



GRAHAK HITAY
GRAHAK SUKHAY

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MUMBAI GRAHAK PANCHAYAT

E-Magazine

Namaskar,

There has been an increasing demand from our non-Marathi readers to have more English pages in our house magazine 'Grahak Tituka Melwawa'.

This seems difficult because the prices of paper and printing have gone very high. So, we decided to come up with an e-Magazine which will include translations of some stories from our Marathi magazine. This e-Magazine will be circulated online via WhatsApp and email. We request you to read and share this magazine with your family and friends. The consumer is a saviour if s/he is aware. Our magazine is a medium to spread awareness and empower consumers.

We look forward to receiving your feedback.

- Team, MGP e-Magazine.



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‘Leaving Our Mark’ at the National Conference

It was a unique experience to present the distribution system of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat at the 'C20 LiFE' national conference under the umbrella of G20. The conference was held on June 3rd and 4th in the beautiful surroundings of Rambhau Mhalgi Prabodhini, Uttan. The activists working passionately in their respective fields with the value of sustainable development at their core had come together from various places in India.

'C20 LiFE' is a platform for social organizations dealing with the Lifestyle for the Environment. The President of the 'Indian Council for Cultural Relations', former MP Dr. Vinay Sahasrabuddhe recommended us to Dr. Gajanan Dange, the National Co-ordinator of Civil20. Soon we received an email from him asking us to send an essay and a 5-minute video describing the distribution model of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat. We barely had 15 days to work on this.

I wrote an essay regarding our model of working with the help of Adv. Shirish Deshpande. Thanks to Saurabh Kulkarni, son of our activist Nalini Kulkarni from Andheri-Jogeshwari Vibhag, the question of making a 5-minute video could also be solved immediately since Saurabh works in a big advertising company. His experience and prompt and voluntary help made the 5-minute video appealing. We could send all this to Civil20 in time and also got an opportunity to present our model of the distribution system at

the 'C20 LiFE' conference.

It was surprising for many to know that Mumbai Grahak Panchayat has been implementing a sustainable lifestyle model for the past 48 years. The organizers have selected some models that have adopted a sustainable lifestyle and posted those videos on the YouTube channel of Civil20 Portal called 'Anukaraniya Udaharan'. A video clip on the model of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat has also been selected and posted on this channel. This model “In the Interest of Consumers, For the Happiness of Consumers (अनुकरणीय उदाहरण, अनाकरणीय उदाहरण)” of a sustainable lifestyle is based on a three-point formula - “Growth in Production, Equity in Distribution and Restrain on Consumption” and runs on the strength of thousands of activists. After watching this 10-minute presentation, many wanted to participate or even replicate the model. The conference also allowed us to meet other participants working with farmers or small producers, who are seeking a direct market for their products, therefore, there could be many possibilities for cooperation.

Over these 2 days, many topics were discussed in the interest of a more sustainable lifestyle. I will write about these later.

The head of the LiFE Task Force in Think20 Group of G20 Prof. Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi raised an important point that growth rate should not be determined solely by measuring GDP. Instead, he advocates

calculating the Wellbeing Index. Along with GDP, it should also take into account the criteria such as water, natural resources, air quality, food security, nutritional value, urban-rural equity, etc. While working in the consumer movement, we have always had this realization that the GDP is not enough as an index of development.

In our Indian culture, we believe that there is enough for everybody's needs but not for everybody's greed. We do not want excessive indulgence. We always advocate this principle in Mumbai Grahak Panchayat. One of the principles of our three-point formula is "Restrain on Consumption". However, reaching a consensus on this issue in the G20 group is not easy. Because the American perspective is to push demand in order to pull

the economy out of recession. So, as Dr. Sachin Chaturvedi said, we have to have the Western World agreeing to curtail wastage despite indulging in abundant consumption. When the world's 20 most powerful nations sit together to discuss their views, it is not easy to reach an agreement.

Some policy changes for sustainable lifestyles were suggested. I also suggested the following changes for protecting the interest of consumers –

- Similar to the Public Distribution System (PDS) for the poor, Eco-Friendly Distribution System (EDS) should be developed for all. In short, the model of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat should be replicated everywhere.
- The government should encourage and take initiative for the development of a direct network between consumers and producers.
 - Government warehouses should be available at various locations at low rates to Mumbai Grahak Panchayat for distribution, and also to producers for direct delivery of goods to the market.
 - Local and state-level administration should encourage the consumer movement.
 - Consumer organizations should be involved in legislations and regulations such as - traffic rules, hike in the fares of Railways, ST buses, Food Standards regulation, etc.

While representing our organization at this conference, I could not help but admire the foresight of our founding members, the hard work they put in to establish this model, and the contribution of numerous activists who have carried this work forward for all these years and feel proud to be associated with Mumbai Grahak Panchayat.

- Shubhada Chaukar



SAMET Success - Case Resolved!

On receiving a notice from MGP, yet another case between a developer and a flat owner has been resolved without the appointment of a conciliator.

A customer from Vile Parle was allotted a 554 sq. ft area instead of the 584 sq. ft area promised by the developer in a planned redevelopment project. Had they registered a case, both parties would have spent a lot of time and money till a consensus was reached.

Adv. Pooja Joshi-Deshpande Registrar (Legal) of Samet, sent a notice through our SAMET forum, the concerned developer agreed to compensate the flat owner with Rs. 5,50,000/- against the shortfall of sq. ft allotted. Any idea if the flat owner is male or female?

Looking at the picture, if it's a female owner, sentence needs to be changed as:

The flat owner confirmed her agreement to the above offer and also mentioned that she received the first installment of Rs 50,000/- as compensation.

- Adv. Shirish Deshpande

Eco Ganesha

The Festive season is around the corner. Let's try to be as much eco-friendly as we can be.

During the Ganesha festival, let's adopt a Zero-Plaster of Paris and No Plastic Policy! The immersion of Ganesha idols leads to pollution of our water bodies. All the waste generated from plaster of Paris idols and the plastic or thermocol decoration material pollutes our water bodies.



Hope this year you will –

- Have a Ganesha Idol made from clay or a permanent idol made from metals, stone, etc.
- Use paper, plants, leaves, flowers, sarees, drapes, etc. for making decorations that will not be an added burden on waste management.
- Avoid using disposable plates and glasses.
- Not cause light and sound pollution.
- Make manure from biodegradable materials like garlands of flowers, etc.

Start planning now and share your experiences about the eco-friendly festivities.

Comfort at the Cost of Life!

Chief Commissioner of the Central Consumer Protection Corporation initiated action against the sale of a 'Seatbelt Alarm Stopper'. Investigation showed that several E-Commerce platforms have been openly selling seat belt alarm stopper clips on their portals. Some have been selling these as bottle openers or lighters.

The central government has raised an alarm against 5 e-commerce companies selling these stopper clips on their portals. (Amazon, Flipkart, Snapdeal, ShopClues and Meesho.)

An alarm goes on if the driver or the front seat passenger does not put on a seat belt. This belt is for the protection of the life



of the passengers in case of any emergency or accident. Selling seat belt alarm stoppers on online portals is putting the safety and life of passengers at risk. E-commerce companies have been advised to stop the sale of such stoppers with immediate effect.

(Compiled news)

Faulty Car got Replaced

■ Anita Khanolkar

This is an apt case that yet again highlights that the members of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat are very mindful customers.

Dr. Vivek (named changed), a medical professional, from Girgaum, purchased an expensive car of a well-known brand on 3rd July 2017. While en route to Pune, the car engine caught fire. Dr. Vivek contacted and sought advice from Mr. Prakash Joshi, a member of the Girgaum Complaints Guidance Cell, as he wanted the car manufacturing company to take back the defective car and refund the money - which the company was not heeding.

The car had barely run for 5969 km. On 23rd November, while driving the car to Pune, Dr. Vivek noticed some smoke coming out of the bonnet. He immediately pulled the car over. When he opened the bonnet of the car to check, he saw that the engine had caught fire. With the help of some passers-by, he managed to put the fire out quickly. This saved the entire car from being engulfed in fire.

Since there was no service centre of that car manufacturing company in the vicinity, Dr. Vivek called up the dealer, narrated the incident, and asked him to help. After waiting for almost four hours, a towing van reached the site and towed the damaged car to the service centre. Dr. Vivek promptly registered a complaint about the incident of the car catching fire at the Colaba Police Station.

After a detailed inspection of the damaged car, it became clear that the car caught fire due to the wrong connection of wires. Earlier, on 27th August 2017, the car connector and lights had caught fire, and the same problem occurred

again in October 2017.

The dealer serviced the vehicle both times free of cost and assured Dr. Vivek that there was no serious problem with the vehicle. Now, even after the third incident, the dealer showed his willingness to do the repairs free of cost.

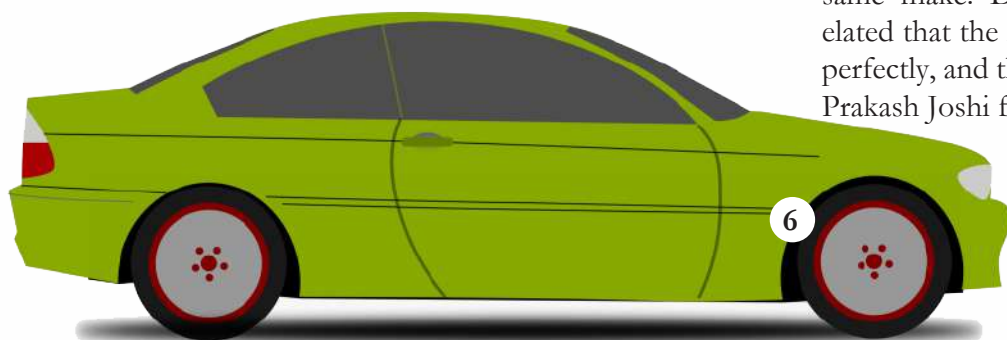
However, Dr. Vivek insisted on returning the car and demanded a refund of the cost of the car by writing to the dealer and the car manufacturing company as he feared this recurrent fire issue could be fatal and he did not wish to take that risk. Despite multiple follow-ups, neither the dealer nor the car manufacturing company gave any positive response.

When Dr. Vivek approached the Girgaum Complaints Guidance Cell of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat with this complaint, Mr. Prakash Joshi asked him to send a letter to both the dealer and the car manufacturing company once again and advised him to add the following two points.

1. A complete refund of the cost of the car, registration fee, all taxes, insurance premium paid along with the total interest paid on the loan taken for purchasing the car.
2. If the refund is not received within a stipulated period, he will file a complaint in the consumer court.

When Dr. Vivek sent a letter drafted accordingly, the unresponsive car manufacturing company now approached him and showed its willingness to replace the defective car with a new one. The dealer got in touch with Dr. Vivek and handed him over a new car of the same make. Dr. Vivek and his family were elated that the longstanding issue was resolved perfectly, and they wholeheartedly thanked Mr. Prakash Joshi for his timely advice and help.

(Courtesy- Maharashtra Times)



Green Environment – An Heirloom to Treasure

■ Parag Redkar, Sumita Chitale

Mumbai Grahak Panchayat celebrated World Environment Day (WED) on 5th June 2023 with great enthusiasm and participation from members.

As this year's theme for World Environment Day focused on solutions to plastic pollution under the campaign #Beat Plastic Pollution, My Green Society came forward and gave cloth bags in large numbers to Mumbai Grahak Panchayat for distribution through its various Vibhags.

Borivali Vibhag

Members of Borivali Vibhag went to various vegetable and fruit vendors in the markets in Borivali East and Borivali West and created awareness amongst buyers about



Mumbai Grahak Panchayat borivali vibhag volunteers while distributing cloth bags at Gorai vegetable market in Borivali.

reducing the use of plastic. They also distributed cloth bags. These cloth bags were distributed to many passers-by from 1st to 3rd June in the evening between 5 to 8 pm. The Borivali Vibhag also put up a stall for Environmental Awareness and Education in the BMC Office premise in

Borivali on 5th June from 4-8 pm. Here they distributed almost 700 saplings of medicinal and useful plants like tulsi, aloe vera, curry leaves, neem, and miracle leaf free of cost. 22 members from the Borivali Vibhag and 3 members from the Dahisar Vibhag participated in these activities. Vibhag President Prof. Dr. Suhasini Sant was present at all events to encourage members to participate in the activities.

Vasai Vibhag

The Nalasopara Sangh held a public awareness campaign in the Vasai market to explain the ills of excessive use of plastic and its effects on the environment. The team also distributed cloth bags. 10 members from the Vasai-Virar Sangh and many employees of the Vasai-Virar Municipal Corporation participated in the campaign.



Shopkeepers along with cloth bags at vasai market.

Kandivali Vibhag

Kandivali Vibhag worked towards creating awareness against the use of single-use plastic through an open forum discussion between the Sangh Pramukhs and the members. They also distributed cloth bags.



A rally by children and residents at Asmita Jyoti Society in Malad on the occasion of Environment Day.

Malad Vibhag

Asmita Jyoti Society conducted a rally with placards displaying slogans like ‘Save the Environment’, ‘Save Trees, Plant Trees’, and ‘Avoid Use of Plastic’. Many school students and members participated in the rally. On 4th June, a social worker appealed to the audience to reduce the use of plastic bags and encouraged them to instead use cloth bags.

Goregaon Vibhag

On 4th June 2023, the Goregaon Vibhag conducted a tote bag painting workshop to promote the use of cloth bags and make long-lasting use of creative articles that are self-



Happy enthusiast at the Tote bag painting workshop in Goregaon.

made. Neha Joshi, an active member, took the initiative to teach simple and attractive ways to design and paint tote bags. These bags designed by 35 enthusiastic members and other participants together will help spread the message of saving the environment and the work of Grahak Panchayat as well.

Dadar-Mahim-Bandra Vibhag

Since 15th March 2023, World Consumer Day, Dadar-Mahim-Bandra Vibhag ran an initiative ‘Shivaji Park No Plastic Zone’. The



Cloth bag initiative at Shivaji Park, Dadar.

Vibhag members were working on the execution of this initiative for the last 2.5 months. The members met the Assistant Commissioner of BMC G/North Ward, Mr. Prashant Sapkale and requested him to put up ‘No Plastic Zone’ boards at Shivaji Park. These boards were put up at 4 places around the Shivaji Park ground on 5th June, World Environment Day in the presence of MLA Balasaheb Sanap. The logo of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat is also displayed on these boards.

Thane Vibhag

The Chief Environment Officer of Thane Municipal Corporation Smt. Manisha Pradhan extended an invitation to participate in the World Environment Day Program organized by the TMC. President Prabhakar Gavane and the Head of the Environment Wing Parag Redkar participated in the event. Additional Commissioner Sandip Malvi, Deputy Commissioner of Solid Waste Management Tushar Pawar, Members of Samarth Bharat Vyaspeeth and Our Nisarg were also present at the event along with the 20 members of Mumbai Grahak Panchayat.



Mumbai Grahak Panchayat Volunteers from Thane vibhag along with chief environment officer of Thane Municipal Corporation Smt. Manisha Pradhan.

Pune Vibhag

Pune Vibhag organized a drawing competition for all age groups. Topics for the competition were: 'Grow a Tree, Multiple Benefits for Free' and 'Reduce Plastic Dirt,



Drawing of a contestant participating in a competition organized by Pune vibhag.

Enjoy Fresh Air and Water on Earth'. This competition received active participation from many members. ◀

Be aware – Be alert

- Vasundhara Deodhar

The Indian market of two-wheelers and cars is growing continuously. In May 2023 more than 14 lakh two-wheelers and more than 3 lakh cars (all varieties) were sold. The concerns of vehicle owners are manifold. But the most important is the quality and quantity of fuel – Petrol/diesel that one gets at the petrol pump. The performance and life of the vehicle depends on the right type of unadulterated fuel. It is, therefore, in the interest of every vehicle owner to know the rights and responsibilities while receiving service at the petrol pump, anywhere in India.

1. Quality – In case of doubt a consumer can ask for the filter paper test done. These papers are to be made available when demanded.
2. Quantity – Each petrol pump must have a 5-litre jug ready for quantity test to be done by filling this jug. This jug has to be certified by the Weights and Measures Department. The tolerance limit is 25 ml for 5 litres.
3. Density – Equipment required to measure the density has to be made available. The reading should match the one in the register maintained on the

site.

4. Proper bill – never leave the place without a proper bill.

Additionally, free air, water, and first-aid must be readily available. A display board showing rates of different types of fuels that are available on that Pump and working hours is generally found. However, the display of the name and telephone number of oil company personnel to be contacted by the customer in case of a complaint is also mandatory. A complaint register/box also has to be there.

Consumer needs to know these rights and facilities when filling the fuel in their vehicle. However, consumers must also adhere to the following safety precautions:

1. Do not smoke on the petrol pump premises.
2. Turn off the engine of your vehicle, when petrol or diesel is being filled to avoid a fire.
3. Do not use a cell phone when the vehicle is being refueled.
4. Never accept petrol or diesel in a plastic or glass bottle as it is dangerous and can ignite a fire.
5. Voice your dissatisfaction through a complaint. ◀



SAMET – A Wise Option!

SAMET is a Conciliation & Mediation Centre (CMC) set up by Mumbai Grahak Panchayat (MGP). The Centre will offer Conciliation and Mediation services to parties having legal disputes. The dispute resolution will be through Conciliation or Mediation.

Why Go for Conciliation / Mediation?

- Saves time
- Shortens litigation journey
- Affordable and inexpensive
- Party-centric proceedings
- Simple procedures, not bound by legal technicalities
- Congenial and informal atmosphere
- Parties come face to face and negotiate settlements amicably
- Parties have freedom and say to take their own decisions
- Out-of-box solutions possible
- No appeals
- Settlements are binding and enforceable
- Creates a win-win situation for all



Types of disputes to be handled by MGP CMC:

- All consumer disputes
- Real estate disputes including re-development projects
- Disputes pertaining to Cooperative societies
- Medical negligence matters
- Insurance claims
- E-commerce complaints
- Banking and finance
- Loan recoveries
- Disputes under MSMED Act, 2006
- Disputes pertaining to False/ Misleading/ Deceptive advertisements



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