

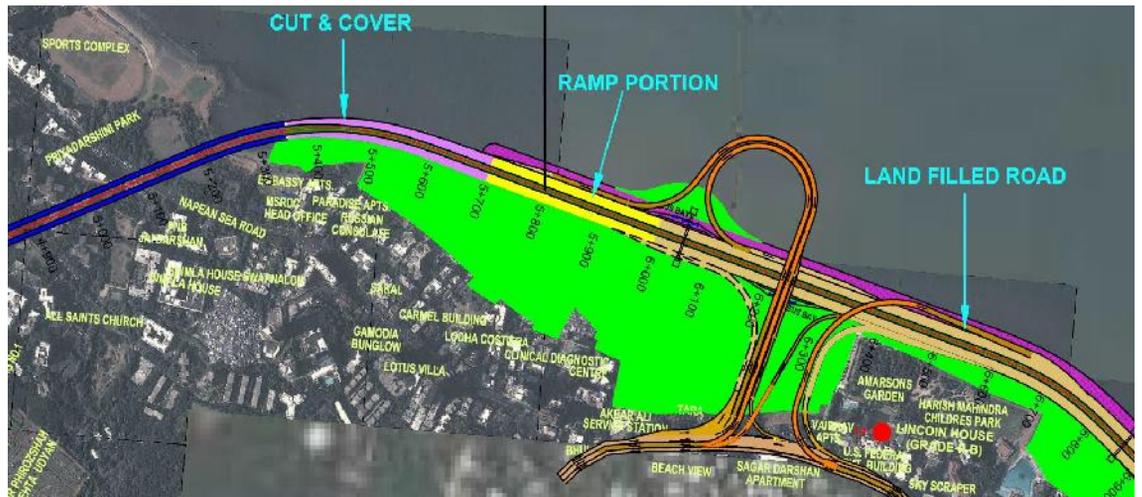
Public Eye

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Newsletter of Nepean Sea Road Citizens' Forum

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Note from the Editor



The Interchange at Warden Road has ramps terminating at the junction of St. Stephens Church, which will create a severe bottleneck especially for cars moving North to South.

Facts & Figures:

- ~ Length of coastal road: 35.6 kms long with 11.4 kms of tunnels
- ~ 2 underwater tunnels (Nariman Point- Nepean Sea Road & Juhu-Versova)
- ~ 18 Kms of land reclamation
- ~ Estimated cost Rs. 12,000 crore!!
- ~ Expected to transport - 120,000 cars / day (almost 4 times the existing traffic on the sea link)
- ~ Massive erosion of the city's coastline, fishing villages, heritage structures along the coast and environmental degradation.

COASTAL ROAD: A boon or bust idea?

The 35.6 km Coastal Road that is proposed to snake along Mumbai's Western sea front has been vehemently opposed by environmentalists, civic groups and protectors of our city's history and culture. For citizens of Nepean Sea Road, it will mean creating a massive interchange junction over the existing Tata gardens as shown in the image above.

Nepean Sea Road Citizens Forum, along with prominent organizations, citizens and institutions held an informative meeting at Priyadarshini Park on the 24th of August and have subsequently submitted signed petitions highlighting the flaws in the government's plan. Besides eroding our green cover and increasing traffic congestion the coastal road will destroy our coastline and be financially irresponsible.

Objections that we raised which are specific to the area, question the ramp that will lead off the coastal road and onto Mukesh Chowk. Space limiting, the Forum has asked where the supports for the ramp will be laid and how traffic is expected to be managed on a narrow band of road that's already sagging under existing traffic congestion.

The Interchange / Ramps at Warden Road are shown in the Coastal Road plan as handling about 42,000 cars daily in 2014; it's expected to service 76,000 cars daily in 2044. Experts estimate, this will aggravate traffic and pollution substantially in the area.

As residents of NSR, we need to raise our voice to improve our own standards of living.

For a more detailed analysis of the cost the Coastal Road will have on NSR citizens and the city at large, please visit our website (www.nsrcf.in).

For a copy of the objections petition circulated and signed amongst citizens on NSRCF, write to us at office@nsrcf.in.



The Chief Fire Officer Mr. Prabhat Rahangdale, speaks on the importance for local residents to be prepared and know how to extinguish different kinds of fires.

FIRE AROUND THE HILL!! RUN RUN RUN!!

In a special annual function for members, NSRCF invited Mr. Sanjay Deshmukh, Additional Commissioner, MCGM and Special Invitee Mr. Prabhat Rahangdale, Chief Fire Officer.

During the meeting the importance of creating a new fire station at Hanging Gardens as suggested in NSRCF's Vision 2020 was brought up. The new fire station is seen as the need of the hour as Nepean Sea Road doesn't have a fire station close by that can reach buildings in distress quickly. Mr. Deshmukh agreed that more needs to be done for the city the size of Mumbai.

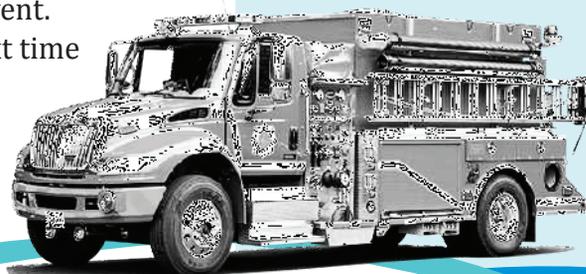
In light of the recent Paradise Apartments fire which was extinguished in time by a brave watchman from the neighbouring Embassy Apartments, NSRCF also requested Mr. Deshmukh to make it mandatory for all building security personnel to obtain a certificate in fire safety as part of their training. Mr. Deshmukh agreed it was a good suggestion and would be taken up for review.

In addition to training in dealing with a fire, **NSRCF also requested for mini vans to be fitted with basic fire fighting equipment and 2000 liters of water, so that they can easily and quickly reach the fire, and start fire-fighting operations until the main fire brigade reaches the building.** This was agreed by all present as a practical solution to avoid major casualties from the fire spreading by the time the fire brigade arrived.

The Chief Fire Officer Mr. Prabhat Rahangdale, special invitee at NSRCF's annual function, then spoke on the importance for local residents to be prepared and know how to extinguish different kinds of fires. While encouraging citizens of NSR to attend regular informative sessions on fire fighting organized by the fire department he stressed that acting correctly and promptly during a fire can help save lives.

NSRCF had organized a fire fighting session earlier in the year, during which Mr. Rahangdale's deputy had shown citizens how to use and operate a fire extinguisher. However only a few residents had turned up to the event. Considering its your life, we hope to see a greater participation next time round!

The new fire station is seen as the need of the hour as Nepean Sea Road doesn't have a fire station close by that can reach buildings in distress quickly.





Mr. Amol Vasaikar
with his team

Our Neighbourhood Celebrity

In this section, we highlight one department of the BMC as our Page 3 celebrity's. In this issue we throw the spotlight on Mr. Amol Vasaikar, Junior Tree Officer and his team who run the horticultural department within the BMC's D Ward.

Q: What are you and your team responsible for?

A: My department is responsible for the maintenance of public gardens and protection of trees in the D Ward area. We always aim to plant new trees wherever possible and attend to citizens grievances with respect to public gardens & trees.

Q: Why did you decide to plant palm trees in Nepean Sea Road?

A: In order to avoid accidents on a long stretch of road without signals, where cars tend to speed, we decided to plant palm trees along the median. The idea was, the symmetry of trees would enable drivers to see the curvature of the road from a distance and judge the road better.

Q: How do you plan to maintain the trees on NSR?

A: The trees planted on NSR, both the palms on the median and the flowering trees on the foot paths are regularly checked, trimmed and manured by my team.

Q: If a tree is old and needs to be felled, what is the procedure to cut or trim the tree?

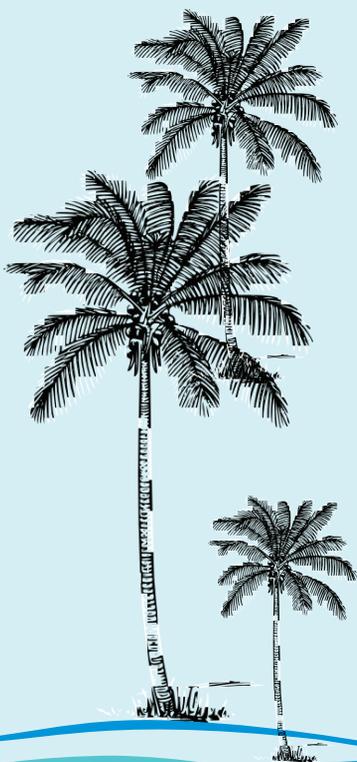
A: If a tree needs to be cut or trimmed, an application letter first needs to be sent to the office of The Assistant Commissioner D Ward. Following which, my team will come and inspect the tree and determine what is the best way to save it. If the tree cannot be saved, we will get permission to cut it. The charges for trimming or cutting a tree are determined based on the type of tree and extent of damage.

Q: How important is green cover in a city?

A: For a city like Mumbai, green cover is extremely important due to increase in population and rise in the pollution level. If every resident of Mumbai plants 1 tree in his lifetime and rears it till it matures we will have a tree population of 22 million.

Q: Is there a contact number to inform your department if any tree/ green area is in danger?

A: Citizens may call the BMC hotline number **1918** in case of an emergency.





Neapen Sea Road's Annual General Meeting; where concerned citizens meet to collectively improve the state of our road. From Left to right NSRCF Chairperson Mrs. Gita Mirchandani, MLA Mr. M P Lodha, NSRCF Secretary Mr. Nelu Gidwani, Additional Commissioner MCGM Mr. Sanjay Deshmukh, Mr, Nanik Rupani and Chief Fire Officer Mr. Prabhat Rahangdale.

A recent development meant that the traffic police has created a new team for Malabar Hill

Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting, is a great platform for concerned members in our neighbourhood to come together, discuss civic issues, understand the progress or road blocks the Forum has met with in the past year.

This year, on Sunday morning, 5th July, NSRCF held its 14th AGM, which was attended by nearly 70 members. Mrs. Gita Mirchandani chaired the meeting. The members approved the minutes of the last AGM, passed the report of the Governing Council for 2015, and approved of the Forums budget and auditors for 2015-16.

The secretary, Mr. Nelu Gidwani reported that last year, had been a frustrating one with little or no progress on most fronts tackled by the governing council. He outlined that **the laying of gas pipelines had met with a futile response from the authorities, despite the intervention of our MP Mr. Arvind Sawant and our MLA Mr. M. P. Lodha.** Mr. Gidwani continued that there was also no progress on the issue of trucks parked along the road leading from PDP's first gate until Embassy apartments.

Steps have been taken, albeit small towards removing hawkers and easing traffic congestion on the road, especially around St. Stephen's Church, where NSR meets Kemps Corner. Towards traffic, Mr. Mukul Mehra, explained that a recent development meant that the traffic police has dedicated a newly created team for Malabar Hill and that NSRCF would work closely with them to de-congest bottle necks at peak hours.

Similarly, NSRCF is being supported by the BMC, to remove illegal encroachments on the street. **The prime focus for the near term is to remove hawkers who have been illegally cooking with gas cylinders on the road and have taken over sizeable portions of the footpath, creating a nuisance and mess in the surrounding area.** (see Page 6; Keeping a Hawk eye out)

On a positive note, Mr. Giwani mentioned that the BMC had been helpful in laying tree guards on several trees along the street and were evaluating how to lay tree guards on all the trees on the road as some trees are old and have roots above the pavement level.

Mr. Devidas Kshirsagar Assistant Commissioner D Ward, updating residents on the progress work undertaken by the BMC over the past year.



The governing council made a humble request to Mr. Lodha to show case Vision 2020 as developed by NSRCF, governing council member and noted architect Mr. Rahul Kadri to the present state government so as to include some of the suggestions in the amended development plan. Mr. Lodha responded favorably and said that the presentation should be shown to Maharashtra Chief Minister Mr. Fadnavis.

MLA M. P. Lodha informed citizens that he was determined to make NSR the best road in the city and would work whole heartedly towards this cause.



Mrs Gita Mirchandani then introduced the Forum's 7 young members who have started spearheading action committees and developments at NSRCF. The 7 young guns are - Ms. Navaz Dhalla, Ms. Kartika Devi Rane, Ms. Nazia Vasi, Mr. Rahul Kadri, Mr. Aazaz Khan, Mr. Mukul Mehra and Mr. Saurin Shah. **Hope is that the young on NSR take over and learn the ropes, as the old guard steps down in a few years.**

Its is hoped that this infusion of fresh minds will take up causes with vigour and continue to work for the road with renewed strength and stamina.



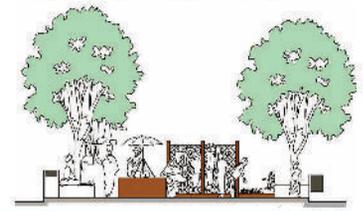
In conclusion, a genuine appeal was also made to all members to help recruit additional members from their buildings, within their friends and family to the forum. The forum feels beefing up our membership will not only add additional revenue to our near deficit exchequer, but will also give the forum more strength in numbers to get things done with both the BMC and government. The AGM ended with a vote of thanks to the Chair and delicious light south Indian snacks.

Nearly 70 members attended the AGM; showing their support towards the Forum's initiatives and activities.





An illegal hawker with a cooking cylinder taking shelter next to a registered hawker.



Keeping a Hawk eye out

As part of a continuous effort to curb the growing number of illegal hawkers on Nepean Sea Road especially those with hazardous gas cylinders and cooking stoves, the NSRCF has taken up the issue with the newly appointed inspector, of D Ward, Mrs Sangeeta Dani.

In order to find a practical, long term solution to the hawkers mushrooming on Nepean Sea Road, NSRCF has submitted amendments to a Revised Draft Hawker Policy by the BMC and continues to maintain a hawk's eye for new encroachments.

As result of our meetings and constant pressure, two successful anti encroachment drives were conducted at Nepean Sea Road.

However in order to ensure we don't have illegal hawkers on our street, we require each resident to be vigilant. Do write to us if you notice a new hawker coming up near you, and we shall try to ensure strict action is taken.

Some of our collective suggestions were:

- ~ Check all hawker licences and ensuring that the number definitely does not increase
- ~ Educating legal hawkers on cleanliness and hygiene
- ~ Relocating them to certain demarcated areas on foot paths



WELL-AIMED COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

OUR ESTEEMED CLIENTS :



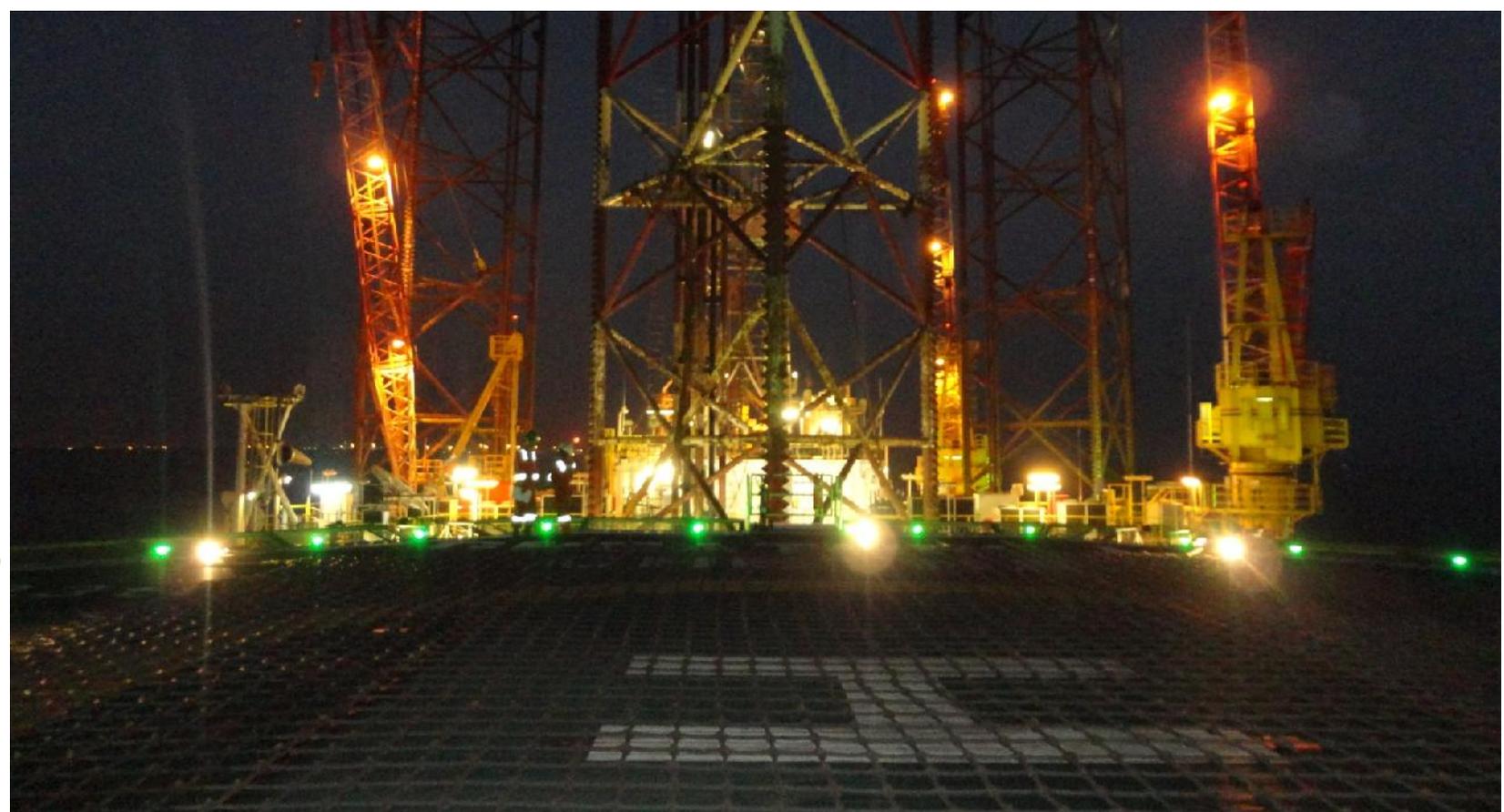
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< Trending online



NSRCF is now active online!
Here is an excerpt from our Facebook page.
The discussion concerns the illegal parking of trucks.
Send us your comments, interact with our governing council and stay updated on news on the street.
To send us an email write to office@nsrcf.in or visit our [website- www.nsrcf.in](http://www.nsrcf.in), or like our [facebook page](#) we already have 1,100 likes!!
NSRCF Nepean Sea Road Citizens Forum

News you can use

~ To complain against illegal political banners / posters call the BMC toll free numbers **1292** and **1293**. The toll free numbers should be displayed prominently on all pandals.

~ 104 is the number for Blood on Call - **Dial 104** to receive blood within 4 hours anywhere in Mumbai. It costs only Rs. 450 per bottle + Rs. 100/- for transportation

~ D Ward was recently informed by a BMC survey of water samples, that it had the worst quality of water in the city. While NSRCF is looking into the matter, it would be beneficial for residents to have water samples from their own water tanks checked independently. To know how to check the quality of water in your building ask us on Facebook or write to us at office@nsrcf.in



From the Editor's Desk

Here is the young new team of Public Eye!
Ms. Nazia Vasi is the Editor.
Mr. Mukul Mehra and Mr. Aazaz Khan are assistant editors and Mrs Shriya Khan designer of the new issue. We hope you've enjoyed reading this issue of Public Eye. With a newer, younger editorial team, this issue brings to you a fresh new design and content. Please vote on your opinion of the new Public Eye on our facebook page!



**Edited by
Nazia Vasi**



**Asst. Editor
Mukul Mehra**



**Asst. Editor
Aazaz Khan**

We would also like to thank **Mr Farrokh Mehta** for his support and ready assistance with every step of writing, editing and printing Public Eye. An editor for over 15 years, we hope to carry on the same quality of writing and passion towards issues affecting NSR as he brought to you.

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