. Dilip's case, fear turned into a relentless quest for survival, a struggle against the unforgiving tide of mounting medical bills.

I can't help but reflect on the bitter irony: life has a price tag, and we are often unaware of the costs until we're faced with the bill at the counter. It's a reality check that rattles the very foundations of our existence.

"The tragedy of life is not that it ends so soon, but that we wait so long **contd. on Page 4**

## RWAs in a Democracy, just cannot be Political

 **Col Tejendra Pal Tyagi Vir Chakra, National President, CoRWA**

Every RWA in Galli- Mohalla is a primary school of Democracy. The District level Resident Welfare association represents a college of Democracy. The State Level Federation of RWAs can be taken as the University of Democracy. And with this standard of measure, CoRWA (Confederation of RWAs- A Pan India National Apex Body of RWAs) can be easily considered as the Civil Society of India. It works like the "Third Eye" of the people and it should be given the title of fourth tier of Governance after Parliament, Legislature and Municipalities.

RWAs should be given overriding priority in resolving their issues because their office bearers do not get any perk or privilege. They are generally senior retired officers from different Government or Private services. They are watched by their neighbours day in and

day out 24 by 7. Hence they do not require any Audit. Quality of Works done by the representatives of RWAs should generally not be questioned because they themselves are the beneficiary.

People from different walks of life, class 1 to class 4, professional, non-professional, religious heads or anti-social elements, all reside in societies or colonies represented by RWA. Every person has his own opinion regarding support to a political party. Hence an RWA just cannot exclusively support one political party. By implication it means in resolute terms that "RWAs are non-political"

RWAs have to function in unanimity irrespective of caste, creed, race, religion or political leanings.

In view of the aforesaid, an RWA has no RIGHT to declare support to any specific party. If it is done, the concerned RWA may be struck off strength

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## India's first Undersea Tunnel

Contd from Page 1 state-of-the-art ventilation and lighting systems.

"The construction on 340 kilometres of the project has seen significant progress," the minister noted. However, when asked about the project's expected completion date, he refrained from providing a specific timeline.

Vaishnav also detailed the advancements in the project, including bridge construction over rivers and the development of station infrastructure. He added that Japanese experts have been closely inspecting and approving the ongoing work to ensure adherence to high

standards.

The Union minister credited



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of providing an affordable and efficient transportation mode for the middle class, stating that the high-speed rail project would integrate the economies of cities along the route, including Mumbai and Ahmedabad. "This project is not just about transportation but about economic integration. It will spur urban development, significantly reduce travel time, and enhance daily productivity," he said.

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## 'Need to preserve open spaces, develop world-class sports facilities': Bombay HC

 [Urvi Mahajani](#)

The Bombay High Court on Thursday underscored the importance of preserving open spaces and sports facilities in Mumbai, stressing their role in shaping a healthier and brighter future for the coming generations. The court raised concerns about the dwindling green spaces in the city and urged a forward-looking approach.

"It is for the times to come. What are we giving to the next generation?" asked a bench of Justices Girish Kulkarni and Advait Sethna.

The bench was hearing a suo motu plea regarding a review of the Maharashtra Slum Areas (Improvement, Clearance and Redevelopment) Act, 1971, following a Supreme Court judgment on July 30. The apex court had earlier highlighted concerns about the Act's implementation and asked the HC to conduct a 'performance audit.' This is the first time that the court will be conducting an audit of an audit.

Referring to India's bid to host the 2036 Olympics, Justice Kulkarni questioned where young athletes would train if open spaces were handed over for private redevelopment. "Where will the young talent go?" he asked, citing the example of cricketer Yashasvi Jaiswal, who once lived in a tent outside Azad Maidan and sold pani puri to make ends meet.


The court also mentioned a proposed world-class sports stadium by CIDCO in Navi Mumbai that was later scrapped in favor of private construction. "You want the Olympics in Bombay? Where do you go? The state had a

good vision to have a world-class sports facility for the common man. Where did it go?" the bench remarked.

During the hearing, amicus curiae (friend of court) submitted a report highlighting over 100 issues affecting the Act's implementation, including complications in identifying and declaring slum areas. Advocate General Birendra Saraf assured the court that the state would address the issues which could be handled on the administrative side and would explore legislative changes where necessary. "Some changes have already been made for effective implementation of the Act," Saraf said.

The court will prioritize addressing core problems impacting the city. Justice Kulkarni remarked, "The main, core glaring problems need to be addressed first, then we review the other problems. That is how we try to focus on the main problem which is bothering us, the people of Bombay."

Petitions were filed by some developers challenging the government circular mandating them to pay advance rent for two years, before undertaking any redevelopment. Saraf emphasised that the rule was made applicable to ensure that in case of delayed payment by the developer, the slum dwellers are taken care of.

The HC directed the state to deliberate on the report by January 15 and asked involved parties to submit suggestions by January 31. The court will begin regular hearings on the matter from February 14. 

## Mahim residents protest garbage piles near St. Michael church

Frustrated residents of Mahim have written to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and civic chief

neither the BMC has taken any action against the hawkers nor have they provided them with dustbins to dispose of trash.



Bhushan Gagrani over inaction in the matter of piles of garbage collecting near St. Michael Church every Thursday.

The residents have been complaining that every Thursday morning, Cross Road No 1 and 2 on Lady Jamshedji Road in Mahim West gets filled with trash. As a result, office-goers and school children have to make way through an unhygienic stretch.

The protesters said the trash is generated by illegal hawkers who put up their stalls every Wednesday evening. They said that

Local resident Sebastian Dsouza said, "Every Wednesday, the church has novena (prayers). Illegal hawkers

squat to cater to the crowd. However, once the hawkers leave at 10 pm, they leave behind leftovers and plastic. Why can't the BMC appoint cleaning staff late on Wednesday or Thursday early morning when they are aware of this local problem?"

"If A-Ward (Colaba-Cuffe Parade) can have a cleaning staff, why can't G-North have a similar arrangement? When not deployed in A-Ward, the staff can clean other areas when needed," Dsouza said. Other residents asked, "Is Swachh Mumbai Harit Mumbai just a slogan?"



## MRI, CT at just Rs 10: New diagnostic centre in Matunga


Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Matunga, has taken a significant step toward affordable healthcare by establishing the Chaar Sahib Zade MRI & CT Scan Centre. This state-of-the-art facility aims to provide high-quality diagnostic services at affordable rates, ensuring accessibility for even the most underprivileged sections of society.

The same was announced by yesteryear actor Jeetendra Kapoor in a video that went viral on December 31. In the video he said, "You will be very happy to know that the world's cheapest MRI CT scan center has opened in Mumbai.

Here, high-tech machines of

the international level are installed by Siemens company. In this, all the needy people will only have to pay Rs.10 for the test. If you get the same test done outside, it will cost you Rs.10,000 to Rs 12,000."

Aligned with the mission of Guru Nanak Devji's principle of "Tera Tera" (Service to All), the center also features a chemist shop offering medicines at a discounted rate of 25-30%, further easing the financial burden of healthcare for the community.

The inauguration ceremony was held on January 1, 2025, at the center located on the college campus. 

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

# 'MITRA should be a guiding force in priority sectors' - Fadnavis

**Kalpesh Mhamunkar**

The Maharashtra Institution for Transformation (MITRA) should work as a guiding force for boosting priority sectors so that the state maintains its reputation of being the leader in the country, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said.

During a meeting held at the Sahyadri Guest House, Fadnavis instructed officers concerned to focus on giving a boost to financial improvements, mining, group farming, solar energy projects, bio-fuels, and international employment opportunities.

He highlighted that group farming has significantly contributed to the collective development of farmers, with 400 active groups across the state, many of which have achieved impressive results.

The CM emphasised the importance of integrating benefits from various schemes under agriculture, water resources, horticulture, marketing, and allied departments.

“These efforts aim to

strengthen the economic and social capabilities of farmers,” he said. He also urged the preparation of models for various schemes to ensure maximum impact.

Fadnavis stressed the need to prioritise reducing fiscal deficits, increasing capital investment, consolidating state assets and ensuring the convergence of multiple schemes.

Accelerating the completion of water conservation projects, formulating a state data policy, and developing a mining policy were also identified as key areas for the state's growth.

The CM reviewed several major projects, including the Jayakwadi solar initiative, biogas production from agricultural waste, and the development of an international zoo at Gorewada. **MMJ**



# Unclaimed Accounts / Deposits



This video by Sucheta Dalal delves into the staggering amounts of unclaimed money sitting in various government accounts, including EPF, ESIC, and small savings schemes. With over ₹2 lakh crore already identified, and estimates suggesting this figure is growing rapidly, she explores how these funds remain trapped in bureaucratic inefficiencies,

poor reporting, and a lack of accountability. She discusses the need for a legal framework to reunite this money with its rightful owners and urges for better utilization of these funds to address national priorities like healthcare and senior welfare. Watch now to learn about this hidden wealth and why it's crucial to demand change.

<https://youtu.be/2s4Fxl7Ow>

**MMJ**

## Mumbai's Iconic Local Trains

Contd from Page 1 ceremony. The first electric train—comprising four coaches—was flagged off at 10:00 AM from Platform No. 2 amid great fanfare. The honor of driving this pioneering Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) train was given to Jehangir Framji Daruwala, who earned his place in history as India's first motorman for an electric train. **MMJ**

## Hospital Tales - Tale 1 Part C

contd. from Page 2 to begin it.” In the context of healthcare, it becomes clear that the tragedy lies not just in life's fleeting nature, but in our inability to recognize the financial weight of our decisions until it's too late.

Dilip's family learned too late that sometimes the most expensive treatment is not the one that comes with a price tag, but the one that extracts everything else—love, hope, and the very essence of what it means to be human. As I reflected on their story, I couldn't shake the feeling that the real cost of living is not just found in Rupees, but in the emotional currency we invest in our loved ones.

In the end, while we may navigate through life thinking we are in control, it becomes painfully clear that the balance sheets of our lives can tip in an instant, leaving us grappling with the harsh truth: life does, indeed, have a price tag, and we must confront it head-on, even when it hurts.

Concluded

**MMJ**

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

AGNI WARD COORDINATORS				
WARD NAME	AREAS	COORDINATOR(S)	PHONE	EMAIL
A	Churchgate, Colaba, Cuffe Parade, Fort, CST	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, 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@yahoo.co.in
H/West	Bandra(W), Khar(W), Santa Cruz(W)	Cherian Joseph Sanjeev D'souza Madhu Poplai	9892314442 9820803840 9820048996	cheriankjoseph@yahoo.com sanjeevd270@gmail.com madhupoplai@hotmail.com
K/East	Vile Parle(E), Andheri (E), Jogeshwari (E)	James John	9324086140	k-jamesjohn@hotmail.com
K/West	Vile Parle (W), Andheri (W), 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@gmail.com
P/South	Goregaon (West)	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 Shirsat Shrikant Soman Glenda Almeida	9820213392 9324228946 9820291563	shirsatwillie382@hotmail.com shrikant_soman@gmail.com glenda301@gmail.com
M/West	Chembur	Krantikumar Sherkhane	703900255	krantikumar@gmail.com
S	Bhandup, Kanjurmarg, Powai	Pamela Cheema	9820150748	pamelachema@gmail.com
T	Mulund	Laxmidas Thakkar	8080011966	lthakkar@yahoo.co.in

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Chadha Bldg. 1st Flr, Plot No. 95, Wadala (W), Mumbai - 400031  
agni.mumbai99@gmail.com  
Ph: 2416 5956  
[www.agnimumbai.in](http://www.agnimumbai.in)