

Ghatkopar hoarding panel gets extension



Ravikiran Deshmukh
MUMBAI

The government has extended the deadline for submission of the report into the Ghatkopar hoarding collapse, which killed 17 people and injured more than 70 last year.

The inquiry committee, headed by retired high court chief justice Dilip Bhosale, will now submit its report by March 31.

The four-member committee was set up in June last year to investigate the tragedy. A government order issued on Tuesday appointed a few persons to assist the committee and dropped a member from the Income Tax Department due to the non-availability of its officer.

A member from the chartered accountant category was also replaced; Advocate US Gandhi will be the member of the committee

TIMELINE

May 13, 2024
Hoarding collapse

June 10
Appointment of committee

July-end

REMIT

As per the terms and references set by the government, the committee is...

■ investigating roles of the entities responsible for the hoarding and the petrol pump

■ examining the records of the permission given to erect the hoarding, financial transactions, and any potential collusion with officials from various agencies

■ evaluating the current process for approving and installing hoardings on government and railway properties and recommending improvements to prevent future incidents

instead of the firm Kirtane and Pandit LLP Mumbai.

Two advocates will assist the committee chief.

Deputy Municipal Commissioner Kiran Dighavkar will assist Additional Municipal Commissioner Ashwini Joshi; and Joint Commissioner of Mumbai Police (Crime) Lakhami Gautam will assist Additional Director General of Police, Maharashtra, Nikhil Gupta.

DEFACING MUMBAI | High Court scheduled to hear PIL today; political parties brazenly continue illegal activities despite several admonitions from the court

Illegal hoardings: Netas commit contempt of HC with impunity

Urvi Mahajani
MUMBAI

Despite filing affidavits in Bombay High Court assuring that they will not erect illegal hoardings, political parties continue to deface the metropolis in contempt of the judiciary.

Recently, on Eknath Shinde's birthday, the city was swathed in hoardings greeting the deputy chief minister. Malabar Hill, where the bungalows of most ministers and judges are located, is particularly affected. The then chief justice Dipankar Dutta had lamented that there were hoardings even outside his bungalow.

Even though it is eight years since HC issued a series of directions ordering the BMC and the government to take action against hoardings, both authorities appear to be taking these instructions lightly. There is no other explanation for the continuance of this menace.

Calling the situation "horrendous and sad", the court, on December 19, 2024, issued a show cause notice to all political parties, asking why contempt proceedings should not be initiated against them. The court also warned civic authorities against inaction, stating it would be "compelled to take very strict action" if the situation was not addressed.

The issue was raised by NGO Suswarajya Foundation in a PIL. In 2017, the court had disposed of a plea by the foundation and others while issuing strict directions to the authorities. However, it continued monitoring the issue



Illegal political banners on Eastern Freeway

through regular reports submitted by the authorities.

As hoardings, banners and posters continued to deface public properties, the HC revived the PIL on October 9 last year, underscoring the need for continuous monitoring. The court noted widespread non-compliance with its 2017 order to prevent the defacement of public spaces.

During the hearings, Suswarajya's advocate, Uday Warunjikar, pointed out that political parties were the primary violators. Earlier, all major parties – the BJP, Congress, Shiv Sena, NCP and MNS – had submitted undertakings assuring that their workers would not put up illegal hoardings or banners. However, in the run-up to and aftermath of the 2024 parliamentary and assembly elections, the faces of political

leaders were displayed everywhere, and the trend continues.

The bench expressed dismay over the surge in hoardings post-elections in November, commenting: "What can be more horrendous than this? Despite our 2017 judgment directing strict action against illegal hoardings, see where we are headed. This is a very sad situation."

In December 2024, the HC bench led by then chief justice DK Upadhyaya said: "It appears that political parties have not remained true to their undertakings."

"We issue notice requiring them [political parties] to show cause as to why appropriate action for defying the 2017 judgment should not be taken against them under the provisions of the Contempt of Courts Act."

The judges also castigated municipal bodies and the government, questioning why court orders were necessary when the law already imposes a duty on these authorities to curb such illegalities. Warning that contempt notices could be issued if orders were not followed, the court said: "Don't push the court into a corner where we are compelled to take very, very strict action. We are warning you [civic bodies]."

Interestingly, the court observed that while civic bodies were incurring expenses on staff and infrastructure to remove hoardings, those responsible for putting them up continued to enjoy their lives without consequences.

During the last hearing, State Advocate General Birendra Saraf informed the

court that around 22,000 unauthorised hoardings had been removed from Mumbai after the elections and over a lakh from the rest of Maharashtra. However, the bench remarked that the number was insignificant, given that the total number of illegal hoardings remained unknown.

Even the HC was not spared, as one such hoarding was put up right outside its heritage building, not only "defacing" the court premises but also "damaging the roads". The court observed: "These photos are testaments to the complete apathy of the authorities, who are not only mandated to check the menace of illegal hoardings but are also under an obligation to follow the orders of this court."

The plea is scheduled for hearing on February 12.

With 179 temples, state to be biggest participant in ITCX '25

FPJ News Service
MUMBAI

A total of 179 temples from Maharashtra will take part in the International Temples Convention & Expo (ITCX) 2025 in Tirupati between February 17 and 19.

The state will be the largest participant in the conclave – the world's biggest for temple administration and management – followed by Karnataka.

The gathering of 1,581 religious organisations from 58 countries will attempt to create a Guinness World Record



MLC Prasad Lad, Gireesh Kulkarni, founder of Temple Connect, and Neeta Lad at MCA Club —Vijay Gohil

for being the largest temple convention.

After the maiden edition of ITCX 2023 in Kashi, the second edition aims to explore innovative approaches and best practices of temple management, focusing on sustain-

able ecosystems, digitalisation, and strategies to enhance temple-based economics.

ITCX is an initiative by Temple Connect, which is striving to document information about Hindu, Jain and Buddhist temples worldwide.

Online petition urges BMC to put brakes on Ferris wheel

Dhairya Gajara
MUMBAI

Mumbaikars have launched an online petition urging the BMC to scrap its giant Ferris wheel project.

The petition, marked to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, the Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority and the BMC, has been signed by more than 2,000 people.

"Mumbai is facing pressing issues like air pollution, floods, traffic congestion and inadequate public infrastructure. The streets are often dug up repeatedly, dust and con-

struction debris is on the rise, exacerbating toxins in the air... And yet, these issues remain unaddressed," read the petition.

The petition alleged that

instead of addressing these concerns, crores of rupees will be diverted towards projects like the giant Ferris wheel that will only serve as a tourist attraction for a hand-

ful of the city's population. The petition has also alleged lack of transparency in the project regarding the land and funds required for the project.

MSRTC plans depots on PPP model on its land bank

Bhalchandra Chorghade
MUMBAI

Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik has announced that the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) possesses a land bank of 3,360 acres across the state, which the government plans to develop into modern depots under a public-private partnership (PPP) model.

Speaking as the chief guest at a conclave organised by NAREDCO GenNext on Tuesday, Sarnaik called upon developers to collaborate on transforming these sites into state-of-the-art transport hubs. The government is considering leasing the land for 99 years and remains positive about the initiative.

The proposed depots will be developed at the district, taluka and village levels, with planning and design led by architect Hafeez Contractor. The project will follow the Unified Development Control and Promotion Regulations, with 90% of the land falling under its jurisdiction. Notably, MSRTC will serve as the planning authority for the developments.

The conclave was attended by NAREDCO Chairman Dr Niranjan Hiranandani, Vice Chairman Rajan Bandelkar, and other key industry stakeholders, signalling strong support from the real estate sector for the government's vision.

THE FREE PRESS JOURNAL

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Behind our remarkable **TRANSFORMATION** are our people

Mukand Ltd. has truly transformed. From a company that was deep in debt to one that's reduced its debt substantially through strategic interventions. Today, we're a company that's firmly on a profitable growth trajectory. We have substantially increased our high revenue stainless steel production. We have introduced progressive policies that encourage a healthy work life balance, making it one of the best workplaces in the manufacturing sector. Our continued focus and emphasis on achieving superior quality products, while harnessing the experience of our 1,400 plus strong workforce, and our commitment to the environment and community make us a truly formidable company that India can showcase.

EXTRACT OF UNAUDITED STANDALONE & CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND NINE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2024.

Rs. in Crore

Particulars	Standalone Financial Results			Consolidated Financial Results		
	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended	Quarter ended	Nine months ended	Quarter ended
	31-Dec-24 Unaudited	31-Dec-24 Unaudited	31-Dec-23 Unaudited	31-Dec-24 Unaudited	31-Dec-24 Unaudited	31-Dec-23 Unaudited
Total income from operations	1,282.39	3,844.81	1,188.40	1,262.27	3,783.10	1,176.68
Net Profit for the period before Tax	30.40	91.28	23.53	29.32	94.17	21.91
Tax Expense (Charge) / Credit	(14.26)	(28.08)	(2.20)	(14.44)	(29.18)	(2.55)
Profit for the period	16.14	63.20	21.33	14.88	64.99	19.36
Other Comprehensive Income (net)	(1.01)	(3.03)	(0.07)	(1.01)	(3.03)	(0.07)
Total Comprehensive Income	15.13	60.17	21.26	13.87	61.96	19.29
Paid-up Equity Share Capital - Face Value Rs.10/- per Share	144.51	144.51	144.51	144.51	144.51	144.51
Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserves) as per Audited Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2024		801.81			776.59	
Earning per share of Rs.10/- each (not annualised for the quarters)						
Basic and Diluted EPS (in Rs.)	1.12	4.37	1.48	1.03	4.50	1.34

NOTES:

- The above results have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting held on February 10, 2025. The Auditors have carried out a Limited Review of these Results.
- The Company jointly with Mukand Sumi Metal Processing Limited ("MSMPL"), a wholly owned subsidiary had filed the Scheme of Arrangement ("Scheme") for transfer of the Stainless Steel Cold Finished Bars and Wires Business from MSMPL to the Company by way of demerger ("Demerger") before the National Company Law Tribunal, Mumbai Bench ("Hon'ble NCLT"). The Scheme shall be subject to sanctions and/or approvals, inter alia, by Regulatory Authorities and Hon'ble NCLT. Pending approval of the Scheme, no effect of the Demerger has been considered in the current financial statements.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Nine months Financial Results filed with Stock Exchange under Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the unaudited Results for the Quarter and nine months ended 31st December, 2024 is available on the Stock Exchange websites (www.nseindia.com and www.bseindia.com) and on the Company's website (www.mukand.com).
- Figures in respect of the previous period have been regrouped / recast wherever necessary in case of the above results.

By Order of the Board of Directors For Mukand Ltd.,
Niraj Bajaj
Chairman & Managing Director

Place: Mumbai
Date: February 10, 2025

BAJAJ MUKAND

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Email ID: investors@mukand.com | Website: www.mukand.com CIN: L99999MH1937PLC002726

‘Googly’ prize to Shinde from Pawar

Kalpesh Mhamunkar
MUMBAI

Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was honoured with the Mahadji Shinde Rashtra Gaurav Puraskar by NCP leader Sharad Pawar on Tuesday in Delhi in the presence of Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia. The award includes a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh, a citation, a memento, and the traditional Shindeshahi turban.

No one understands the googly bowled by Pawar in politics. But I am sure he will not bowl a googly at me, says Shinde

During his speech at the event, Shinde lauded Pawar's political acumen, stating, “No one understands the googly bowled by Pawar in politics, even people close to him don't realise it. But I am sure he will not bowl a googly (political trick) at me.” He further remarked, “One should learn from Pawar how to maintain relations in politics.”

Reflecting on his tenure, Shinde said, “I have never resorted to making personal attacks in politics. Many allegations were made against me, but I responded with my work. When I got the opportunity to become Chief Minister, I realised that time was limited.”

The event created a stir in political circles due to the presence of both Shinde and Pawar on the same stage.

The gesture of Pawar felicitating Shinde added to the intrigue, as Shinde is a staunch opponent of the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT), which is in alliance with Pawar's party under the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA). The political repercussions of this event are expected to unfold in the coming days, with reactions anticipated from both the MVA and Mahayuti alliance parties.

REHABILITATION WORK | Two DyCMs will be ex-officio members of the amended body

Govt reconstitutes SDMA; adds some room for Shinde

Kalpesh Mhamunkar
MUMBAI

Three days after Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was excluded from the newly restructured State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA) while his deputy, Ajit Pawar, was included, the state cabinet on Tuesday approved an amendment to the Maharashtra Disaster Management Authority Rules, 2019, designating the chief minister and both deputy chief ministers as ex-officio members.

The exclusion of Shinde from the committee had sparked criticism, with accusations that Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis had been making decisions that sidelined Shiv Sena ministers. The decision to exclude Shinde from the committee was seen as a reflection of growing tensions within the ruling alliance.

In response to the controversy, the Maharashtra Cabinet on Tuesday has granted the CM the authority to nominate both ministers and non-government members to the Disaster Management Committee.

According to the revised rules shared by the government, Rule 3 of the Maharashtra Disaster Management Authority now outlines the structure of the SDMA. Under the new amendment, the committee will be chaired by the chief minister, with nine members, including the deputy chief ministers and ministers nominated by the CM. Additionally, the CM has the discretion to appoint experienced and knowledgeable individuals as non-government members to enhance disaster preparedness and



IN BRIEF

1 Reconstituted disaster management body will comprise 10 members

2 The committee will be chaired by the chief minister, including the deputy chief ministers and ministers nominated by the CM

3 The CM has the discretion to appoint experienced and knowledgeable individuals as non-govt members

response.

Previously, the committee included the chief minister, revenue minister, finance minister, home minister, relief and rehabilitation minister and the public health minister.

Since assuming the CM post, Fadnavis has made several decisions that have caused friction within the Shiv Sena faction led by Eknath Shinde. Critics allege that these decisions are intended to diminish Shinde's influence and undermine his faction's power. One of the most notable moves was the reallocation of key ministerial positions, with the BJP-led government allocating important posts, such as the guardian minister roles for Raigad and Nashik districts, to NCP and BJP representatives rather than Shinde's faction.

Further compounding tensions, the Industries Minister Uday Samant recently issued letters to department officials, instructing them not to make any policy decisions without prior consultation.

Additionally, the CM appointed Sanjiv Sethi, a senior bureaucrat and the chief secretary of the transport department, to head the state transport authority. Fadnavis also issued a directive mandating that any appointment of personal secretaries and officers on special duty must be approved by the General Administration Department under his control.

As political tensions continue to rise, BJP leader Ganesh Naik has announced plans to hold a public meeting in Thane, a stronghold of Shinde, further intensifying the rift between the factions.

The amendment to the Maharashtra Disaster Management Authority Rules represents a shift in the balance of power within the state government, and the political landscape in Maharashtra remains increasingly volatile.

‘Reformative approach needed in punishment’

PTI
MUMBAI

The courts must adopt a reformative approach in cases involving young offenders, the Bombay High Court observed while granting bail to a 20-year-old man accused of sexually assaulting his cousin.

A single bench of Justice Milind Jadhav said that punishment in cases where the accused is a youth has to be inflicted for a reformative result rather than being punitive.

The court said every opportunity or risk should be taken constructively in cases involving young offenders so that they get a chance to become good citizens in society.

The bench on February 7 granted bail to a man accused of sexually assaulting his minor cousin on three occasions between April and May 2023.

Urvi Mahajani
MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday directed former BMC corporator and Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Shrikrishna (Bala) Laxman Chavan, who filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) against illegal construction in Mumbai, to submit an affidavit detailing the actions he took against such structures during his tenure.

When a bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice Bharati Dangre learnt that the petitioner was a former municipal representative, it questioned, “When you were a corporator, how many actions did you take against illegal constructions?” The court then ordered him to file an affidavit within two weeks.

Ajit holds DPDC meet, Gogawale gives a miss

Prajakta Pol
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena minister Bharat Gogawale on Tuesday remained absent at the annual meeting of the Raigad District Planning and Development Committee (DPDC) chaired by Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar. NCP leader and Women & Child Development Minister Aditi Tatkare was present at the meeting.

Local Sena MLAs Mahendra Dalvi and Mahendra Thorve too were not present. “We were not sent any official invitation. If this was an official meeting about Raigad's development, the district collector should have invited all the MLAs. We were not even provided with an online link to join,” claimed Dalvi.

But an official in Ajit Pawar's office said that as Nashik and Raigad districts do not have guardian ministers at present, only ministers from the districts were invited. It was a pre-budget meeting and hence held in Finance Minister Pawar's office, he said.

Gogawale clarified the matter while speaking to the media. “I had been informed in advance that I would not be attending the meeting. I had a scheduled event in Raigad. Therefore, it was necessary for me to be there.”

Shinde Sena flays CMO over appointments

Prajakta Pol
MUMBAI

The Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena is growing increasingly frustrated as the approval of key staff appointments, including personal assistants (PAs) and officers on special duty (OSDs), remains stalled in the Chief Minister's Office (CMO). According to a source cited by The Free Press Journal, the delay has hindered ministers' ability to carry out their administrative duties effectively.

Several senior ministers, including Uday Samant, Shambhuraj Desai, Sanjay Rathod and Gulabrao Patil, are among those affected, as their recommended staff members await clearance. On Tuesday, Shiv Sena ministers raised concerns over staff appointments at the Maharashtra cabinet meeting. Even after two months, ministerial offices have not been able to appoint PAs, personal secretaries and OSDs. Recommendation letters are pending at the CMO.

However, sources stated that the appointments have been delayed due to the screening process initiated by the CMO. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis clarified that only officers with a clean

Sources stated that the appointments have been delayed due to the screening process initiated by CMO

record, without corruption charges or ongoing departmental inquiries would be given priority for appointments. He assured that the process would be completed soon, and appointment orders would be issued at the earliest, sources said. During the discussion on this issue, officials present in the cabinet meeting were asked to leave the hall.

Some ministerial staff members have been serving in various departments since 2014, yet their appointments remain stalled. The CMO has assigned the responsibility of screening candidates applying for positions in ministers' offices to IAS officer Shrikar Pardeshi and Chandrashekhar Vaze, the OSD to Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis. The delay is due to the new appointment process introduced by the CMO, which requires comprehensive background checks of officers before they are assigned to ministers.

Marathi writer Raosaheb Rangrao Borade dies



PTI
CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR

Marathi writer and academic Raosaheb Rangrao Borade passed away due to a prolonged illness at a private hospital in Maharashtra's Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar on Tuesday, family sources said.

Borade (84) has penned more than 30 books and plays. He was born in Katgaon village of Latur district in 1940.

Borade served as the principal of Deogiri College in Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar. After his retirement, he was appointed president of the Maharashtra Rajya Sahitya Sanskriti Mahamandal in 2000. The state government recently conferred the Vinda Karandikar Lifetime Achievement Award to Borade for his contribution to Marathi literature.

Submit ex-CP's statement in court: Ex-cop

MANSUKH HIRAN MURDER CASE

Charul Shah Joshi
MUMBAI

Former encounter specialist Pradeep Sharma, who is facing prosecution for his alleged role in the murder of Thane trader Mansukh Hiran, has approached the special NIA court, requesting directions for the agency to submit the statements of former city police commissioner Parambir Singh and ACP Avinash Dharmadhikari before the court.

It has been alleged that Singh and Sharma met in Worli and allegedly discussed Hiran, whose explosives-laden car was found outside industrialist Mukesh Ambani's home in February 2021. However, Singh claims that Hiran was not discussed and that their conversation was solely about gangster Ravi Pujari.

As per the prosecution case, prior to the murder of Hiran on the night of March



Pradeep Sharma



Parambir Singh

4, 2021, dismissed police officer Sachin Vaze had a meeting with Singh and Sharma on February 28, 2021 and March 2, 2021. It was alleged that the conspiracy to eliminate Hiran was hatched in those meetings.

Singh has in his statement denied the allegations and claimed, “I deny that there

was a meeting at my residence or in my office or that Sachin Vaze and Pradip Sharma both came together to my residence at Malabar Hill. Pradeep Sharma had visited once in evening at my residence to discuss about his concerns in Ravi Pujari matter.” Singh in his statement claimed Vaze visited him few times to his residence earlier regarding briefing about the discussions which he had during his visits to CM and HM in sensitive cases which he was handling.

With this, Sharma claims, “If these two statements are recorded by the NIA, it is that the duty of the prosecution to produce the same and not two produce half-baked evidence.”



A spiritual guide

‘Hamare Pran Jugal’ a book on spiritual, social values by Ajay Dhooy Bihari was launched in the presence of Pundrik Goswami Maharaj at YB Chavan Center – Vijay Gohil

Over seven Army jawans under scrutiny for ISI links

Ashish Singh
MUMBAI

More than seven Army jawans from Nashik's Deolali Camp are currently under scrutiny of the central intelligence apparatus in an alleged connection with an espionage case involving Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI). These jawans are suspected of either directly or indirectly sharing sensitive military information, including army movements, ammunition specifics and unit locations, with handlers across the border.

The questioning of these jawans continues based on the interrogation of Army jawan Sandeep Singh, who was recently arrested by the Punjab police for allegedly leaking classified military details to ISI operatives. Singh, who was stationed at Nashik's Deolali Camp, was apprehended last week while on leave as part of an intelligence-led operation. Another Army jawan, Rajbir Singh, linked to the ISI network, is currently absconding. During

the investigation, it was revealed that Sandeep Singh had collected a total of Rs15 lakh from various sources for espionage activities.

The questioning of other jawans stems from their regular interactions with Singh and their assignments in sensitive departments at the camp. Currently, their banking transactions and personal expenses are under scrutiny.

The intelligence units are also investigating whether other personnel at Deolali Army Camp might have been compromised through methods like coercion or honey-trapping, tactics frequently used by foreign intelligence agencies.

Investigations revealed that Singh, a resident of Sardulgarh in Patiala, had been in communication with suspected Pakistani agents for nearly two years and had been passing sensitive details to handlers across the border. Along with his associates, Singh was collecting information about several army camps across the country

and transmitting it to ISI via WhatsApp.

Sandeep Singh joined the army in 2015. He has been serving at the Deolali Camp since June 2024, and his associate, Rajbir, was also stationed there. The Punjab police seized three mobile phones from Sandeep, which have been sent for forensic examination.

His arrest follows the detention of Amritpal Singh from Punjab's Tarn Taran, who was allegedly a part of a larger network involved in espionage and drug smuggling. Further interrogation of Amritpal Singh led Amritsar Rural police to Sandeep Singh. In connection with this case, two other individuals, Mandeep Singh (alias Maddy) and Madhav Sharma, were earlier arrested from Rajasthan. During their arrest, police recovered 500 grams of heroin, Rs10 lakh in suspected hawala money, and a 0.30 bore pistol, indicating a possible link between espionage and cross-border drug smuggling.



₹110 crore
Estimated cost



₹70 crore
BMC's contribution



₹40 crore
Railway's contribution

The new bridge

Span 380 meters
Six vehicular lanes

Have concrete foundation and a 6.5-meter clearance above the railway tracks

■ New bridge will improve connectivity between Nagpada and Tardeo

■ The BMC decided to construct a cable-stayed bridge to minimise piling work and streamline the construction process since the bridge is above railway tracks

Bellasis bridge to be ready this year

The construction of the new cable-stayed Bellasis Railway over Bridge (ROB) between Mumbai Central and Grant Road is progressing ahead of schedule.

Contract extended until
April 2026

Bridge will be open to traffic by
Dec 2025

1893
Bridge, originally constructed

June 2024
Dismantled by railways in after being declared unfit following a thorough audit



The work on the Bellasis bridge is progressing as planned, and we are making efforts to open the bridge for traffic ahead of schedule. Approximately 12 structures obstructing the bridge route have already been removed, and the remaining 12 abandoned buildings will be cleared immediately

–Abhijeet Bangar
Additional Municipal Commissioner

Text: Shefali Parab-Pandit

Ex-corporator asked to file action against illegal bldgs

The UBT leader had filed a PIL against illegal construction in Mumbai seeking SIT probe into the alleged inaction of BMC officials

builders and failed to act against unauthorised construction in Khar Danda. He seeks a Special Investigation Team (SIT) probe into their alleged inaction despite multiple demolition orders.

According to the plea, an illegal ground-plus-three-storey structure stands on a 20,000-square-foot open plot near the SNDT nalla pump-

ing station in ward No. 99 under the H/West Ward. Despite a stop work notice being issued, the work allegedly continued.

Chavan has named BMC officials, including Assistant Commissioner Vinayak Vispute, Designated Officer Milind Kadam and engineers Rahul Bodke and Aditya Jog, accusing them of failing to enforce the law.

The PIL states that despite BMC undertaking demolition of the structure on May 4, 8 and 15, 2024, it reappeared.

Even the complaint by a local resident, Mohammed Amin Shaikh, was ignored by the authorities forcing him to escalate the matter to

a public grievance committee meeting on August 2, 2024.

The petition also accuses a businessman of fraudulently obtaining a stay on demolition by misrepresenting ownership documents. Despite the BMC's awareness of the forgery, officials have taken no firm steps to remove the structure.

Chavan urges the court to order an SIT probe into municipal officials' inaction. The PIL names the BMC, its municipal commissioner, the solid waste management department, and the Mumbai suburban collector as respondents. The court will hear the matter in two weeks.

State to withhold benefits over Aadhaar validation

More than 10 lakh beneficiaries will not get money under two popular schemes until they complete validation

Ravikiran Deshmukh
MUMBAI

The government will not disburse Rs1,500 each to more than 10 lakh beneficiaries under the Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar Yojana and Shraavan Bal Seva Pension Scheme for the months of January and February.

The decision comes after the government decided to disburse the money through

the direct benefit transfer (DBT) portal with Aadhaar validation. The DBT disbursement, initiated in December last year, brought 29.77 lakh beneficiaries on board the portal. But during the process of the Aadhaar validation the number of beneficiaries reached only 19.74 lakh.

The state has decided to disburse money to those whose Aadhaar validation has been completed. It means over 10

lakh beneficiaries will not get financial assistance for the two months. Issuing order for the release of funds, the state has allocated Rs610 crore for disbursement, holding the amount for the rest of the beneficiaries. For the 10 lakh beneficiaries, the state has asked district collectors to complete the process of validation on an urgent basis.

Both the schemes were the most populist till the Ladki

Bahin Scheme was launched by the Mahayuti government in July last year. Both Sanjay Gandhi Niradhar and Shraavan Bal Seva are the brainchild of Congress governments.

According to sources from the government, a significant number of beneficiaries may not exist or their names are proxies. It is because when the scrutiny of names to bring them on board the DBT portal was being made names of

hundreds of beneficiaries had to be dropped for want of valid proofs. During the process of Aadhaar validation, the data of many beneficiaries did not match, leaving a scope of doubt for non-existence of them or someone else claiming the benefits by proxy. The state finance department led by Ajit Pawar, during a review meeting, held a few months ago, had asked the social justice and special assistance

department for the scrutiny and the Aadhaar validation to ascertain the exact number of beneficiaries.

The state finance department is currently reviewing a number of populist schemes and asking for scrutiny as a huge amount was being spent on them. The financial crisis might have forced the Mahayuti government to such an exercise, quipped an official.

MUMBAI AIRPORT | Affidavit highlights risks posed by high-rises exceeding height limits

Collector says sorry to HC for flight path obstructions

Urvi Mahajani
MUMBAI

The Mumbai Suburban District Collector submitted an affidavit to the Bombay High Court on Monday, offering an unconditional apology for not fully removing obstructions from the flight path of aircraft at Mumbai International Airport. However, the affidavit stated that significant progress had been made in compliance with court directives.

"I most respectfully tender an unconditional apology for not achieving 100% removal of the identified structures. However, significant progress has been made in eliminating obstructions," the affidavit by Collector Rajendra Kshirsagar stated. "Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) has been kept informed of the developments at every stage, and the complete action will be carried out as expeditiously as possible."

The affidavit added that Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL) has been kept informed throughout. The affidavit was filed in reply to a 2019 public interest litigation (PIL) by activist Yeshwant Shenoy, highlighting safety risks posed by high-rise buildings near the airport exceeding height restrictions.

In August 2022, the court directed the collector's office to enforce compliance and report progress. While several buildings remain in litigation, nine structures in Kurla and Bandra have no legal protection.

During the hearing on Monday, Shenoy submitted that too many buildings were coming up around the airport. "What I say state is pushing builders to construct. The state is colluding [with developers]," Shenoy said. However, the bench of Chief Justice Alok Aradhe

IN BRIEF

1 Collector submitted affidavit offering unconditional apology for not fully removing obstructions from the flight path of aircraft at Mumbai Airport

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and Justice Bharti Dange said it will hear the plea on March 11.

The affidavit noted that one housing society had partially complied with demolition notices, while others had removed obstructions like water tanks, antennas and staircases. However, portions of concrete structures still exceed height limits. Some buildings plan to demolish the excess within 30 days, while others have sought an additional month or appealed demolition orders to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation.

Joint inspections were conducted on February 7 and 8, 2025, with MIAL overseeing the process. Authorities are coordinating with the Slum Rehabilitation Authority and the BMC to ensure compliance. On February 7, the collector's office issued fresh notices to owners of the remaining seven structures, directing them to remove obstructions within 15 days or face coercive action. The affidavit seeks eight weeks from the court to complete the necessary enforcement.

Landmark, Sobha sign ₹423cr deal

FPJ News Service
MUMBAI

Landmark Developers and Sobha Ltd have jointly acquired a 2.11-acre land parcel at Jerbai Wadia Road, Parel, for Rs423.38 crore.

The deal, registered on January 23, 2025, marks a key step in the redevelopment and expansion of premium residential and commercial spaces in the prime central Mumbai locality.

According to property registration documents, the total agreement value for the land stands at Rs2,12,05,58,000, with a stamp duty payment of Rs10.60 crore. The sale was executed in partnership, with both developers securing distinct shares in the project's free-sale component.

Landmark Developers has acquired 10,953 square metres of the free-sale component, valued at Rs212.05 crore while Sobha Ltd has secured 21,621.24sqm, amounting to Rs211.32 crore.

With Parel emerging as a residential and commercial hub, the acquisition is expected to contribute to the area's real estate development, potentially offering luxury housing, retail spaces, and commercial offices.

Man held over threat to blow up police stn

Megha Kuchik
MUMBAI

The Bandra Railway Police on Tuesday travelled to Goa and arrested a man accused of threatening to blow up the Chembur Police Station.

On Monday at 4pm, a hoax call was received on the Bandra Railway Police station's landline from a mobile phone, threatening that the Chembur station would be blown up.

According to the police, the caller's number was traced to Goa. The accused, a 40-year-old labourer, had been drunk when he made the call. He hails from Kolhapur and has been living in Goa with his family for the past four years. After receiving the call, the bomb detection squad launched a search operation at Chembur station but found nothing.

On Monday, an FIR was registered by the Bandra GRP. The case was filed under sections 217, 353, and 351(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

APPOINTMENT OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT (PMC)

Topiwala Centre Premises Co-operative Society Ltd.

- CTS No. - 746/7
- Survey No. - 104 A/2 (part)
- Plot Area - 4152 Sq. Mtr.

Off. S.V. Road, Goregaon (west), Mumbai 400 104, having Basement, Ground Floor to 10th floor Society invites expression of interest together with profile and details of Project Management Consultant (PMC) well experienced on similar project and assisting it in process of obtaining feasibility report& Structural stability report detailed survey process. Minimum 7 years experience in this field and in adverse litigation from any society handled in the past.

The society reserves the right to accept or reject any or all offers without assigning any reason. Expression of interest with sealed quotes may be sent to **The Secretary, Topiwala Centre Premises Co-operative Society Ltd. On the address 404, Topiwala Centre, Goregaon (W), Mumbai 400104** and timing Between 3 pm to 5 pm before 15-20 days from date of issue of this circular.

Topiwala Centre Premises Co-operative Society Ltd.
Sd/-
Secretary (Mob.: 9967170190)

Cheating exam centres face govt wrath



TEXT: Kalpesh Mhamunkar, PHOTO: Vijay Gohil

Students appear for HSC exams at Bhavan's College near Gamdevi. Chief Minister Devendra

Fadnavis has issued orders to all collectors and police officers in the state to take strong action against inci-

dents of mass copying in the 10th and 12th exams. He has instructed that the recognition of such examination

centres be permanently revoked, and teachers and staff who assist in cheating dismissed from service.

Wet lease workers to protest on Feb 25

Kamal Mishra
MUMBAI

Thousands of drivers and conductors employed on wet lease buses of the Brihanmumbai Electric Supply & Transport (BEST) undertaking are set to stage a protest on February 25, 2025, demanding equal pay and benefits similar to those of permanent BEST employees.

Workers engaged with private contractors such as

They are demanding equal pay and benefits similar to those of permanent BEST employees

Daga Group, Mateshwari Urban Transport Solutions Pvt Ltd, BVG India Ltd, and others claim that they perform the same duties as

BEST's permanent staff yet face wage disparities and lack of job security. They are demanding the implementation of the "equal pay for equal work" principle, citing the continuous and essential nature of their jobs.

"To press their demands, workers will march to Azad Maidan on Tuesday, February 25, at 12.30pm. A delegation will also submit a memorandum to Deputy Chief Minister Eknath

Shinde and the commissioner of BMC," a union leader said.

Confirming the development, union leader Shashank Rao stated that most workers will likely join the protest after completing their shifts, ensuring that bus services remain unaffected.

Currently, BEST operates nearly 3,000 buses, with two-thirds supplied by private contractors on a wet lease basis.

CIN: U65999MH2017FLC293229

Regd. Office: 101, Raheja Centre First Floor, Free Press Journal Marg, Nariman Point, Mumbai – 400021. Website: <https://www.sbmbank.co.in>, Tel: +91 22 4302 8888

Unaudited Financial Results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2024				
Sr no.	Particulars	Quarter Ended		Year Ended
		31-Dec-2024	31-Dec-2023	31-Mar-2024
		Unaudited	Unaudited	Audited
1	Total Income from Operations	23,883	21,790	93,951
2	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(153)	(1,958)	(3,991)
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(153)	(1,958)	(3,991)
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	(153)	(1,958)	(4,325)
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	(153)	(1,958)	(4,325)
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	100,114	82,363	92,138
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserves)			(15,173)
8	Securities Premium Account			3,558
9	Net worth	74,101	66,484	73,988
10	Paid up Debt Capital / Outstanding Debt*	61,585	77,217	72,684
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference shares	-	-	-
12	Debt Equity Ratio*	0.77	1.08	0.91
13	Earnings Per Share (Face Value of ₹10/- each) (Not annualized)			
	1. Basic :	(0.02)	(0.24)	(0.52)
	2. Dilluted :	(0.02)	(0.24)	(0.52)
	* Debt represents total borrowings; Equity represents total of share capital and reserves.			

Note:

- These results for the quarter and nine months ended December 31, 2024 have been reviewed by statutory auditors – Gokhale and Sathe, Chartered Accountants who have issued an unmodified opinion thereon. The results for the prior periods were audited by - K. S. Aiyar & Co., Chartered Accountants, on which they had issued an unmodified opinion.
- The above is an extract of the detailed format of quarterly / half yearly / annual financial results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 52 of the LODR Regulations. The full format of the quarterly / half yearly / annual financial results are available on the websites of the listed entity (<https://www.sbmbank.co.in/aboutus/investor-corner.php>)

Mumbai
February 11, 2025

For SBM Bank (India) Ltd.
Mr. Ashish Vijayakar
Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer