

Corporator seeks quality checks on mid-day meals

DIPTI SINGH MUMBAI, AUGUST 22

THE HUMBLE dal-rice served as mid-day meal in civic schools roused strong protests at the education committee meeting of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Tuesday.



Dr Saeeda Khan with the samples of mid-day meal

Khan even carried samples of mid-day meal served at one of the BMC schools at Kurla to the meeting. The samples have been sent for testing at a laboratory. Khan has demanded a detailed probe into quality of food served in BMC-run schools.

According to Khan, despite having a fixed weekly menu in all schools, many schools do not follow those. Khan added, "Apart from being unhygienic the food doesn't seem to contain the required amount of proteins and vitamins. The dal was all watery, the puffed rice laddoo was all broken. Besides, on Tuesday the schools were supposed to serve 'Matki chi usal' (curry made up of lentils and pulses). Quality check of mid-day meal served in all BMC schools should be conducted."

Meanwhile, chairman of the Education Committee, Shubhada Gudekar, said, "The quality of the sample will be checked. The matter will be probed and those found guilty will not be spared."

Its been over two decades since mid-day meal (MDM)

scheme was introduced in city schools. However, recently NGO Praja Foundation released data that revealed that one out of every three children studying in civic run schools in Mumbai is malnourished.

The data accessed by Praja Foundation through an RTI in May showed among screened students in BMC schools, the number of malnourished kids increased from 11,831 in 2013-14 to 53,408 in 2014-15 and further to 64,681 in 2015-16. As per the data, Kurla has 6,586 malnourished children in civic schools.

Mumbai worst

Following a review of the mid-day meal scheme across the state in February 2017, the Ministry of Human Resource Development pointed out poor coverage of the scheme in five districts of Maharashtra. Mumbai has, for the fourth consecutive year, topped the list of poorly performing districts vis-a-vis the mid-day meal, the report points out. Of the total 3,53,777 students enrolled in primary schools in the city, only 2,25,798 avail the mid-day meal scheme.

METRO CAR DEPOT AT AAREY COLONY

Congress smells a land scam, targets CM, joins activists in fight against car shed

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, AUGUST 22

JOINING HANDS with the Aarey Conservation Group, Mumbai Congress president Sanjay Nirupam has raised allegations of corruption against Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and claimed that there is a Rs 18,000 crore scam behind the plan to construct a Metro car shed in Aarey colony. Nirupam pointed out that the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation (MMRC) has asked for more land than required, with the intention of handing over a portion of it to real estate developers for commercial use.

Termining it as an expose of the state government's intentions, Nirupam alleged that Fadnavis is deliberately killing the city's green lungs. "While car depots in other cities like Kochi and Pune need around 12 hectares, the MMRC has asked for 30 hectares. They will only end up

using 18 hectares for the car depot and will hand over the remaining 12 hectares to private builders," said Nirupam.

He alleged that the 12 hectares will yield around 12.84 lakh square feet which will amount to a profit of Rs 18,000 crore for the builders. "The current market rate of that area is around Rs 35,000 per square feet and basic calculations indicate that with an FSI of 4, real estate developers will commercially exploit the land and earn at least Rs 18,000 crore. This is a scam and the chief minister who is trying to ensure that this project takes off is responsible for it," he said.

Nirupam and other activists including Stalin D. Amrita Bhattacharya, Priya Mishra and Biju Augustine of the Aarey Conservation Group pointed out that the site for the car shed has been finalised without considering alternative options. "Even though MMRC claims that alternative options were considered,



Devendra Fadnavis



Sanjay Nirupam

there are no documents to show the other sites were even visited only because the other sites lie in Coastal Regulatory Zone where infrastructure can be constructed but not real estate. The state government has done nothing but lie at every step," said Nirupam.

He claimed that even though it is well-known that Aarey colony falls under the jurisdiction of the forest department and is an eco-sensitive zone, the state government is trying to

prove that Aarey colony belongs to the dairy development department and is not a part of forest land. The activists argued that the land belongs to the Revenue and Forest Department and Dairy Development Department is only the custodian of the land.

Nirupam said that while MMRC claims that no real estate development will be taken up near the depot, the design documents indicate that 30,000 square metres will be used for commercial purposes.

'CHARGE AGAINST CM BASELESS, MALICIOUS'

Mumbai: The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) has issued a statement refuting allegations made by Mumbai Congress Chief Sanjay Nirupam against Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis—regarding a scam in the construction of a Metro cars shed in Aarey colony—as baseless and malicious.

The land in question was sanctioned during former Congress Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan's tenure, on March 3, 2014, the statement said.

The statement said, "The entire 30 hectares have been acquired for the car shed. There is no provision for using this land for any purpose other than the stated project."

"Out of the 30 hectares, five hectares is green patch which would be retained in its pres-

ent form. Therefore, 25 hectares land would be available for the Metro project," the statement pointed out.

Dismissing the charges that the land belonged to the forest department, the CMO statement said the land belonged to the dairy development department. The forest department, in an affidavit to the Green Tribunal, had stated that the land does not belong to them.

This allotment of land, which is being questioned by Nirupam, was sanctioned by former Congress Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan on March 3, 2014, when the Congress-NCP government was in power, the statement said. Not an inch of this land is being used for any commercial purpose. Where is the question of additional FSI, the statement added.

District officials told to finalise 10 days for relaxation in noise norms

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, AUGUST 22

THE MAHARASHTRA Government on Tuesday asked the district administrations across the state to notify the remaining 10 days this year in which grace time would be given for use of loudspeakers till midnight instead of the mandatory 10 pm.

The move comes in the backdrop of the amendments in the Noise Pollution Rules of 2000, which allows the district collectors to allocate 15 days a year to relax noise norms from 6 pm to 12am. The right earlier rested with the state government. The amendment was passed on August 10.

The state government had, however, last year notified 15 days in which noise pollution rules were to be relaxed. However, with five of these 15 days having gone this year and with the impending Ganesh festival, the state government has asked district authorities to quickly finalise the 10 days when sound norms will be relaxed.

"Of the 15 days that were notified for relaxation in 2017, five have already passed this year. All district collectors in lieu of the forthcoming festive season should identify the 10 days when norms will be relaxed and publicise these dates in respective districts," a Government Resolution stated.

No 'deemed silence zones' in state: Govt tells HC

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE MUMBAI, AUGUST 22

THE STATE government Tuesday informed the Bombay HC that as of now, there were no "deemed silence zones" in the state, with the Centre recently amending the Noise Pollution Rules of 2000. The state will now carry out a fresh exercise to declare certain areas as silence zones.

Pointing out that the earlier rules and court orders regarding noise pollution were unworkable owing to a wide definition of what areas were covered in silence zones, Advocate General A Kumbhakoni said the amendment would help make the system more workable.

"If we go by the earlier definition of educational institutions or hospital area, every inch in a city like Mumbai will be a silence zone. If the judgment of the court is adhered to in a city like Mumbai, a space where an idol is placed will be a religious space

and will therefore be a silence zone. We need to iron out the creases. There is no deemed silence zone as of now," he added. The High Court asked why the Maharashtra government was so keen on people using loudspeakers in the state. A division bench of Justices AS Oka and Riyaz Chagla were hearing a petition relating to noise pollution rules. The court was informed that pursuant to the amendment to the noise pollution rules of 2000, all areas declared as silence zones in the past stand notified.

The AG said lack of silence zones during the transitional phase did not mean the government would allow loudspeakers near hospitals etc. "When we give permissions for loudspeakers we will ensure decibel levels are maintained," he said. The HC, in its 2016 order, had said an area of not less than 100 metres around hospitals, educational institutions and courts constitutes a silence zone.

State government used to decide the 15 days a year where grace time would be given for use of loudspeakers till midnight instead of the mandatory 10 pm. Now, instead of the state government the district authorities will decide on the same.

The men who give the go-ahead to every train

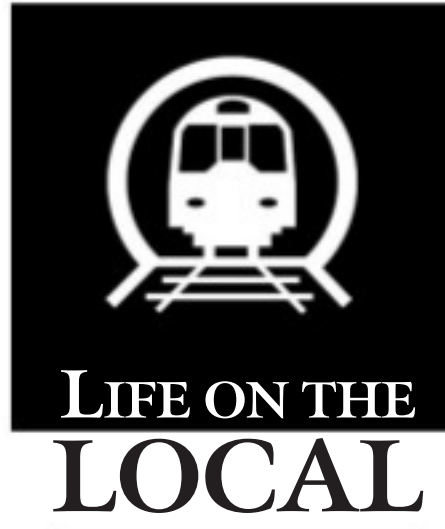
SADAF MODAK MUMBAI, AUGUST 22

AS HE waves a green flag to let an express train pass platform 6 at Kurla railway station, pointsman Afzal Khan is aware of curious passengers looking on. "Many think it is just a fun routine, to wave the flag. But mine is a very significant job for the smooth functioning of the railway system," 33-year-old Khan says.

At all major city railway stations, pointsmen such as Khan are stationed at various spots round the clock to ensure trains continue to run without hitches. For instance, if a local train is at the platform and a passenger pulls its emergency chain, pointsmen rush to the spot to reinsert a particular lever to make the train run again.

A station master at one of the suburban stations explains that there are at least 40 pointsmen posted at each major station — such as CSMT, Byculla, Dadar, Kurla, Thane and Kalyan — working in shifts, round the clock. Their main job is to give an 'alright' for each passing long-distance express train.

The men stand on the platform or on gate protection duty at railway crossings. As they see every oncoming express train and engine, they are the first to spot anything unusual, such as



LIFE ON THE LOCAL

a fire, any part of the train hanging out, or an axle not in place. The men wave a green flag which is "responded" to by the assistant loco pilot of the train by waving a green flag back. The pointsman is then expected to notice any abnormalities on the train as it passes by, at full speed.

"This also includes checking for issues with the passing train or to see if any passenger is calling for help or if anyone sitting on the door has his legs stuck between the platform and the train. We have to then wave the red flag, which is noticed by the guard at the rear end of the train so it can be halted," says Khan.

The station master adds that the flags also helps check the alertness of the train driver. "These are systems put in place by the British, which we are

continuing. The flag system, which we call giving an 'alright' to the trains, is also to ensure that the driver is not asleep, or the train has not been not hijacked," the station master says. In goods trains, the pointsmen also have to ensure that no door has sprung open.

While the men use flags during the day, after sunset they use LED torches. "Earlier, we used kerosene lamps with red and green slides to alert the train riders," an official said. Pointsmen say that they usually spend their eight-hour shift on alert without breaks. "Though we end up memorising the entire train time table, we cannot leave our spots, as even solo engines pass the platforms and need to be given an alright," Khan says.

Many commuters, however, do not understand the role of a pointsman, he feels.

"Seeing us standing at the platform, people ask us questions about local train timings, platforms etc., without realising that our job is to remain alert at all times without being distracted by such queries," Khan says.

Have a comment or suggestion for Life on the Local? Write to mumbai.newsline@expressindia.com with subject line: Life on the Local

SALUTE THE SOLDIER. A SERVICE DEDICATED TO OUR MARTYRS. As a token of gratitude to our defence personnel, in recognition of their valiant efforts and sacrifices, our paper will carry obituaries and remembrances of those who have made the supreme sacrifice. Salute the Soldier is a complimentary service, a small gesture of respect and appreciation on our behalf.

The Indian EXPRESS Classifieds. EDUCATIONAL. Energizing Engineers Since 2001. K. C. COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT STUDIES AND RESEARCH. VACANCY ROUND NOTIFICATION 2017 - 2018. F.E & Direct Second Year. F.E and DIRECT SECOND YEAR B.E. DEGREE COURSES IN ELECTRONICS & TELECOMMUNICATION ENGINEERING.

RECRUITMENT. SITUATION VACANT. ACADEMIC. TOLANI COLLEGE OF COMMERCE. 150-151, Sher-E-Punjab Society Andheri (East), Mumbai-400 093. (Recognised Minority Institution) [ENGLISH MEDIUM]. Invites applications for one Part-Time post of Shikshan Sevak in HINDI in the Junior College.

COACHING CLASSES. Only For Success 'Khardikar Classes', VII, IX, X, XI, XII, 5th to 9th Fail...? Direct SSC, 11th Fail...? Direct HSC. D.D. Vispute College of Science, Commerce & Management. Devad - Vichumbhe, New Panvel College Code: 673. ADMISSION NOTICE. B.Sc. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY. COMPUTER SCIENCE. BIOTECHNOLOGY.

BUSINESS. POULTRY. AMIR Broiler Mumbai: Today's Live Broiler Rate Rs. 100/- . Contact: Phone: 23860517/ 25257522/ 25256529. FF Enterprises, sole distributors of Zorabian Chicks Pvt. Ltd. recommended today's Ex Farm Big Live Broiler Chicken Rate Rs. 62/- and Retail Market Rate Rs. 92/-.

SERVICES. ASTROLOGY. ASTROLOGICAL Pasaji experience in 25 years. Free advice. All critical problem solved. Hastrekha, Face Reading, Janam Kundali etc. TRAVELS. TOURS & TRAVELS. TOUR GURU. Bali 4 Nights ₹ 20,000. Dubai 4 Nights ₹ 20,000. Thailand 4 Nights ₹ 12,000. Malaysia 3 Nights ₹ 12,000. Singapore 4 Nights ₹ 26,000.

CHANGE OF NAME. Jay Pankaj Kapoor, S/o Late Pankaj Satpal Kapoor and Mrs Grace Pankaj Kapoor, aged 18 years, residing at 1506, Dheeraj Valley Tower, Sai Baba Complex, Mohan Gokhale Road, Goregaon East, Mumbai, 400063, India changed my name from Jay Pankaj Kapoor to Jay Pankaj Kapoor vide affidavit dated 18.08.2017 sworn before notary G. Z. BADOLE. I have changed my name from Tara Dashaarath Bhojane to Sangita Dashaarath Bhojane As Per Affidavit.