



भारतीय जनता पार्टी

अंधेरी पश्चिम विधानसभा

FIGHTING CORONA ON GROUND ZERO

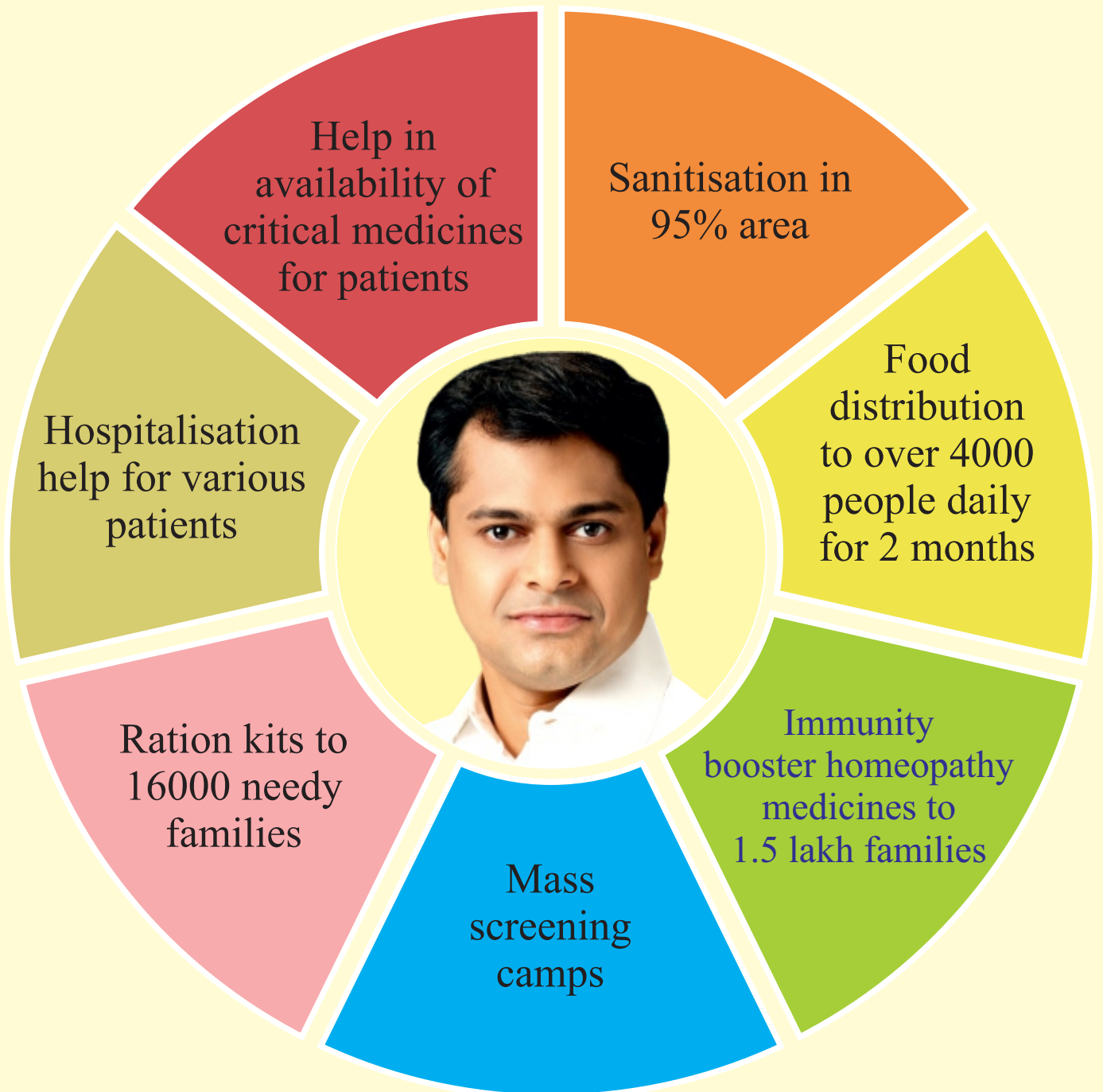


#HELPTHENEEDYinANDHERIW

TEAM BJP



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Sanitisation of more than 95% area including both bldgs & slums.

Sanitisation Ward No. 64 - 65



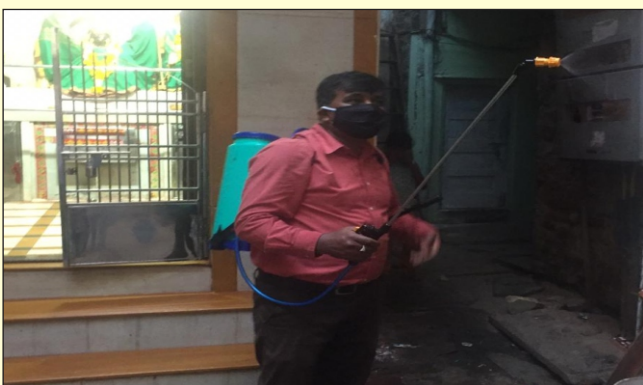
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Sanitisation Ward No. 68



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Sanitisation Ward No. 69



Sanitisation of more than 95% area including both bldgs & slums.

Sanitisation Ward No. 70



Sanitisation of more than 95% area including both bldgs & slums.

Sanitisation Ward No. 71



Food distribution was done to over 4000 needy persons every day in entire Andheri west for 2 months.

Food Packets Distribution Ward No. 66



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Food Packets Distribution Ward No. 70



We were able to raise over 40 lakh rupees through donations from various people across Andheri west which helped us to give ration kits to 16000 needy families in entire Andheri west assembly region.

MLA Ameet Satam himself first contributed 1 lakh for the cause.

Ration Kits Distribution Ward No. 64 - 65



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Ration Kits Distribution Ward No. 71



Distribution of Arsenic Albumin 30 homeopathy medicines as immunity boosters to over 1.5 lakh homes across entire K West zone.

Distributed Homeopathy Immunity Boosters Ward No. 64 - 65



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Mass screening camps were conducted with joint efforts of Nirameya seva Foundation, MCHI-Credai & BMC in hotspots of both slums & bldgs where thousands of persons were screened, isolated which resulted in improvement in situation in hotspots.

Mass Screening Camps Ward No. 64 - 65



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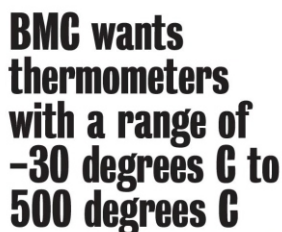
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Mass Screening Camps Ward No. 71





BMC wants thermometers with a range of -30 degrees C to 500 degrees C

TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

The opposition parties say the advanced features are not required, and will only lead to cost escalations with very little to show for the extra expenditure. Opposition parties and experts also allege that the tender

A pulse oximeter is a small, lightweight device used to monitor the amount of oxygen carried in the body. This noninvasive tool attaches painlessly to the fingertip, sending two wavelengths of light through the finger to measure the pulse rate and how much oxygen is in the system. Once the oximeter finishes its assessment, its screen displays the percentage of oxygen in the blood coming from the heart — as well as the current pulse rate.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

Dr Kshirsagar, who said he has

never been accused of bribery in his 15 years of service, said he had at first asked the family to visit a local doctor. "Since they didn't find any, I helped them out. I will resign soon; I am being punished for helping them out. I am being framed," he alleged.

City MumbaiMirror COVID-19 OUTBREAK Tuesday, May 12, 2020 3

Civic body is paying more for a full kit than the combined cost of the individual items; BJP MLA threatens to lodge ACB complaint; civic official says he will “look into it”



COST OF INDIVIDUAL ITEMS

- Goggles: ₹59
- Mask: ₹42
- Mask: (N95) ₹11.55
- Mask: (three-ply) ₹9.50
- Pair of nitrile gloves: ₹495
- Cover-all with hood and shoe cover: ₹575

WHAT BMC PAYS FOR FULL KIT



Kit with N95 mask: ₹812

Rs 206.5 extra per kit

Total: Rs 605.50 (with N95 mask), Rs 575 with three-ply mask

Kit with three-ply mask: ₹660

Rs 85 extra per kit

812 each. A kit includes a cover-all with a hood and shoe cover, which costs Rs 495; a pair of goggles that cost Rs 59; an N95 mask that costs Rs 42; and a pair of nitrile gloves that cost Rs 9.50. The combined costs of the individual items is just Rs 605.50 - Rs 206.50 less than what the BMC pays. Similarly, for kits that come with a surgical (three-ply) mask, the BMC pays Rs 660 a piece. A single three-ply mask costs Rs 11.55, which means the total cost of the individual items is Rs 575 - Rs 85 less than what the BMC is pay-

He added, "This is nothing but a way of getting kickbacks. I have raised issues about malpractices in procurement by the CPD in the past as well but no action has been taken. I will take up this issue in the state legislature and demand an Anti Corruption Bureau probe into every purchase made by the CPD during the pandemic."

Satam said that there must be an enquiry against the CPD officials responsible, and pointed to other alleged irregularities in procurement, such as restrictive tender con-

BMC officials said the civic body had also received many PPE kits as donations and as part of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. PPEs airlifted from Chennai last month are being used by doctors on the front lines. And just last week, Star India and Disney+ Hotstar partnered with Project Mumbai to provide more than two lakh PPE kits for health workers at the BMC and another 10,000 khaki

BMC scraps tender for digital hand gun thermometers

Mirror had exposed bizarre tender specifications for digital thermometers and pulse oximeters

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The BMC on Tuesday scrapped the tender to buy digital hand gun thermometers after some of the bizarre tender specifications were exposed. The tender specified that the thermometers should be able to measure temperatures ranging from minus 30 degrees to 500 degrees Celsius.

"We have cancelled the tender for the thermometers. We will not place any order for the thermometers using that tender," Additional Municipal Commissioner P Velrasu said.

The BMC's Central Purchase De-

partment (CPD) on Tuesday issued a circular saying that the BMC won't purchase pulse oximeters and that infrared thermometers were easily available in the market and so they can now be purchased at the local level by the BMC instead of buying them centrally from the CPD. The CPD in its circular also said that the rates of the two items had also reduced considerably in the market. Meanwhile, the Art of Living Foundation donated 100 thermometers to the BMC.

MumbaiMirror had on Monday reported how the BMC wanted to buy hand gun thermometers that can measure temperature from minus 30 degrees to 500 degrees Celsius and pulse oximeters with adjustable brightness and dual colour OLED display with 6 modes. Experts have said that the two products with such specifications aren't needed and are not easily avail-



Mirror stories published on May 5 and 4

ble in the market either.

While the oximeters were purchased at Rs 1,530 per piece, the BMC had fixed the price of the thermometers at Rs 6,490 per piece. "There is no question of buying anything at above the market price. All the specifications were approved by deans of three major hospitals. We will make sure that there is no irregularity in any purchases and ensure transparency in the tender process," Velrasu had said.

BJP MLA from Andheri (West)

Ameet Satam, who had first raised the issue, welcomed the BMC's decision to scrap the tenders. "This is a welcome move by the BMC. The BMC must make sure that all procurements are done transparently. There must be a vigilance probe into all the purchase by the CPD since March 22 when the Covid-19 crisis broke out in the city," Satam said.

Infrared thermometer especially digital infrared thermometers, is very important in the fight against Covid-19. It detects temperature from a portion of the thermal radiation emitted by the object being measured. This thermometer, also called laser thermometer does not need to physically touch but only scan the surface of the object/person whose temperature is being measured. Besides, they take less than a second to read and report the temperatures," a supplier said.

A pulse oximeter is a small, lightweight device used to monitor the amount of oxygen carried in the body.



The Art of Living Foundation has donated 100 thermometers to the BMC

This noninvasive tool attaches painlessly to the fingertip, sending two wavelengths of light through the finger to measure the pulse rate and how much oxygen is in the system. Once the oximeter finishes its assessment, its screen will display the percent of oxygen in the blood coming from your heart, as well as current pulse rate.

With 2.5 lakh in stock, BMC won't buy new PPE kits

Additional municipal commissioner scraps purchase after Mirror reports that BMC was paying more for a full kit than the combined cost of the individual items

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Hours after Mirror reported that the BMC was paying Rs 207 extra per personal protective equipment (PPE) kit, Additional Municipal Commissioner P Velrasu on Tuesday ordered that no fresh purchases will be made and that a new tender will be floated after the current stock is exhausted.

The BMC's central purchase department said it has 2.5 lakh PPE kits in stock at the Andheri sports complex warehouse. Of these 75,000 will be kept as emergency reserve and the remaining utilised.

Velrasu said the BMC had received a large number of PPE kits as donations from organisations and corporates. "The old purchase rate becomes invalid now. When we need more kits, we will float a tender and select the most competitive bidder."

The Mirror report had highlighted that as per rates fixed on April 30, the BMC was paying more for a full PPE kit than the cost of the individual items that make it up. For kits with an N-95 mask, it was paying Rs 812 each. Individual items of the kit, however, collectively cost Rs 206.50 less—a coverall with a hood and shoe cover goes for Rs 495, a pair of goggles for Rs 59, an N95 mask for Rs 42, and a pair of nitrile gloves for Rs 9.50.

Similarly, the BMC was paying Rs 660 a piece for kits that came with a surgical (three-ply) mask. A single three-ply mask costs Rs 11.55, which means the total cost of the individual items was Rs 85 less than what the BMC was paying.



The BMC was paying Rs 207 extra per kit that included an N-95 mask

PPE kits with N95 masks are for doctors and nurses working in Covid-19 wards, while those working in non-Covid-19 wards and support staff, such as security guards, phone operators and ward attendants, are given kits with a three-ply mask.

The civic body had bought around 5,000 PPE kits every day at these rates.

Velrasu said these purchase rates now stand scrapped.

FLASHBACK

BMC forgets math, pays up to Rs 207 extra per PPE kit



Mirror's May 12 report

In his order, he also asked all BMC departments and hospitals to submit a report on PPE kits bought and used since April 30. "All details like price and name of the supplier have to be submitted in two days," said Velrasu.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam, who had raised an alarm over the rates of the kits, demanded a high-level inquiry into all orders placed by the civic central purchase department since the outbreak of the pandemic. "The BMC just scrapped the tender after we raised objections and pointed to a potential scam. I will raise this issue at the next session of the state legislature. Every single purchase is riddled with irregularities. The BMC has wasted lakhs of rupees of public money on overpriced PPE kits," he alleged.

Satam suggested that the BMC draw up an inventory of all items it has received as donations and under corporate social responsibility initiatives. "The BMC itself doesn't know what it has received. The inventory will help ensure that items are not bought in excess," he said.

BJP releases white paper on Nesco Covid centre deal

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Mumbai: BJP released a white paper alleging that BMC paid multiple times the cost the market rate to a builder for facilities at Nesco Covid health centre in Goregaon and wrote to chief minister Uddhav Thackeray demanding a judicial inquiry.

The contract was awarded to the builder without tenders. BJP corporator in BMC Vinod Mishra alleged corruption after highlighting charges/rent paid by BMC to the builder and market cost of material. BMC paid Rs 8.25 lakh for bedsheets though the same ones were available in the market for Rs 2 lakh, he said.

BMC denied the allegations, stating that Covid-19 cases were increasing when the contract was awarded in an emergency. It said the builder was providing the material cheaper than other contractors. It gave a Rs 8.5-crore contract to the builder for setting up 2,000 powder-coated beds and other things at Nesco. BMC pays rent for some things for three months.

PPE kit now cheaper by Rs 250

With rate revisions, Personal Protective Equipment kit prices fall 30%, helping BMC save Rs 40 lakh a day

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

Floating tenders for buying Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits frequently has helped the BMC save money. After the civic body floated tenders for PPE kits, rates for the life-saving kits have come down by 30 per cent in less than a month. A PPE kit with an N95 mask now costs less than Rs 550 and the one with a three-ply mask costs less than Rs 500. With the new rates, the BMC is saving around Rs 250 per kit. With the civic body buying 15,000 kits, it saves around Rs 40 lakh a day.

The BMC had last month floated tenders for buying PPE kits after Mumbai Mirror reported how the civic body was paying Rs 207 extra for a PPE kit. After Mirror's report, Additional Municipal Commissioner P Velrasu ordered that no fresh purchases would be made. He also said that a new tender would be floated after the current stock is exhausted. The BMC soon exhausted its stock of 2.5 lakh kits which it had received under CSR initiatives.

The BMC then called for tenders from vendors to supply PPE kits and



PPE kit rates

● May 2020
Kit with N95 mask: Rs 812
Kit with three-ply mask: Rs 660

● June 2020
Kit with N95 mask: Rs 546
Kit with three-ply mask: Rs 478

their bids were closed on May 20. When the prices were open last week, it emerged that vendors were selling PPE kits with an N95 mask for Rs 546 and a kit with a three-ply mask for Rs 478.

The rates were as high as Rs 812 for a PPE kit with an N95 mask and Rs 660 for a kit with a three-ply mask in early May. This is a reduction of more than 30 per cent.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam, who had first raised the issues of over-priced PPE kits, said that since the rates of PPE kits are dynamic, the BMC must revise the prices every week. "The BMC called for tenders after we intervened. They must call for tenders every week since the rates reduce very fast. The BMC is giving work orders to several vendors. If they place bulk orders to

three or three vendors, rates can come down by further Rs 150. We will scrutinise every purchase by the BMC in the next session of the state legislature," Satam said.

Mumbai Mirror had reported how in its rush to buy PPEs, the BMC had forgotten basic arithmetic. What the civic body paid for a full PPE kit was more than the cost of the individual items that make it up. For PPE kits that came with a three-ply mask, it paid Rs 85 extra per kit, and for kits that include an N-95 mask, it paid a whopping Rs 207 extra per kit.

"We call for tenders periodically. Around 80 vendors participated last time. Now, we have floated two more tenders. Floating tenders every week is not possible, but we will try to do it

FLASHBACK

BMC forgets math, pays up to Rs 207 extra per PPE kit
Civic body is paying more for a full kit than the combined cost of the individual items. BJP MLA Satam demands to bring kit complete, civic official says he will 'track down' it.



With 2.5 lakh in stock, BMC won't buy new PPE kits
Additional municipal commissioner scraps purchase after Mirror reports that BMC was paying more for a full kit than the combined cost of the individual items.



Mirror's reports on May 12 and 13

every fortnight. We have come with a new tender format wherein the already qualified vendors for PPE can quote only prices and not any technical documents. This method will reduce the workload, and once the system stabilises, we can follow that system on a weekly basis," Velrasu said.

New isolation centres, but half of 30,000 hospital beds unused

Govt officials say hospitals are yet to act on the directive of reserving 80% beds for Covid-19 patients

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TWEETS @MumbaiMirror

There's a frenetic rush to build new isolation centres across the city for Covid-19 patients, even though around 50 per cent of the existing 30,000 beds in various hospitals are unoccupied for various reasons.

While sources have pointed out BMC's misdirected efforts, a senior state government official said new jumbo facilities are needed as most hospitals and nursing homes are not running at full capacity. This, he said, has led to a massive shortage of beds, especially for critical coronavirus patients.

"Most hospitals are working at 40 per cent capacity due to shortage of staff, but patients need to be isolated somewhere. Hence the plan for new ones," he said. He added that hospitals were last month ordered to reserve 80 per cent beds for Covid-19 patients at affordable cost, but many of them are yet to act. State Public Health Minister Rajesh Tope and Principal Secretary (Public Health) Pradeep Vyas didn't respond to



A state-run isolation centre (left); Health Minister Rajesh Tope paid a surprise visit to four private hospitals earlier this month to check if they had reserved 80% beds for Covid-19 patients



queries from Mirror on Monday.

According to state government data, there are around 1,400 small, medium and large nursing homes and hospitals in the city, with 7,000 beds in public hospitals, and nearly 23,000 in private medical facilities. BMC chief Iqbal Chahal has further ordered 8,000 beds and has said that erecting jumbo facilities is BMC's priority. The MMRDA and CIDCO are currently focused on building new isolation centres. Many of the large-scale facilities are already 50 per cent full. Earlier, it was said that it's a futile effort and how these facilities could turn into a white elephant.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam said the

state government must take over private hospitals during the pandemic. He said there's no point spending crores on new isolation centres when around 15,000 beds in hospitals and nursing homes are available but not being used. He said the government can easily use and upgrade the existing infrastructure.

Satam suggested reserving some of the city's medical facilities exclusively for treating non-Covid-19 patients while keeping a large chunk for infected patients. He said, "Elective surgeries have been put on hold for three months now. We need non-Covid-19 facilities too. But coronavirus continues to be a huge challenge.

The only way out is to make a pool of beds for infected citizens."

According to a government circular issued on May 21, 80 per cent of all hospital and nursing home beds—except those in the maternity, dialysis and chemotherapy categories—were to be regulated by the BMC, with their rates capped. As per the order, "This applies to both isolation and non-isolation beds. That means 80 per cent of isolation beds available with any healthcare provider should be regulated by the state government, as also 80 per cent of non-isolation beds." As a result, private hospitals can charge regular rates for only 20 per cent beds.

In Andheri, BMC shifts Covid focus from slums to highrises

Richa Pinto@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The BMC is shifting its Covid-19 focus from slums in the Andheri area to highrises in Lokandwala, Versova and Oshiwara. A look at the cases that have been reported from BMC's K-West ward (which includes these areas and also Juhu) from Friday to Sunday shows that more cases have been reported from buildings than from slum pockets.

For instance, on Saturday, of the 52 new cases that were reported from the ward, 16 were from slums and 23 from residential colonies. And on Friday out of the 64 cases reported, again, the majority was from non-slum areas.

Even while tracing high-risk contacts (HRC), the same trend has been observed. For instance, on Saturday, seven HRCs were from highrises and six from the ward's slums.

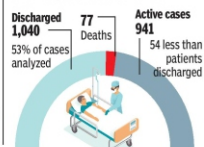
K-West ward has so far reported 2,877 cases, of which active cases as of Monday stood at 1,086. To control the spread of the novel coronavirus in the ward, the BMC has now decided to focus on aggressive screening and checking of oxygen levels among those living in housing societies in residential neighbourhoods, something that for the last couple of months was done in the slums.

"Housing societies will be asked to buy oxygen concentrators and turn their own club houses into isolation facilities wherever possible so that residents who are found to be asymptomatic patients can quarantine themselves within the society," said assistant municipal commissioner, K-West, Vishwas Mote.

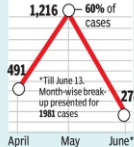
DHARAVI ON WAY TO WIN BATTLE? 53% PATIENTS HAVE RECOVERED

Asia's largest slum seems to be on the verge of victory against Covid-19, thanks to aggressive containment measures, including door-to-door surveys, expansive testing, impromptu treatment facilities, and, perhaps most importantly, free medical services. But challenges remain, reports Richa Pinto

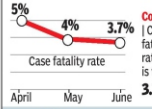
1981 Total cases from Dharavi analysed by BMC for trends and categorization. Otherwise, 2013 cases as of June 15



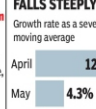
CASES BY MONTH
April 1 | First Covid-19 case reported in Dharavi



MORTALITY RATE DIPS



GROWTH RATE FALLS STEEPLY



POINT OF CONCERN

It's good news as of now, but cases could rise again, especially during the monsoon. Therefore, screening of locals, till now just for Covid-19, will be expanded to all vector-borne diseases

Kiran Dighavkar | WARD OFFICER, K NORTH

DOUBLING RATE PLUNGES



case their oxygen levels dip. Also, from Tuesday onwards, 13 civic teams will be formed (one for every corporator's area), who would visit housing societies in the ward

to screen residents. Local MLA Ameet Satam said he has requested civic officials to screen fruit and vegetable vendors and also grocery and medical store staff.

Door-to-door visits part of civic rapid action plan for the suburbs

Richa Pinto@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: The BMC will launch a rapid action plan on Monday to control the sudden rise in Covid-19 cases in the suburbs. The case doubling rate in wards like R-Central (Borivli lies in it) is 18 days compared to the 34-day average for the city. In R-North (Dahisar is in it), the doubling rate is even worse: 16 days. The BMC will bring on board around 50 ambulances that would be donated by an NGO. These will visit high-risk localities for swab testing.

Deputy municipal commissioner Vishwas Shankarwar said screening would be held in particular containment areas in the coming days. "As and when doctors suggest that a particular person with symptoms needs to be tested, swab would be collected," he said. "Many of the recent cases are of patients who were admitted in hospitals for other ailments and had to be tested for Covid-19 as well. Considering that their immunity was already low, these patients were found infected with Covid-19."

In Dahisar and Borivli, the BMC has planned door-to-door screenings, especially

in residential localities for early detection. In certain areas where the numbers are rising rapidly, a complete lockdown has been proposed not just in the area proper, but also a buffer zone, where nothing except for essential shops would stay open. Officials said that the police had suggested a similar lockdown of containment zones. In areas like Andheri in the western suburbs, where aggressive house-to-house screening in certain pockets has already begun, MLA Ameet Satam said that over the last week, the ward has screened residents of 120 buildings as well as over 200 hawkers and staff of grocery stores. "All buildings are also advised to have a screening counter at their entrance with a thermometer and an oximeter to screen all external persons entering the building," he said.

BMC has okayed a lockdown in areas at Dindoshi in Malad, said additional commissioner Dilip Sawant. Police patrolling was carried out at Santosh Nagar and at Borivli's Shastri Nagar, a containment zone, on Saturday. People were asked to stay indoors and follow lockdown guidelines.

(With inputs from Nitasha Natu)

'MMRDA paid 40% extra for Covid hospital'

BJP MLA alleges phase I of the facility at BKC was built without inviting tenders; MMRDA says rules were followed

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority (MMRDA) completed phase II of the Covid-19 hospital in Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) in record time on Tuesday, but its 1,080-bed phase I hospital has come under the scanner for overpricing and irregularities.

In a letter to Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, BJP MLA Ameet Satam alleged that the MMRDA gave out contracts for the construction of the Rs 20-crore makeshift hospital at around 40 per cent more than the market prices and without inviting tenders. He has demanded an independent inquiry.

The MMRDA on its part claimed that it had followed all procedures and had sought quotations from multiple firms before issuing work orders. MMRDA officials said that the procurement was

done under the emergency clause of the disaster management protocol and did not require tendering.

In his complaint, Satam has attached price quotations from firms for construction of a similar hospital project, and claimed that he has received quotes much lesser than what the MMRDA has paid to its contractors.

For instance, according to documents shared by the MMRDA with Satam, the agency paid Rs 9.4 crore to a company called Ms Jess Idea Pvt Ltd for constructing the main hangar for a period of three months. This structure houses the entire hospital for the patients measuring around 9,400 sq mt, the doctors' facility of around 2,375 sq mt and the toilet area of around 2,100 sq mt.

Satam in his complaint said that the same hangar could be constructed for just Rs 5.67 crore in the same time. Satam has produced a quotation from a firm called RMB Event Management Company for Rs

5.67 crore for the same structure, and maintenance for three months. This means a price difference of Rs 3.77 crore or 40 per cent. The hospital is housed in a waterproof 'German tent' (a hangar-like structure), 235 m in length and 40 m in width.

The MMRDA bought all its beds and mattresses from Ms Nilkamal Limited and spent Rs 3,835 per bed, Rs 1,888 per mattress. The MMRDA ordered 1,000 beds and mattresses spending almost Rs 60 lakh on beds, mattresses pillows, and saline stands.

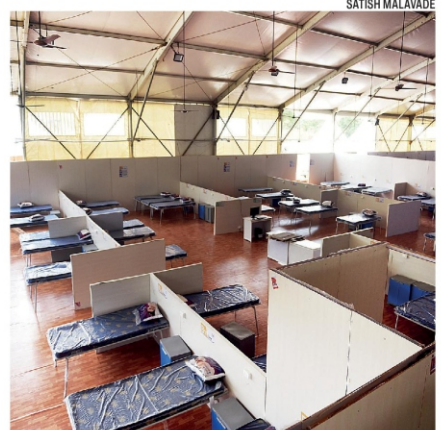
Satam in his complaint said that he could procure the same beds at just Rs 3,481 each and the mattresses at Rs 384 which is around 20 per cent cheaper.

According to Satam, the MMRDA paid Rs 350 more

per bed and Rs 384 more per mattress.

MMRDA Commissioner RA Rajeev said that there were no irregularities in the project at all. "We have kept 37 files ready for any kind of audit or scrutiny. We had formed a robust committee of experts for all the purchases. There was total transparency, and no procedures were violated in any way. Now, in hindsight anyone can quote lower prices but when we built the hospital, there was a lockdown in place."

He said the prices might have come down now but the hospital was built in record time, and it was a matter of pride for the MMRDA that it its feat was being compared to the hospital that was built in Wuhan in a record time, Rajeev said.



Phase I of MMRDA's hospital at BKC cost Rs 20 cr

SATISH MALWADE

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE
DAILY PROGRESS OF COVID-19 CASES

TIMES CITY
THE TIMES OF INDIA, MUMBAI | FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2020

'Screen veg, fruit vendors, grocers to limit infection'

Richa.Pinto@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: Screening of vegetable and fruit vendors, and grocery and medical staff for their body temperatures is fast becoming the new normal in the city, since Covid-19 cases have been rising among those who shop for essentials. At a civic park in Borivli's I C Colony where fruit, vegetable and fish vendors have been shifted to ensure social distancing, all are screened, including customers.

Shiv Sena member Abhishek Ghosalkar from the area said they came up with the plan after a number of patients reported they had only stepped out to buy essentials and had got infected.

"On discussing with the authorities, we realized the patients might have got infected while buying essentials and therefore we decided that volunteers would be given non-contact digital temperature guns to screen those entering the park," he said.

In Andheri, too, where the number of patients from high-rises is currently on the rise, MLA Ameet Satam said he has suggested the local K-West Ward officials screen fruit and vegetable vendors as well as grocery and medical store staff. "All fruit and vegetable vendors on footpaths and grocery and provision store staff should be screened. In several cases, these are the only people that persons who are still following the lockdown conditions come in contact with," he said.

In South Mumbai's Colaba, too, corporator Makrand Narvekar said he has witnessed a similar trend. He took the example of a 50-year-old patient who had not stepped out of his home at all during the lockdown and would only receive groceries and vegetables at his doorstep. "The only source of infection in such a case appears to have been from the goods that arrived at his residence. Besides,



A volunteer uses temperature gun to screen vendors at I C Colony, Borivli

I have been receiving complaints from locals about zero social distancing maintained by fisherfolk at Sassoon Docks. Locals are extremely worried about an outbreak in their area because of the crowds that gather. Therefore, screening of vendors in every locality should be considered by the authorities," he said.

In Goregaon, local corporator Sandeep Patel said since June, if a ward reports an average of 30 cases daily, then 25 are from high-rises and five

are from the slums.

"The trend has completely reversed now and we are noticing the number of cases coming from slum pockets is fewer than buildings. Those in high-rises have hardly stepped out during the lockdown. Screening of vendors to find from where they get their supply of groceries, vegetables and fruits would ensure any potential carrier is immediately isolated. The BMC should not leave any opportunity to trace them," said Patel.

City MumbaiMirror

CORONAVIRUS-OUTBREAK

Friday, June 26, 2020 3

Chief secretary hauls up BMC for builder's Covid-19 contract

Mirror had reported yesterday how Romell Realtors was awarded Rs 10.9-crore contract with no relevant experience

NILESH WAJIKAR



BMC's Covid Care Centre at Goregaon's NESCO exhibition center; Mirror's report on June 25

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

Chief Secretary Ajay Mehta on Thursday called for a report from the BMC on work orders worth Rs 10.9 crore issued to Romell Realtors for supplying equipment at the NESCO Covid Care Centre in Goregaon. Acting on a Mumbai Mirror report, Mehta has asked Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal to submit a report on the issue.

Mehta said he would order a probe after he gets the report. "I have asked for a report with facts on this from the Municipal Commissioner. We will see if there have been any irregularities," Mehta told Mumbai Mirror.

This paper had on Thursday reported how Romell Realtors, a city-based builder, has been awarded a Rs 10.9-crore contract to supply beds and medical equipment to a BMC Covid-care centre, even though the firm allegedly has no experience in this field. No tenders were floated either before giving the work order for a period of three months.

Romell Realtors is supplying oxygen cylinders, medical beds, mattresses, fans and humidifiers to the BMC's Covid Care Centre at Goregaon's NESCO exhibition center. The realty firm has several residential projects across the city, but according to officials it has no experience of supplying or manufacturing oxygen cylinders, beds and mattresses and humidifiers. According to documents accessed by Mumbai Mirror, approvals to give work orders worth Rs 10.9 crore to Romell Realtors were given by then Municipal Commissioner Praveen Pardeshi on April 27. This was for supply of oxygen cylinders, beds and mattresses for three months. Later the BMC's Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) department issued two pay orders of Rs 2.67 crore and Rs 2.70 crore on May 26 to Romell Realtors for supply of pedestal fans, medical beds with mattresses, oxygen cylinders and humidifiers.

The BJP has alleged the NESCO centre was a multi crore scam. "This is nothing but a scam. All the items that Romell is supplying are available at 50% less in the market. This is nothing but a Rs 5 crore gift to Romell Realtors. The BMC has turned Covid centres into dens of corruption. There must be a high level probe into this and the BMC must issue stop payment orders to the builder," said BJP MLA Mihir Kotecha.

Samajwadi Party MLA Rais Shaikh wrote to Chahal seeking a probe into the builder's CSR fundused for the NESCO project. "This is a clear case of conflict of interest. The BMC must clarify on what Romell Realtors has done through CSR? Rs 90 lakh CSR and Rs 10 crore contracts without tenders is nothing but a scam. We urge Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray to issue stop payment orders to Romell Realtors," Shaikh said.

BJP Group leader in the BMC, corporator Vinod Mishra said that the contracts were awarded to Romell Realtors without any due diligence. "He is charging Rs 100 per day per fan for 90 days. This amounts to Rs 9000. New high end fans are available for Rs 6000. So this is a big scam. There must be an independent enquiry against all officials who handed this file," Mishra said.

Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal did not respond to a detailed query from Mumbai Mirror on Thursday.

FLASHBACK

Builder gets contract for Covid equipment, no tenders floated



hira said.

Romell Realtors had said that its CSR contribution to the NESCO centre was worth Rs 1 crore, for x-ray machines, cabins, liquid cylinders. The company also said that the revised work order value is Rs 8.4 crore and not Rs 10.90 crores. "The MoU signed with Romell Realtors is at a much lesser rate resulting in a substantial saving. Considering the urgent need, the BMC took the decision to entrust the contract to M/s Romell Realtors. We don't manufacture medical beds and cylinders but best quality beds have been supplied," the company had said in a statement.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam said that he would file a complaint with the Lokayukta and the Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB).

Congress corporator Ravi Raja, who is the opposition leader in the BMC too wrote to Chahal demanding that payment to Romell Realtors be stopped. "All payments to Romell Realtors must be stopped. The BMC must come out with a white paper on the NESCO centre and make public all the money that has been spent on it," Raja said.

Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal did not respond to a detailed query from Mumbai Mirror on Thursday.

City MumbaiMirror

CORONAVIRUS-OUTBREAK

Thursday, June 25, 2020 4

Builder gets contract for Covid equipment, no tenders floated

Despite having no relevant experience, Romell Realtors bags Rs 10.9-crore contract to supply oxygen cylinders, medical beds and more to the BMC's Covid care facility at Goregaon's NESCO exhibition centre

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

A city-based builder has been awarded a Rs 10.9-crore contract to supply beds and medical equipment to a BMC Covid-care centre, even though the firm allegedly has no experience in this field. No tenders were floated either before giving the work order for a period of three months.

Romell Realtors is supplying oxygen cylinders, medical beds, mattresses, fans and humidifiers to the BMC's Covid Care Centre at Goregaon's NESCO exhibition center. The realty firm has several residential projects across the city, but according to officials it has no experience of supplying or manufacturing oxygen cylinders, beds and mattresses and humidifiers.

According to documents accessed by Mumbai Mirror, approvals to give work orders worth Rs 10.9 crore to Romell Realtors were given by then Municipal Commissioner Praveen Pardeshi on April 27. This was for supply of oxygen cylinders, beds and mattresses for three months. Later the BMC's Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) department issued two pay orders of Rs 2.67 crore and Rs 2.70 crore on May 26 to Romell Realtors for supply of pedestal fans, medical beds with mattresses, oxygen cylinders and humidifiers. Officials said that for now pay orders worth Rs 5.2 crore were issued for three months, pay orders for another three months would be issued next month.



Earlier this month, 821 beds were made operational at the Goregaon centre in addition to the first lot of 265

While Romell Realtors bagged the contract worth Rs 10.90 crore, the company's website claims that the NESCO isolation centre was set up with the company's support. "Considering the urgency of the steady rise in Covid-19 cases in Mumbai, BMC has set up a DCHC (Dedicated Covid Health Centre) at Goregaon's NESCO ground, with the support of Romell Group. Equipped to accommodate 2,600 oxygenated beds, a first for Mumbai, it will be the largest DCHC in the world," the company said on its website under the CSR tab.

Romell Realtors said that it's CSR contribution to the NESCO centre was worth Rs 1 crore, for x-ray machines, cabins, liquid cylinders. The company also said that the

revised work order value is Rs 8.4 crore and not Rs 10.90 crores. "The MoU signed with Romell Realtors is at a much lesser rate resulting in a substantial saving. Considering the urgent need, the BMC took the decision to entrust the contract to M/s Romell Realtors. We don't manufacture medical beds and cylinders but best quality beds have been supplied," the company said in a statement.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam has complained to Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal asking why work orders worth Rs 10.90 crore were given to a developer without inviting tenders. "This is a nothing but a scam. The BMC has turned a builder into an oxygen cylinder supplier overnight," Satam said.

Romell Group's NESCO contract

Total contract approved: Rs 10.90 crore

Pay Orders issued so far: Rs 5.30 crore

1,500 fans at Rs 100 per day per fan (for 90 days)

1,500 medical beds with mattresses at Rs 100 each (for 90 days)

2,000 oxygen cylinders at Rs 5,500 (purchased)

2,000 valve sets and humidifier bottles at Rs 3,000 (purchased)

4,442 units of Methalide at Rs 200 (purchased)

Earlier this month, 821 beds were made operational at the Goregaon centre in addition to the first lot of 265 commissioned on June 2. The ultimate plan is to make it a 3,000-bed facility.

In a letter dated May 3, Joint Municipal Commissioner Ramesh Pawar had asked Romell Realtors to sign an MoU for setting up a Covid care centre with 850 beds. Later the builder was asked to create a facility with 2,000 beds. The letter asked the builder to work in consultation with Joint Municipal Commissioner (Special) Anand Waghrakar. Waghrakar did not respond to a query from Mirror.

The BMC's M&E department is headed by Additional Municipal Commissioner P Velasru. However when contacted, Velasru said he had no information on this since he was not dealing with this subject. Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal also did not respond to a detailed query.

Civic body cites 'emergency' as it breaks rules

BMC awards second medical contract to builder without tender

Romell Realtors gets work order to supply dura oxygen cylinders for three Covid-19 centres; firm has no medical field experience

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR
Questions about integrity be damned, the BMC has given another contract to Romell Realtors without calling for tenders, this time to supply junior oxygen cylinders to three civic-run facilities treating Covid-19 patients.

Mirror had reported last month that the construction company, which has several residential projects across the city, is neither a supplier nor a manufacturer of oxygen cylinders, beds and mattresses or humidifiers. But its lack of experience didn't deter the BMC from awarding it a Rs 10.80 crore contract in May to supply beds and medical equipment to the Covid-19 care centre at Goregaon's NESO exhibition centre, without even calling for tenders.

Confident that it had got away with bending the rules—former chief secretary Ajay Mehta hauled the BMC up over the work order and asked it to submit a report on the allegation of irregularity only after Mirror's June 25 report—the civic body's central purchase department awarded a second contract to the company on June 7 worth Rs 1.30 crore to supply 70 dura oxygen cylinders to the NSCI Covid-19 centre in Worli, Bhabha Hospital in Bandra and HBT Trauma Care Centre in



The BMC had in May awarded a contract to Romell Realtors to supply beds and medical equipment to the NESO centre

Jogeshwari, again without following the due procedure.

Dura cylinders are vacuum-insulated liquid gas cylinders which allow storage of cryogenic gases like oxygen, argon, nitrogen and medical oxygen at a very low pressure. Their capacity is 25 times higher than conventional gas cylinders.

The BMC isn't even trying to hide that Romell Realtors is a blue-

eyed contractor. It failed to supply the 70 cylinders by the designated deadline of June 10, and got away with just a slap on the wrist instead of having its work order revoked: the BMC imposed a fine of Rs 9.9 lakh on it for the 'delay' and eventually asked it to deliver only 55 dura cylinders. Those deliveries have been made.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 50



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

BJP MLA Ameet Satam, who had flagged the previous work order as well, pointed out in a complaint letter to Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal that the civic body's actions violate all standards of transparency. "Why is the work of supplying medical equipment given to a builder and that too without inviting tenders?" he wrote.

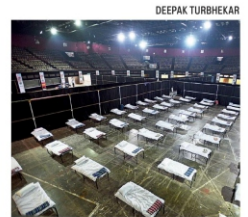
Satam told Mirror that he has asked for details of all contracts awarded by the BMC for Covid-19-related equipment since March, when the pandemic broke out. "The municipal commissioner must cancel all such orders given to Romell Realtors, initiate an inquiry, stop the payment, and invite short tenders for the supply of all equipment/items so that there is competition and transparency," he said.

Additional Municipal Commissioner P Velrasu, who heads the central purchase department, said Romell Realtors was given the contract for the dura cylinders because "it was an emergency". "Dura cylinders are not meant for the

NESCO centre. Considering shortage of time and complaints about lack of oxygen cylinders at HBT Trauma Hospital and other peripheral hospitals, the department approached two oxygen players. One quoted very high rates. One responded, but said that it cannot supply more than 30 cylinders within three days. Romell said it could supply cylinders within the given time. Dura cylinders were purchased directly considering the shortage of time," he said.

Velrasu said ex post facto sanction was taken from the municipal commissioner. "The central purchase department imposed a heavy penalty for the late supply of dura cylinders. Barring the contract for the dura cylinders, the department has no other work order with Romell."

Romell Realtors said it was asked to urgently deliver the dura oxygen cylinders owing to its 'success' with the previous NESO work order. It said it placed an order for 70 cylinders on the night the work order was issued, and delivered 10 of them to the NSCI centre on June 8, collectively 30 to HBT Trauma Care on



The NSCI Covid-19 centre in Worli is among the three facilities to which the company supplied dura oxygen cylinders

June 9 and June 11, and 15 to Bhabha Hospital on June 13. It claimed it couldn't meet the rest of the requirements because one of the manufacturers could not supply more than 45 cylinders.

Accusing the BMC of "unnecessarily" imposing a penalty on it without looking at its reply to a show-cause notice, it said the civic body is yet to pay for the 55 cylinders it delivered.

City MumbaiMirror

CORONAVIRUS-OUTBREAK

Friday, June 26, 2020

4

Corporators' fund to be used for immunity booster drug

BMC allows use of local area development fund to distribute homeopathic drug Arsenic Album 30

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

The BMC has allowed corporators to buy and distribute homeopathic immunity boosting medicine Arsenic Album 30 from their local area development fund. Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal recently also raised the funds for each corporator from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 15 lakh.

The homeopathy drug Arsenicum album 30 was listed by the Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (Ayush) on March 6 as an effective

immunity booster that could keep coronavirus at bay. Since then, it has become so popular that corporators and legislators, BMC officials and the police and almost every NGO has been distributing it even though there is no scientific evidence to prove its efficacy against Covid-19.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam was one of the first elected representatives in the city to disburse the medicine. Satam said he had distributed Arsenic Album 30 (as it is also known) to more than 20,000 families in the K West ward, in areas which reported large numbers of positive cases. In April, the BMC had kicked off the demand by allowing the distribution of Arsenic Album in two of



A distribution drive for the drug in Ghatkopar last month

the worst-affected wards in the city.

Congress corporator Ravi Raja who is the opposition leader in the BMC, said the BMC's decision to allow buying of Arsenic Album 30 from corporators' fund had come too late. "Almost all corporations have

already distributed the drug to residents across the city," Raja said.

Last week, with the city running short of life saving but costly drug Tocilizumab to treat Covid-19, BJP corporators had demanded that they be allowed to use their local area



development fund to buy such medicines.

BMC officials said that they were still examining whether they can allow the use of corporators' funds for buying drugs. However, Shiv Sena corporator Amey Ghole, who heads the BMC's Health Committee, had said that the corporators' fund was for civic amenities and not for buying medicines.

Homeopathy is often dismissed by doctors of Western medicine as a pseudo-science. "It's mumbo jumbo," Dr Shantanu Abhyankar, a practitioner of modern medicine had told Mirror last month, when the distribution drives for the drug picked up pace. "They say it improves immunity, but there is no way to measure that either. It will build up a false sense of security among the public."

City CORONAVIRUS-OUTBREAK

Sunday Mumbai Mirror 2
 Sunday, July 19, 2020
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GANPATI FESTIVITIES

BMC urges Mumbaikars to tamp down celebrations

In a pilot project of sorts, the municipality has urged mandals in Andheri (West) to organise only 13 celebrations this year; if the plan gets a good response, it could be implemented across the city

Chaitanya Marpakwar
 @timesgroup.com
 TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

The BMC has urged mandals in Andheri (West) to organise only 13 community Ganapati celebrations this year, one for each electoral ward. A pilot project of sorts, if the plan gets a good response from mandals and citizens in Andheri (West), officials said it could be replicated in other wards.

Vishwas Mote, assistant municipal commissioner, K-West, has asked mandals to organise only 13 public Ganapati celebrations. He has also organised plans for home collection of small Ganapati idols, so that people don't have to step out for immersion.

"There are hundreds of community Ganapati mandals in K-West. But in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, we have requested that we have only 13 actual Ganpatis. There are 13 electoral wards in the K-West administrative ward. So there can only be 13 community celebrations," Mote said.

"At other locations, we have asked people to organise blood donation and awareness camps. We have sent this pilot project plan to all corporators and politicians and are now awaiting their response," Mote said.

A list of guidelines for the 11-day festival, to be held from August 22, was issued earlier this month. As per the directives, mandals have to restrict the height of Ganapati idols to four feet, while idols worshipped at homes should not be more than



The state has also asked Ganesh mandals not to organise immersion processions

two feet high. Earlier, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray had met representatives from Ganesh mandals and asked them to limit the size of the idols. Mumbai has around 14,000 major Ganesh pandals each year. Some of the mandals have 20- to 25-foot-high idols.

Officials said K-West has around 150 public Ganapati celebrations, the Andheri-Chhattrpada area the most popular among them.

The guidelines, issued by Principal Secretary (Home), Amitabh Gupta, also urged citizens to immerse idols at home and avoid travelling to crowded waterfronts. It also said that citizens should consider deferring the immersion to next year. "By avoiding going to crowded

spaces while welcoming and immersing idols, you will protect yourselves and your family members from the risk of contracting Covid-19," the guidelines read. Citizens have also been asked to use idols made of environmentally-friendly materials.

Mote said citizens should inform the BMC in advance if they will collect idols from their buildings.

"Household Ganpatis will be collected from outside residential buildings for immersion. This way, residents won't have to step out and there will be no crowds at beaches. We will immerse the idols in artificial ponds. We will set up many artificial ponds across the ward," Mote said.

Former corporator and Shiv Sena

leader Devendra Amberkar, who heads the Swapnakshay Mitra Mandal, said they will follow the state government orders. "We are not sure if it will be possible to not hold festivities at all. We have been installing Ganpati for 40 years. We will have a small idol and have low-key festivities. We will also have an awareness campaign and a medical camp," he said.

"This plan is not practical at all. Ganpati is not just a religious festival but also a social event. Many mandals have their own celebrations. It won't be correct to ask them to stop their celebrations and have only one Ganpati per electoral ward," said Ameet Satam, BJP MLA from Andheri (West).

MumbaiMirror

58 Covid-19 deaths on average each day in July; city's death rate remains at a high of 5.5 per cent as on July 31

/ Aug 11, 2020, 07:01 AM IST



On an average, 6,500 tests were conducted per day in July, up from 4,200 daily tests in June (Photo by Nilesh Wairkar)

High death rate of 5.5 per cent, despite increased testing and vacant beds, remains a worry.

Despite the BMC's liberal testing policy and massive availability of beds in Covid-19 centres and hospitals, the city's death rate still remains at a high of 5.5 per cent as on July 31. July alone saw a death rate of 4.9 per cent, which is much more than the national average of around 2 per cent. With a total of 1,796 Covid deaths in July, this comes to a grim average of 58 daily deaths last month.

On an average, 6,500 tests were conducted per day in July, up from 4,200 daily tests in June. Municipal Commissioner Iqbal Chahal said that the BMC had conducted 2.4 lakh tests between July 7 and August 7. "Our death rate till July 1st was 5.8 per cent. From July 1 to July 31 it came down to 4.9 per cent. Overall death rate came down to 5.5 per cent. This month, we are monitoring hospitals very closely. Our target is to bring down mortality to around 3 per cent in August," Chahal said.

According to the daily bulletin on BMC's official twitter handle @mybmc, the total number of tests till August 9 were 6,05,419. Data released by the BMC shows that despite the civic body's claims of having 7,000 beds and 250 ICU beds vacant, on an average 58 Covid-19 patients have died every day in July.

BJP MLA Ameet Satam has written to Chahal demanding an increase in the RT-PCR testing. "The BMC must increase testing and investigate why so many deaths are taking place," Satam said. The BMC had in July begun conducting Rapid Anti-Gen tests too. Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis has said the state should use its full capacity for RT-PCR testing, and opposed the dominance of antigen tests in the total number of tests conducted.

Even the state's Covid-19 task force has raised concerns on the high death rate.

Dr Gautam Bhansali, general physician at Bombay Hospital who has been appointed as coordinator between the BMC and private hospitals, said "Many patients with co-morbid conditions are coming on fifth or sixth day with 'happy hypoxia'. These patients may not be critical but at any moment the oxygen saturation level may decrease and they may need immediate hospitalisation." Happy hypoxia is a condition where patients with extremely low, otherwise life-threatening levels of oxygen, show no signs of difficulty in breathing.

Suresh Kakani, additional municipal commissioner, said the focus is to reduce the mortality rate. "We are now focusing more on increasing the RT-PCR testing at the community level, where our health experts will do door-to-door collection of swabs. We are trying to increase the RT-PCR testing from 6,000 to 8,500," said Kakani.

BMC ropes in NGOs to screen slum-dwellers

Teams race to screen residents before the onset of the monsoon season

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

The BMC has enlisted the help of local non-governmental organisations to screen residents of slum pockets for the novel coronavirus. Teams of doctors, healthcare workers and volunteers authorised by the BMC are racing to screen slum-dwellers, especially given the fast approaching monsoon season.

In K-West Ward, which has more than 1,000 Covid-19 cases, the NGO Niramay Seva Foundation has already made huge progress. A team of eight doctors and more than 30 volunteers have so far screened more than 5,000 residents of Nehru Nagar, in Andheri.

The BMC has drawn up a protocol for the doctors to follow. According to officials, they work four days, then rest for three. They are tested on the seventh day and only resume work if the result is negative.

The decision to approach the NGO was taken after a request from local BJP legislator Ameet Satam. "The doctors are working free of cost. We started work last week. Now a second team of doctors is screening people since the first team is now resting as per the protocol. We are also giving the doctors additional volunteers for help," Satam said.

The Nehru Nagar slum is one of the most populated in the city, with more than 35,000 residents. Almost all slum-dwellers use community toilets and social distancing is physically not possible.

The monsoon is approaching soon. We plan to screen the most dense slums before the monsoon, so that we can move out all symptomatic patients from there and house them in quarantine centres. So far, around



Residents of Nehru Nagar express their gratitude to doctors

30-40 residents have been moved into quarantine centres," Satam said.

Sanjay Nagarkar of the Niramay Seva Foundation said they had roped in doctors and final-year MBBS students. "Our first batch is out now. We screened more than 5,000 people and around 80 were reported as suspect. The first batch worked for four days and the second batch is now working. There are eight doctors in each batch and they are all working free of cost. There are women doctors in the team too," said Nagarkar, the RRS's general secretary for the city.

"Each doctor leads a small group of three-four people. The group uses infrared thermometers and pulse oximeters to screen the residents. We plan to finish screening all of Nehru Nagar by the end of the month. We want to finish before the monsoons. The BMC is giving us PPE kits and all equipment and even accommodation for doctors,"

Nagarkar said. "The residents were so happy that they clapped for our teams when the first batch finished the screening on Tuesday. People there are cooperating with us and so is the BMC. We plan to set up more such teams in other slums," he added.

BMC officials confirmed they had organised accommodation for the doctors. "They screen all residents for symptoms of Covid-19. If they find any symptoms then they refer the patient to the BMC clinic where we test them. The screening helps us gauge the spread of the virus in the slums and ensure that all patients with symptoms are sent to institutional quarantine," said a senior civic official.

"BMC doctors are also there. They help the volunteers and also support them. The extra manpower helps us screen more residents in less time," the official said.

High mortality, low testing rates in city

City's mortality rate of 5.67% is much higher than the national average of 3.99%; just 5,310 tests daily on average in July despite no-prescription testing policy



Swab test at a housing society in Dadar; so far, the BMC has carried out just over 4 lakh tests till July 15

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TWEETS @chaiMIRROR

Even as Municipal Commissioner Lohia has claimed that the city was seeing only 1200 Covid-19 cases a day despite the BMC's liberal testing policy, the city's death rate remains at a high of 5.67%. BMC data shows that despite the civic body's claims of having 7000 beds and 250 ICU beds vacant, 60 Covid-19 patients have died each day till July 15, with 910 deaths reported in the first two weeks of July.

As on July 15, the city has recorded 5,464 Covid-19 deaths, at a mortality rate of 5.67%, which is much higher than the national average of 3.99%.

Even on the testing front, the city has tested only 3,550 people per day since the pandemic broke out. So far the BMC has carried out just over 4 lakh tests till July 15. Even in July when the BMC claimed to have started universal testing and liberalised the testing regime, allowing people to get tested for Covid-19 without any prescription, only 79,663 tests were carried out till July 15 at an average of just 5,310 tests per day.

BPM MLA Ameet Satam has written to Lohia hitting out at the BMC for failing to reduce the mortality rate. "The Municipal Commissioner's statement that the pandemic is close to being over in the city may lead to a complacent situation in the city both in the administration as well as citizens. The BMC has conducted 4,08,320

tests till July 15 which means we have conducted a meagre 3,550 on an average daily since 22nd March. Leader of Opposition (LoP) Devendra Fadnis has time and again stressed the need for conducting at least 10,000 tests daily when Mumbai has a capacity of conducting around 12,000 tests per day," Satam said in his letter.

The BMC has claimed that despite the BMC's new universal testing policy, the number of new cases had not gone up drastically. "After our open testing policy where people can get tested without prescriptions, our testing has gone up from 4,000 to 6,800 tests per day. But our total positives have come down from 1,400 to 1,200 now. Out of these, symptomatic patients are less than 200. So we need only 200 beds every day. On Monday, after allotting beds to all, we had 7,000 Covid-19 beds and 250 ICU beds vacant," the BMC had said in a statement.

Fadnis had also demanded that the government should increase the number of tests being conducted four fold. "The government's decision to restrict tests to 5,000 to 5,500 in Mumbai is responsible for the spread of the virus," Fadnis said last week.

Fadnis alleged that the deaths of at least 600 Covid-19 patients at home have not been recorded in Mumbai. "Besides, 287 deaths of Covid-19 positive deaths have been dismissed as deaths caused by other reasons. This is in violation of ICMR norms. Only in case of accidents or suicides can deaths of Covid-19 patients be categorised as



Door-to-door screening at Malad

caused by other reasons," he said. "A total of 910 deaths in the first 15 days of July is extremely dangerous and contradicts your claim of the pandemic being close to over in the city. Why is there such a mad rush for Bernersli and Tollymore if the situation in the city is under control? What we are trying to do is rather than completely cleaning and eliminating the problem, we are trying to push the problem below the rug and satisfy ourselves that our floor is clean but the dirt below the rug will again resurface on the floor. There is a chance of a major spike again. I request you to refrain from rushing into making claims and conduct at least 8-10,000 tests daily for at least a month more and then review the situation by mid-August and then arrive at conclusions," Satam said in his letter on Friday.

Chahal refused to comment on Mumbai Mirror's query.

नेस्को कोविड सेंटर में घोटाला

लोकायुक्त के पास पहुंचा मामला

नवभारत न्यूज नेटवर्क

मुंबई. गोरेगांव स्थित नेस्को सेंटर में बीएमसी की तरफ से बनाए गए कोविड सेंटर में कथित घोटाले का मामला अब महाराष्ट्र के लोकायुक्त के पास पहुंच गया है. बीजेपी विधायक अमित साटम ने बड़े पैमाने पर अनियमितता का आरोप लगाते हुए लोकायुक्त एम एल तहिलयानी से पूरे मामले की जांच करवाने एवं दोषियों के विरुद्ध कार्रवाई की मांग की है. इसके पहले विधायक मिहिर कोटेचा ने आरोप लगाया था कि अधिकारियों एवं सत्ता पक्ष की मिलीभगत से बगैर टेंडर के एक बिल्डर को डेकोरेटर एवं मेडिकल सप्लाय का काम दिया गया.

बीजेपी विधायक ने की शिकायत



विधायक अमित साटम ने कहा है कि एक बिल्डर को कोविड सेंटर का काम सौंपा गया, जिसे मेडिकल क्षेत्र का कोई अनुभव नहीं है. बीएमसी की तरफ से नेस्को कोविड सेंटर के लिए 10 करोड़ 80 लाख रुपये का वर्क ऑर्डर दिए जाने को लेकर हमने मनाया आयुक्त से जानकारी मांगी थी लेकिन अभी तक आयुक्त की तरफ से कोई उत्तर नहीं मिला है. इस लिए अब लोकायुक्त का दरवाजा खटखटाना है. जांच के बाद सच्चाई बाहर आ जाएगी.

महामारी

सीएम ने की थी प्लाज्मा दात

नेत्रहीन संगीत शि

नवभारत न्यूज नेटवर्क

मुंबई. गंभीर कोरोना मरीजों की जान बचाने में प्लाज्मा थेरेपी मददगार साबित हो सकती है. ऐसे में प्लाज्मा डोनेशन के लिए उन लोगों की पहल की जरूरत है जो कोरोना को मात दे सकें हैं. बखवार को एक नेत्रहीन



Declared dead on social media, doc recovers from COVID

Family of senior general practitioner, Dr Vasant Shenoy, was flooded with several condolence messages after he was rushed to the hospital

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DECLARED dead by the social media, a doctor residing in the western suburbs has come back to life, having successfully recovered from COVID-19 after a nearly three-week battle with the virus. While doctors fought to save him, his family had to deal with the flood of condolence messages.

The ordeal for the Shenoy family from Santacruz started on the evening of May 28 when 62-year-old Dr Vasant Shenoy tested himself for oxygen levels and found them to be alarmingly low. Dr Shenoy is considered as one of the highest qualified general practitioners in the city.

"I was totally fine, but to get a second opinion, I called up a few of my doctor friends. They all told me to not worry. My friend Dr Abhishek Bhargav diagnosed a suspected 'Happy Hypoxia' — a rare and deadly form of COVID-19 where a patient displays zero symptoms. Dr Bhargav advised me to rush to the nearest speciality hospital," said Dr Shenoy.

The next three-and-a-half hours were a frenzy of calling hospitals and trying to find a bed for Dr Shenoy, his wife and daughter. Panicked, Dr Shenoy then messaged local MLA Ameet Satam for help. Satam arranged for a BMC ambulance and a hospital bed within half-an-hour at Brahma Kumaris' Global Hospital & Research Centre, Andheri West.

"I can only imagine the plight of the common man. My wife and daughters, both being doctors, were left to making frantic calls to find a hospital bed and I, a doctor with over 40 years of experience and a former president and secretary of the Indian Medical Association, could not do anything either. Soon, rumours of my demise started spreading and people started pouring in condolences on social media, adding to my family's mental trauma," Dr Shenoy said.

Dr Shenoy's daughter, Dr Priyanka, later had to send a message to everyone informing about his health. "As you all know, my father, Dr Vasant Shenoy has been admitted in the hospital. As of now, he is stable and responding well to treatment. At no point was he on a ventilator, since everybody has been assuming this," the message read. When Dr Shenoy switched on his mobile phone after his hospital stay, he too received several condolence messages.



Dr Vasant Shenoy

Shenoy has been admitted in the hospital. As of now, he is stable and responding well to treatment. At no point was he on a ventilator, since everybody has been assuming this," the message read. When Dr Shenoy switched on his mobile phone after his hospital stay, he too received several condolence messages.

Rushed to the ICU, after the primary tests, the doctors prescribed an urgent course of five injections of the drug Tocilizumab. Five doses of the drug are given intravenously through saline over a period of one hour. This is to avoid a critical situation called Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome.

However, there was no stock of the drug available and the family had to once again call Satam for help. He managed to get hold of a chemist in Ghatkopar, who delivered the medicine worth nearly ₹35,000 for a full dose.

"During my stay, I witnessed Dr Girish Vadgaonkar, the ICU in-charge and Dr Jevdan Motlekar, both managing a team of medical professionals who were diligently working in double shifts since four of their own were down with COVID-19," said Dr Shenoy. Back from the hospital on June 17, he has been advised bed rest at home. He wants to resume his practice at the earliest.



Ameet Satam - not your typical politician!

By Munir Vora San Francisco, CA, USA +1 (408) 352 5200

Why Am I writing this note?

Mr. Ameet Satam, MLA, recently provided an incredible amount of help to my parents who were diagnosed with Covid-19 and have now recovered. He did so knowing that I'm not an Indian citizen and didn't know where my parents live. So there was not even a voting angle!! A simple thank you would not suffice, hence this note.

Who Am I:

I'm a Juhu scheme boy now settled in Silicon Valley, California, the world-famous Technology hub in USA.

My Parents:

My 83 yrs old father is a retired bank officer and my 80 yrs old mother is a retired teacher. They are currently living at Juhu Scheme. They were to come to USA in March but couldn't due to the Covid lock down. In spite of taking every precaution, on June 2nd I received the dreaded call from my father. He had high temperature as did my mother. Their Covid test results were pending. I couldn't sleep the whole night with just one fear "Am I going to lose my parents?" The very next day my father's result came as Covid positive. I knew then that my Mother's would be positive as well. It was like we had been struck by lightning. It's the worst fear of children based in the US with parents in India. This time it was even worse because I couldn't even fly over to take care of them! I was told that day 7-12 of Covid would be critical, hospital beds are scarce, ICUs are getting full, ventilators are unavailable. Basically, the nightmare scenario had arrived!

Massive hunt for hospital bed:

I reached out to all my sources and their contacts including in Delhi and the US consulate. In the US one would call one's local representative in the State Assembly or US congress for help in such an emergency. I had no experience with calling the local MLA for help in India. But I was desperate and ready to try anything.

A call to Mr. Ameet Satam:

I pinged Mr. Ameet Satam - the local MLA, whom I had never met and had no relationship with whatsoever. We didn't have to wait long. My father soon received a call directly from Mr. Satam advising him not to worry. He promised to work on getting my parents admitted to a hospital. Ameet ji called him frequently with an update on his search for hospital beds. I personally was trying for Nanavati hospital as it is close to my home and was established as a Covid center with ICU/Ventilator facility for 2+ months.

Miracle happened:

We secured 2 beds at Nanavati hospital but the hospital told us they were full. Hence my parents could end up in separate rooms. So I called Ameet ji and was surprised that such a busy person answered my call himself and proceeded to ask me, "how did they get infected?" I could feel the worry in his voice. My answer was "I don't know... might be surface transfer or not wearing masks properly." Our discussion continued and he asked if we needed any other help. My mother was turning 80 on June 6th, the day of their hospital admissions. So, I hesitantly asked:

- Could he possibly help my parents get into the same hospital room?
- Also, was there a way they could be in touch with him for future help as I was 15000 miles away?

He was very gracious and told me to not worry about my parents. By the time my parents reached Nanavati hospital, he had managed to get them into the same room.

What happened Next:

Ameet ji called my parents every single day. In addition, he texted me their health status every morning and evening. He was personally calling the CEO of Nanavati Hospital to check their status. My parents told me that Ameet ji is taking care of them like a Son.

My father recovered earlier and was discharged from the hospital. You can imagine my mother's apprehension at having to stay on alone. However, Ameet ji stepped up as if he was her own son and managed to get her shifted to a single room, so disturbance was minimized and recovery would be faster. By the time my father reached home, our apartment had been sanitized by BMC. Yes, now that he had tested negative, neighbours were helping. But during the time he was Covid positive, only one person came to their assistance — Mr. Ameet Satam.

Good ending:

My mother was discharged after 20 days. While she was alone at the hospital, Ameet ji never wavered from his routine of obtaining her status and updating us with every detail. Not to forget that without our knowledge, Ameet ji had called the hospital and ensured that their bill was reasonable and customary. The fact that someone cared about how elders would bear huge hospital bills, without even being asked, makes Ameet ji a gem of a human being in my parents' and my eyes. My parents now consider Ameet ji as their second son. And I am eternally indebted to him for his selfless assistance.