Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP)

NEWSLETTER

21st Edition | February 2024 Roundup

MESSAGE FROM FOUNDER

A SALUTE TO BALA SIR: ACKNOWLEDGING THE POWER OF THE COMMON CITIZEN TO BRING ABOUT CHANGE

Dear Bengalurigas,

It was a little over four years ago that I founded BNP. We have come a long way since then, with a host of campaigns and initiatives, which are truly making an impact at the grassroot level. All this has been made possible because people like you and me — common citizens or Bengalurigas — came together to work passionately to rebuild Namma Bengaluru.

The first Bengaluriga whom I consulted when I wanted to start a political party was "Bala Sir". He has been closely associated with me since the day I started building the Bangalore Apartments' Federation (BAF). We first met in 2013 when I reached out to the Managing Committee members of a few apartment complexes in my locality, to collaborate and work together. Destiny introduced us but our chemistry made us great friends, though he was all of 30 years older than me.

I distinctly remember the day I voted in the Lok Sabha Election in April 2019. I headed straight to his place after casting my vote, to discuss the concept of a new political party focused solely on Bengaluru and its municipal governance. He heard me out very intently and gave a very strong thumbs up to the idea. His opinion was crucial and I must confess that BNP would have been a non-starter if he had said anything remotely negative about the idea. He ended up serving as the first President of BNP and remained an integral part of the Governing Council and the BNP Leadership till he passed away on 12th December 2023.

People like Bala Sir exemplify the kind of team that I have been seeking to build in BNP: extremely passionate about Bengaluru, proactive in taking up various causes and energetic in initiating and implementing campaigns. Despite being a senior citizen and well into his 70s, he showed remarkable tenacity, consistency, and passion in undertaking and conducting various BAF and BNP campaigns.

Bala Sir's passing has left behind a void in my personal life that will be impossible to fill. However, I am sure he will be with us in spirit through our entire journey. Many of our BNP team members carry the same spirit, passion and attitude as him, and I would be delighted to have more such dedicated people amongst us, working tirelessly for the cause of BNP and Bengaluru.

Rest in peace Bala Sir!

As always, I am happy to receive inputs and feedback from you at
srikanth.narasimhan1975@gmail.com

SRIKANTH NARASIMHAN
Founder & General Secretary, Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP)

PROTECTING CITIZENS FROM HARASSMENT

Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP) Founder and General Secretary, Srikanth Narasimhan, and **Governing Council Member and BNP Zonal Leader (Bommanahalli) Lalithamba B V**, met the Chief Commissioner Sri. Tushar Giri Nath on 12th February 2024, along with Loganathan, a citizen being harassed with illegal notices. BNP urged the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to follow due process and ensure that innocent citizens are not harassed.

The Chief Commissioner promised to consider the following points raised by BNP:

- **Groundless Demands and Bogus Claims:** BBMP officials are raising baseless and even bogus claims. In certain cases, officials are demanding commercial rates and penalties, claiming that users have a commercial Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) connection, though they have only a domestic connection. In other cases, BBMP is inflating the area of the property even though the owners can prove a lesser area.
- **Denial of Due Process:** BBMP is not giving adequate time for citizens to respond to its Show Cause Notices. In some cases, a Demand Order was issued within 3 or 4 days of the Show Cause Notice without giving a reasonable time of 15 days to respond.
- **Ignoring Evidence by Owners:** BBMP is not acknowledging genuine responses to the notices, where owners are showing valid evidence. Instead, the BBMP is using threats and harassment to force owners to pay.
- **Threats to Owners who are Following Due Process:** Even where owners have deposited 50% of the claim to start the statutory appeal process, BBMP is demanding full payment, threatening to seal their property, which is a clear case of illegal extortion.

INTERACTION WITH BBMP OFFICIALS

In an ongoing process, **Lalithamba B V** and **BNP Governing Council Member and Zonal Leader (Bangalore South) Poongothai Paramasivam**, engaged with several officials at BBMP Head office on 9th February.

They met the **Revenue officials** and discussed the Government Order (GO) implementation on Property Tax Zone misclassification, and also sought clarification on specific cases. They were informed that in the 1st Phase, the GO order will be implemented for 78,254 users. In the 2nd Phase, software will be updated for Zonal notices issued later. No timeline was indicated.

At the **Administration Department**, the BNP team met Sri. B.S. Manjunathaswamy, Deputy Commissioner (Admin) to follow up BNP's request for updating Zonal Level Officers (ZLOs) contact details on the BBMP Website and Sahaaya 2.0. BBMP is currently working on printing the BBMP Contact Directory (as a Diary) by collating all the contact details at Zonal/Ward levels. BNP has requested officials to share the soft copy of the database.

Thereafter, BNP representatives met the **BBMP Audit team at the Finance Department**. They sought clarity on their request submitted on 29th January to BBMP Chief Commissioner Sri. Tushar Giri Nath, requesting publication of detailed annual reports with information at Level 2 or Level 3 on the new BBMP website. Currently the BBMP audit department is following a prescribed format for audit report, and BBMP Budget reports capture actual expenses up to level 2 details during previous years. BNP will continue to push for a department order to be passed for this purpose.

At the **Lakes Department**, the BNP team met Sri. Vijay Kumar Haridas, Chief Engineer Lakes and submitted a letter to halt encroachment activity and ongoing construction around Subedeharana Kere, Begur, until a thorough evaluation is done. BNP urged the BBMP's Lakes Department to initiate a comprehensive survey to mark the lake area and its buffer zone accurately. Discussion focused on a few other lakes. The Lakes Department is awaiting grants to commence walking track projects in some of the lakes. In a new development, the BBMP Engineering department will be responsible for protecting the lakes' Buffer Zones, that are 30 metres from the lake boundary. Recently a **circular** was released regarding the Buffer Zone around the lake.

The team also met Dr. M V Kumar, **Programme Officer for Mental Health and Tobacco Control,** to discuss cigarette sales near school premises. He explained the procedure and requested citizens to register any complaints in the **Stop Tobacco App** for necessary action.

A request was made to Sri. B.L.G Swamy, **Deputy Conservator of Forests (DCF)** to update contact information for ZLOs in the BBMP website. His team is collating the contact details to share with the IT Department to update in the BBMP website. BNP has requested officials to share a copy of the same, which is expected to happen shortly.

Sri. Prabakar, **Head of IT and his team** were requested to update available information of ZLOs contact details on the BBMP Website and Sahaaya 2.0. Here the team explained about the list of officials in charge in each Department and the level of official contacts to be updated in the website.

FURTHER MEETINGS WITH BBMP OFFICIALS

Lalithamba B V and **Poongothai Paramasivam**, along with **BNP Leader Vineet Muthanna**, met some officials at BBMP Head office on 23rd February.

With Sri. Munish Moudgil, **Special Commissioner Revenue**, BNP discussed erroneous Property Tax classification and requested suitable corrections in the database. The Special Commissioner assured that it will be taken up in April 2024.

The BNP team also met Sri. Selvamani, **Special Commissioner Elections**. Discussions were held about electoral roll cleanup and rationalisation of the voters at booth level.

At the **Forest Department**, the BNP representatives again met the DCF Sri. B.L.G Swamy. BNP reiterated their request for the department to update contact information for ZLOs in the BBMP website. The team also discussed with him ways to simplify the process of Tree Trimming/Cutting and asked him to issue clear instructions regarding the same. They also spoke about a few cases being delayed by local officials.

This meeting with the **BBMP Anti-Tobacco Team**, was to stress previous requests to take adequate measures against rampant sale of cigarettes near school premises and also to regulate the excessive number of shops getting opened in most areas.

Further discussions were held with the **BBMP Lakes Team** about Subedeharana Kere. The team also spoke about Somasundarapalya Kere and a few other lakes.

During a meeting with Sri. Chandra Shekar, **Deputy Director of Horticulture**, BNP requested plantation in the lakeside, medians, undeveloped parks and stressed the need for their regular upkeep.

AREA SABHA ACTIVITIES (Local civic issues addressed by BNP)

Footpath

BNP Area Sabha Leader Aparna Chandar from SJR Redwoods in Bellandur had brought to our attention, a broken footpath on Sarjapur Road, Doddakanahalli Ward. The footpath slabs had collapsed into the drain and were blocking it. This issue was addressed and resolved by ensuring the replacement of all missing and broken slabs. This significantly enhanced pedestrian walkability and safety.

Doddakanahalli

Konena Agrahara

In Konena Agrahara, **Milind Kubulkar, Governing Council Member and Zonal Leader (C V Raman Nagar)** observed a damaged footpath on Old Airport Road opposite Kemp Fort and in front of Trendsman. The BNP team coordinated with the relevant civic department and repaired the footpath.

In the same ward, Milind also noticed and reported another broken footpath, with a dangerous hole, on Wind Tunnel Road, opposite to Air Force School compound, next to Srinidhi Residency Autorickshaw stand. The issue needed urgent repair as it was dangerous especially to the school children and Sr. Citizens. It was resolved by ensuring the replacement of all missing and broken slabs.

Konena Agrahara

Garbage

A resident of Hulimavu, Sanjay Maradi, became a Civic Warrior when he reported that work on Hulimavu Lake had been abruptly stopped since the State Elections, leading to significant deterioration + dumping of all kinds of garbage in the lake bed. Thanks to the continuous efforts of the BNP team in collaboration with the appropriate Lake Department officials, actions were taken to address and rectify the situation.

Hulimavu

Konena Agrahara

Milind noticed that garbage disposal was not done on 8th Main Rd B Block Vinayak Nagar, Konena Agrahara, between 1st Cross and 5th Cross. BNP followed up with the authorities and this area was cleared.

Open Defecation

C V Raman Nagar

The section of Kaggadasapura Main Road, between Bhuvaneshwari Nagar Temple Road and Bairasandra Road, has turned into an open defecation spot. No one could walk over the footpath. It was polluting the environment and could cause health problems and spread diseases. Along the footpath, fast-food outlets and fruit & vegetable stalls came up and these started to dump waste too. Civic Warrior Prithvi Raju, of C.V. Raman Nagar, highlighted this issue. After the issue was raised with the authorities, the situation was addressed by the intervention of BBMP officials. A Marshal was assigned to monitor the area and individuals found discarding garbage were fined.


Gandhi Nagar

Lalithamba B V and Poongothai Paramasivam noticed that outside Majestic Bus Stand, near the BMTC Exit point, there was an unbearable stench of urine. They informed the relevant officials and requested them to enhance cleanliness. The Marshal and BMTC team took necessary action to monitor the place. There is a significant difference now. The BNP Team urges residents to keep all public spaces clean and beautiful.

Solid Waste Management

Civic Warrior Tyagaraj Sharma, living in Arakere Ward, pointed out the poor condition of the pavements at Arekere Gate Junction on Bannerghatta Road. There were pipes left over from some earlier project and dry branches obstructing the pavement, causing problems for pedestrians and attracting more dumping. The BNP team followed up with the respective BBMP officials and resolved the problem.

Arekere
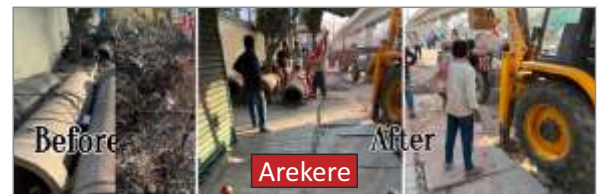
Roads

Ibluru

In Ibluru Ward, near Udupi Cafe junction, the road condition was reportedly very bad, with potholes making it especially risky for 2 wheelers. The BNP team took up the matter with the BBMP officials. After continuous follow up, the area was tarred by BBMP.

Ibluru

Street Lights

BNP Team Member Prakash noticed that a streetlight pole was tilted and seemed likely to fall. This was on 27th Cross, Nagarjuna Green Ridge Road in Ibluru Ward. The BESCOM Team visited the spot and clarified that the slant was given deliberately because of the main power line above. They assured the BNP team that the pole is buried 5 to 6 feet underground and there is no danger of tipping over.

Trees/Branches

Mallasandra — Before / After

In Mallasandra Ward, a resident reported a fallen tree branch that was causing obstruction in the area. Although BESCOM staff removed the overhanging branch from the electricity cables,, the cut branches were left on the road. The BNP Team followed up the matter with the BBMP Forest Department and the branches were cleared the same day.

Cable Wires

The BNP team notified the BBMP team regarding the low hanging cable wires near HSR BDA Complex in Ibluru Ward. After persistent follow up, the hanging cables around the tree were removed. The team will continue to work with BBMP to remove other hanging cables at the Ward level.


Before / After — Ibluru

Flexes & Banners

Attiguppe — BEFORE / AFTER

Civic Warrior Nandini, a resident of Attiguppe in the Hampi Nagar Ward, brought to our attention, the continuous problem of politicians' banners being placed on the footpath leading to Attiguppe Metro Station, entirely obstructing it and forcing pedestrians to walk on the road, amidst heavy traffic. The BNP raised the issue on the Sahaaya App. About 15 days after complaints were submitted, and after BNP Team's continuous follow up with the BBMP, one hoarding that was blocking the path was removed. However, banners attached to traffic poles and the walls of the adjacent park still remain, causing displeasure among commuters.

Sewage

In HSR Layout, Sector 1, Civic Warrior Syed Imran reported a sewage problem. His neighbour had complained about the sewage overflow in his house, over a month ago. BWSSB Team had come then and helped to fix it. But later, it became worse and sewage entered their kitchen. The BNP Team took up the matter with the BWSSB Team and it was resolved within 24 hours.

HSR Layout — BEFORE / AFTER
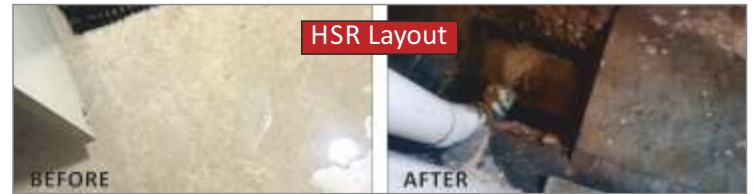
Other than these civic issues, BNP helped resolve 11 other complaints including Drinking Water issues, raised by several Civic Warriors in various Wards.

BNP thanks all our Civic Warriors for making their neighbourhoods and our city a better place.

Do you want to be a Civic Warrior in your area? The best way to be someone who is part of the solution is to join the BNP Area Sabha in your neighbourhood. These Area Sabhas meet to take up, discuss and address civic issues in the local area. To join, Whatsapp +91 8095130000 today!

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS (Pick of Special BNP Activities)

HONOURING A NOBLE SOUL

Sri. Balasubramanian, fondly known as "Bala Sir", a BNP Governing Council Member and former President of the Bangalore Apartments Federation (BAF), passed away recently due to ill health.

A key BNP figure since its inception, he played a significant role in helping the party to reach its present position. **Srikanth Narasimhan** and Bala Sir's family, including his wife Mohana, son Akshay & daughter Mayura, hosted a Memorial Meet on Saturday, 24th February at Indira Nagar Club. His daughter Mayura spoke fondly about her personal memories of her father. Several BNP and BAF members shared their impressions of Bala Sir and acknowledged his many contributions to BNP and BAF, and to the community at large. **Srikanth** recalled how Bala Sir's affirmation about the need for a new political party for Bengaluru, provided the inspiration and impetus to set up BNP. Those who paid tribute to Bala Sir highlighted his many endearing personal attributes, including his commitment, sincerity, simplicity, humility and disciplined ways.
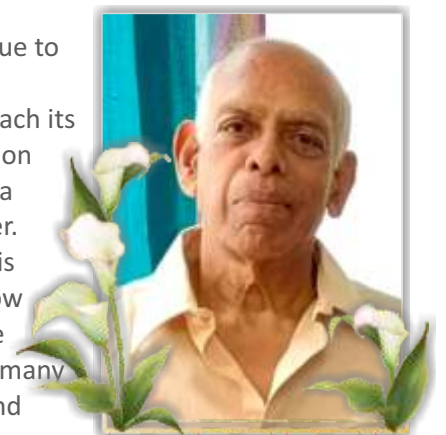
BNP LEADER'S SUCCESS STORY

BNP Governing Council Member and Zonal Leader (Bangalore South) Poongothai Paramasivam has been at the forefront of promoting greater citizens' participation through Ward Committee Meetings (WCMs). Her dedicated efforts and her effective use of these meetings to raise and resolve civic issues successfully has been much appreciated by BNP. Her tireless work has been acknowledged by Janaagraha and her success story has been featured in Janaagraha's 'MY CITY MY RESPONSIBILITY - A Handbook for Active Citizenship'. You can read the book from their website **HERE**.

Her inspiring story is featured on Page 53. It showcases the power of one committed individual as an agent of positive change in the community.

We invite each BNP Leader or Member who receives any award or special recognition OR is engaged in any special project or community initiative, to inform the BNP Newsletter Team.
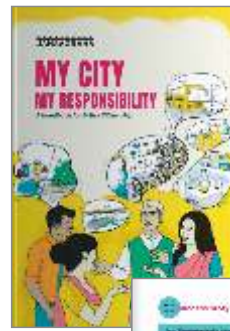
TIME TO RETHINK MUNICIPAL GOVERNANCE

BNP and Indian Habitat Forum (INHAF) have jointly organised a six-part webinar series, '**CAT in Municipal Governance**' being conducted between February-April 2024. BNP's model of municipal governance is based on 3 principles of C-A-T that is C - Citizen Participation, A - Accountability, and T - Transparency. Through this webinar series, BNP will present various aspects of urban governance which are being tackled by them innovatively. The webinar series will provide insights on Grassroots Governance, Sources of Finance and Apportioning, Importance of Area Sabhas and Ward Committees in Allocation of Funds and Execution of Projects, Service Delivery and analyse Roots of Misgovernance.

The first part of this webinar, streamed live on 16th February, was on 'Introduction to Area Sabhas'. **Srikanth Narasimhan** talked about the concept of Area Sabhas, how they work, and how BNP has already put in place about 20 Area Sabhas where citizens come together to discuss local issues and follow up to get them resolved. **Lalithamba B V** and **Poongothai Paramasivam** presented various issues that had been resolved in their Wards through commitment and citizen participation. BNP Area Sabha Member Aparna Chander revealed how she attended a BNP meeting by chance and understood how a citizen could raise issues in a WCM. Later, 15-20 of her Apartment residents attended a WCM, presented their problem and work began soon after.

As **Srikanth** concluded, "The only way it (civic issues of Bengaluru) can be sorted out is if the citizens of the city, in their respective localities, take the responsibility for their own locality... If we as citizens come together, under this political umbrella, under the concept of 'Area Sabhas', and we all do this together, I am very confident that in the not-too-distant future we will be able to make Bengaluru the best city in the world... the vision of Nadaprabhu Kempegowda"

You can access the webinars from the INHAF website **HERE.**

Click **HERE** to access a clip from this first webinar, where BNP leaders share how they brought about positive changes through Area Sabhas.

CITIZEN INPUTS FOR BBMP BUDGET

In the run up to preparing its annual budget for 2024-25, BBMP invited suggestions from the general public. Convinced that only residents can best understand the needs of their own wards, BNP reached out to ordinary citizens to provide their valuable input. After all, it is taxpayer contributions that fund BBMP projects and schemes! BNP had invited ordinary citizens to complete and submit a specific form to suggest any significant development projects their ward might need, such as improvements to roads, drainage systems and parks. BNP gathered, collated and submitted this public input to the BBMP for consideration.

Vote4Bengaluru (Voter ID Drives)

This month, BNP conducted a Voter ID Camp at Embassy Pristine, Bommanahalli, on 4th February. There were over 30 voter registrations.

BNP Members Jeevan, Kamesh, Roomi, **Vineet Muthanna** and **Lalithamba B V** supported the Voter registration process. BNP thanks Ramya and their association for giving BNP an opportunity to conduct a Voter ID camp in their community and is grateful for the support and hospitality extended to the BNP Team.

The team got an opportunity to discuss BNP, Area Sabhas, Ward committee meetings, resolving civic issues and much more.

> **Note:** You can still choose to register as a new Voter. Please refer to Voter Portal User Guide on our website **HERE**
>
> If you stay in a layout or apartment complex and want to arrange a voter registration camp, simply give a missed call to BNP on **080-47190000** OR send an email to **voters@nammabnp.org**
> **Let's Vote for Bengaluru!**

Area Sabha Meetings (Local Level Community Meetings)

On 11th February, an Area Sabha Meeting was held at SJR Redwoods, Doddakanahalli. **Srikanth Narasimhan** and **Vishnu Reddy, Zonal President - Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP) Mahadevapura**, met the Area Sabha Leaders to talk about next steps as the elections are approaching. Attendees discussed ideas and came up with a plan to go forth and tackle the challenges. It was a great session on how to connect with the community.

The next weekend, on 18th February, another Area Sabha Meeting was held. This one was in Ibluru Ward at Aakruthi Silverline. The formation and importance of Area Sabhas was discussed, as were ideas for increasing the visibility of BNP in every community.
Join the BNP Community Group in your area now! Send a Whatsapp message to +91 80951 30000 to know more.

SPOTLIGHT ON: BNP's BRIGHT PORTAL   Sowmya Raghavan (BNP's Head of Research) elaborates

1. What does the BNP's Bright portal signify?
The Bright portal is a unique portal set up by BNP to provide info on BBMP projects, invite public feedback and thus promote transparency in government.

2. What kind of information does this portal provide?
The Bright portal is a window for the citizens of Bengaluru to understand various projects undertaken by the BBMP from 2015 to 2021. It can be accessed on our website **HERE**

3. Why did BNP feel the need to set up this portal?
The entire municipal governance rests with BBMP, which conceives, sponsors and executes various projects across the city. However, it is difficult for a citizen to understand which projects are ongoing or have been completed in his/her ward. The Bright portal provides an easy way to search and access such information.

4. How was this portal set up?
The Bright portal was set up by scanning the BBMP work bills, details of which are available on their official website. The job numbers on each work bill were then painstakingly correlated with the approvals, which carry the same job numbers. These approvals are available in a different section of the BBMP website.

5. What are the project details available on this portal?
The Bright portal has detailed information on all the projects undertaken and budgeted for, across the city. Every project has a name and details such as the year of commencement and completion, cost associated with the project and the source of funding for the project.

- continued...

6. How can citizens use this portal?

The portal is very user friendly. Through simple search boxes, a citizen can get information from the database in a ward-specific manner. It can also be searched using keywords such as roads, drains etc. It is open and free and requires no special credentials to login and use.

7. How current is the information available in the portal?

The data housed in the portal has currently been updated from 2015 until March 2022.

8. What are some of the key insights from the portal?

The Bright portal offers a way to analyse similar data across wards. When analysing expenditure on similar items such as CCTV cameras or exercise equipment in parks, BNP's research team found large variations in spends per ward. This is likely due to the absence of transparent tender awarding processes in the system. There appears to be no common or central guidelines that govern expenditure norms across wards.

9. How can this portal help bring in good governance?

Making citizens aware of all ongoing and executed projects is key to ensuring their active participation in development. When citizens participate effectively, they enforce accountability among officials as well. Sharing information transparently, empowers the citizens with the knowledge of how their tax contributions are being utilised. Empowered citizens can then monitor the progress of these projects and drive positive change through the machinery of the Area Sabhas and Ward committee meetings.

MEDIA CONNECT (BNP's interactions with the media)

Press Releases

BNP's Press Releases (PRs) bring public attention to civic issues that plague Bengaluru. The idea is to encourage prompt action to resolve the highlighted issue and other similar issues around the city.

BNP's 3rd February PR called attention to a pressing issue faced by residents of Gottigere Ward — the persistent flow of sewage water in the RWDs meant to carry rain water. Earlier, BNP had highlighted similar issues in HBR Layout and Kaverappa Layout. However, despite repeated complaints, both the BWSSB and the BBMP have engaged in a blame game rather than collaborating effectively to address this. In this PR, **Poongothai Paramasivam** urged effective resolution of such issues. "BBMP officials should make regular checks for encroachments and carry out cleaning. Also, people should be educated about the consequences of drain blockages that lead to flooding, stench issues etc."

The PR dated 6th February was about BNP formally submitting a letter to the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) demanding immediate establishment of the Bengaluru Metropolitan Land Transport Authority (BMLTA). This PR focused on the fact that despite the passage of the Bill last year, the BMLTA remains unestablished, contrary to the statute's directive that the act should be operational within six months following the Bill's approval. As **Lalithamba B V** said "... none of the existing institutions have the inclination or accountability to solve these issues. It's time for the government to act swiftly and fulfil its obligations to the city and its residents."

BNP demanded urgent action on Bengaluru's hazardous roads and footpaths, amid rising accidents and utter neglect. The PR dated Feb 16th listed some bad roads and footpaths from various Wards and asked "How many more accidents and fatalities will it take for the responsible civic agencies to take decisive action?" **Milind Kulabkar** said "On the one hand, the government is proposing substantial funds for white-topping projects while on the other, there is total neglect as far as the urgent need for road repairs is concerned... diverting funds to less pressing projects reflects a mis-allocation of priorities."

You can access all the BNP Press Releases on our Namma BNP website **HERE**

BNP in the News

Please click **HERE** to see how different Media organisations have supported BNP by publishing articles on our endeavours to resolve civic issues in Bengaluru.

BUDGET BOOST FOR BENGALURU

The State Budget 2024 aims to promote 'Brand Bengaluru' by improving infrastructure and attracting investors. Significant plans include digitalization of property tax records for BBMP properties, white-topping of major roads, building underground tunnels and all-weather roads, extended hours for commercial establishments, a 250m high Skydeck, captive solar parks and development of Sarvagna Park.Metro, Suburban Rail, and BMTC operations are to be integrated with an additional 44 km of metro line by March 2025. While these grand plans must be commended, much depends on how professionally these projects can be implemented, and how transparently the allocated taxpayer funds are utilised.

BBMP BUDGET ALSO FOCUSED ON BRAND BENGALURU

BBMP's budget focuses on Brand Bengaluru, by allocating ₹1580 crore for 8 key sectors: Sugama Sanchara, Clean Bengaluru, Green Bengaluru, Healthy Bengaluru, Education Bengaluru, Tech Bengaluru, Vibrant Bengaluru, and Water Security. The budget was presented by Sri. Shivananda Kalakeri, BBMP Special Commissioner (Finance) on February 29th. According to Sri. Tushar Giri Nath, BBMP Chief Commissioner, revenue under new policies and reforms, along with the budgeted amount of Rs 1,580 crore, will be put in an escrow account meant solely for Brand Bengaluru projects. BBMP will also prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for a Medical college mooted by Sri. DK Suresh, MP for Rural Bengaluru.

TAPS RUN DRY IN NAMMA BENGALURU

A serious water crisis has hit parts of Karnataka, including 174 villages and 120 wards in Bengaluru Urban district, where taps are often running dry. Bengaluru's relentless population growth (1 crore residents, with 10 lakhs added yearly) has strained its water resources. The city's daily shortfall of 1,680 MLD from the River Cauvery is met through borewells and private tankers, which have nearly doubled prices over the past two months. Registration of tankers is now mandatory and two Nodal Officers manage water supply in each ward. Regulation of tanker supply is necessary, but what Bengaluru requires is a clear water strategy, with an alternate supply source, reliable pipeline network and an effective conservation plan.

LOKAYUKTA CENSURES TALUK LAXITY

A surprise inspection by Karnataka Lokayukta, Justice BS Patil on January 20th, revealed shocking irregularities in five taluk offices across Bengaluru, inviting strong censure. These included absent officials, long pending files, unattended applications, incomplete records and interference by brokers. In Yelahanka, 43 officials were absent. 20 people were waiting and 60 files were pending. Pending Right To Information (RTI) applications numbered 1,281 in Bengaluru South. At Anekal, brokers were collecting money via phones from the public and 3,119 applications were pending. In Bengaluru East, 530 RRT cases, 18 SAKALA applications, 68 Katha transfers and mutations were overdue. While several files awaited signature, the Tahsildar and Grade II Tahsildar were missing in Bengaluru North. Some officials wore no identity cards and offices lacked basic amenities. Surely tax-paying citizens deserve better service?

DOUBLE BILLING SCANDAL UNEARTHED

Auditors scrutinising BBMP's 2021-22 accounts, unearthed a double billing scandal related to the Covid Care Centre in Koramangala Stadium, involving Raja Enterprises. The BBMP Health Officer (South Zone) released ₹1.50 crore under purchase/hire charges of the Covid Care Centre (March 15-July 15, 2021) and the Executive Engineer (Projects), South Zone released ₹1.51 crore for purchase/hire charges of the same Centre (March 15-August 14, 2021). The Health Officer cleared ₹55.57 lakh for additional work (June-December 2020). Totally, Raja Enterprises received ₹3.57 crore. Auditing of BBMP accounts by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) may reveal more such billing irregularities.

CCTV CAMERAS UNDER SCRUTINY

Bengaluru boasts 3 lakh Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras, but residents remain sceptical about safety. These cameras are installed by various stakeholders, so no single authority oversees them. The Police are collaborating with citizens and commercial outlets to extend coverage and increase CCTV cameras to 5 lakh by year end. They regularly check all establishments in their jurisdiction, penalise them for dysfunctional cameras and maintain a report. They are also collaborating with Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) to help set up CCTV cameras. All public cameras are geotagged to obtain CCTV footage from any crime spot within minutes. However, while most residents were happy with police-installed cameras, the BBMP-installed cameras did not evoke a sense of safety.

Bengaluriga Bytes (BB), the BNP's tongue-in-cheek look at life in Bengaluru, draws attention to pressing civic issues that need rectification if Bengaluru is to become a model city.

Enjoy the Instagram reels of February's cartoons by clicking on the image. Like, Share, Comment and Follow **namma.bnp on Instagram** for more.

If you would like to see them as images, zoom in, or, see all the cartoons **HERE**

That's it for now! Look out for more such newsletters every month!

Thank you once again for your unwavering support which is helping BNP to go from strength to strength!

Not yet a member of the BNP? Click HERE to volunteer and join hands with the BNP – India's first and only city party!

Stay updated on BNP's activities. Follow us on