Dear Friends,

We had some very interesting and eventful initiatives last couple of months – we started with a cultural exchange between London and Mumbai - EAST GREETS WEST brought together two different calligraphers Mr. Paul Antonio and Mr. Achyut Palav from two different cultures and worlds on a single platform to showcase their art through a conversation using calligraphy.

Continuing our close relationship with the Railways, as part of “Hamara Station Hamari Shaan initiative”, we beautified Mumbai Central Station through art work and murals highlighting the icons of Mumbai’s culture, its food, and especially its people. The artwork captured the essence of the city and was a tribute to its famous indomitable spirit. We also conducted a plastic awareness workshop “Know Your Plastic” to reach out to the commuters at the Station. These initiatives were done in collaboration with The Souled Store and Indian Institute of Packaging and we are grateful for the support of Western Railway.

Education, primarily quality education plays a fundamental role in development and effective growth of an economy. Under our Education Mission, a preliminary meeting was organised with like-minded education institutions to understand & discuss the current issues and challenges primary education is facing across schools in MMR.

We also had a very interesting meeting with Ms. Valsa Nair Singh, who in the past, Chaired our Environment Mission and is now Principal Secretary – Excise & Civil Aviation. We are grateful to Ms. Singh for the time she gave us and some very valuable suggestions that Mumbai First can take up as a part of our future agenda. As suggested by her, we met Mr. Deven Bharti – Senior IPS Officer, Mumbai Police, to discuss the possibility of our working with them on the “Traffic Barricade Project”. Mr. Bharti welcomed the suggestion and we will take this forward in the coming months.

Recently we met Dr. Surendra Bagde, General Manager of BEST undertaking. It was a very productive meeting. The main agenda was to discuss one of our project ON BOARD – A device that enables seamless commuting for the Visually Impaired. We are pleased to inform that Mr. Bagde and his team at BEST liked the idea and are keen to take it forward.

We continue to make good progress on two of our other recent initiatives - Mission 24 & Table Tennis for all – More details on this in our forthcoming issues.

Last year, we collaborated as knowledge partners with Mumbai Port Trust and Ministry of Shipping and hosted the conference on “The Dawn of Cruise Tourism in India”. We were happy to see recently, the launch of Angriya: India’s first luxury cruise ship from Mumbai to Goa. We take this opportunity to congratulate Mumbai Port Trust and Ministry of Shipping.

Narinder Nayar
Chairman, Mumbai First
Dear Mumbaikars “Namaste”

As the year is coming to an end, I hope you had an interesting year and wishing your families & you a prosperous new year ahead.

Amidst the Diwali celebrations, the air quality this year was marginally better as compared to last year. We have opened our eyes on this issue but still a lot needs to be addressed, Poor air quality is an issue we cannot ignore. As it adversely affects the health of each and every one of us and negates the quality of life enjoyed by Mumbaikars.

As part of our Environment mission, in view of the recent observations on Mumbai’s air quality and pollution contributing sources, we organized a round table conference with NEERI on Pseudo Stifling: Mumbai & Mumbaikars “Championing for Cleaner Air and Clearer Skies”.

The discussion saw participation from various stakeholders such as MCGM, MPCB, NEERI, IIT Bombay and WRI, Experts and most importantly the citizens of Mumbai. This is just a stepping stone to create a holistic environment and encourage an open platform dialogue on the various issues faced by mumbaikars.

In this feature, under the “This is Mumbaigiri” column, we are very pleased to share with you the inspiring story of Chinu Qwatra and his team who call themselves “Beach Warriors”.

It gives me great pleasure in sharing with you all, that, we have commenced the first phase of our initiative “Table Tennis for all” in 10 municipal schools across MMR. I am thankful to our Partners, Mrs. Vita Dani – Chairperson, Mr. Neeraj Bajaj – Co Promoter and Mr. Kamlesh Mehta – CEO of 11 SPORTS who graciously agreed to share their views and their vision for Table Tennis Development Program in Municipal schools in MMR.

In the upcoming months, we are going to focus on our Education, Environment and Security missions. I appeal to each one of you to take a pause, introspect and take action towards making Mumbai Metropolitan region as resilient as we mumbaikars are. The Mumbai we dream of, let’s make it a reality.

We will be more than happy to have your inputs and support for our initiatives.

Dr. Neville A Mehta
CEO, Mumbai First
East Greets West
A conversation through Calligraphy

The sign of a great state or a great city is the strength of its cultural life. Culture represents a set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices. In the month of September, we were very glad to collaborate with YES YES WHY NOT, Tao Art Gallery and Xenia Solutions Pvt. Ltd. to showcase the calligraphic work of two great calligraphers - Achyut Palav & Paul Antonio.

Concept:

East greets West was an art show that featured a spontaneous collaboration between two great calligraphers – one an exponent of Devanagari script and the other a scribe to the queen's crown. The objective of this showcase was to bring under one roof two masters, from two different parts of the world, who practice two different scripts and styles, and have only one thing in common - their craft – calligraphy. East Greets West shall present excerpts from their conversations through calligraphy.
About the Artists -

Achyut Palav is one of the most prolific exponents of Devanagari calligraphy and has represented India in several international showcases across the globe - including the Calligraphy Biennales. Paul Antonio is one of the most sought after calligraphers in the world - whose illustrious list of clients include Kate Moss, Versace, and most significant of them all - The Crown Office of England.

The Showcase -

14 Framed and 24 unframed excerpts of Paul and Palav’s conversations were showcased at the Tao Art Gallery from 27th September – 30th September.
Hamara Station Hamari Shaan
Bringing Colours to Mumbai Central Station

Improvement of Mumbaikars suburban railway experience has always been close to Mumbai First's heart. Working closely with the Railways, Mumbai First has spearheaded the mission to clean up Mumbai's suburban stations.

Railways are unarguably the life line of any city, specifically in Mumbai and MMR where more than 4.2 billion people travel in trains everyday. Most of the travellers not only travel but some times due to long distance journeys ends up spending a considerable amount of time at the Railway Stations.

The objective of beautifying the Railway Stations was two fold—on one hand to make the stations vibrant, alive and make it colourful for the travellers. On the other hand it also promotes local artists and gives them an opportunity to talk about social messages through the medium of art.

Mumbai First joined hands with “The Souled Store” to bring colours to the Mumbai Central Station which has a high foot fall of people from Mumbai and across India due to the long distance out station trains. The beautification work was done during Daan Utsav, “The joy of giving week”, celebrated in the month of October every year across the country.

The initiative was supported by Western Railways. It was a 100% volunteer driven initiative, around 300 volunteers came in the wee hours of the night to give life to the life line of our city.
Scope of Work

36 Panels and Staircase on the Foot Over Bridges (FOBs) were beautified.

Theme

The theme of the art/murals painted at the station was to describe the essence of our city and celebrate Mumbai’s Spirit. Therefore various iconic elements of the city such as Bollywood, the Mumbai skyline, etc. were picked. The designs revolved around Mumbai’s culture, its food and especially its people. It’s a tribute to all the real life heroes like dabbawala, policeman, etc.

Volunteer’s Experience

Cleon D’Souza –
It was an interesting experience, so many people coming together to bring a difference to our city. It was especially awesome seeing our designs on the panels and knowing that a part of us will always be on the walls of the city.

Mishaal –
It’s a rare opportunity to paint the walls of Mumbai central railway station and I feel blessed to have been a part of this. I look forward to more of such opportunities where we help make the community better and a more beautiful place to live in.
Hamara Station Hamari Shaan
Know your Plastic Workshop

Mumbai Central played an important part of yet another Mumbai First initiative. Collaborating this time with Green Thinkers - Indian Institute of Packaging, we organised a workshop on 4th October 2018, to make people aware about the packaging materials of different products consumed in day to day life.

On its own, plastic is not the bad guy it is made out to be. On the contrary, its intrinsic qualities have played an important part and revolutionised the packaging industry.

However, mismanagement of plastics waste has created havoc with the environment. Its adverse impact has resulted in stringent regulations like Plastics Ban.

But what is key, is to eliminate the single use of plastic which has been adversely affecting our environment is spreading awareness in its use and disposal.

Volunteers interacted with the passengers from 4:30 pm till 7:30 pm and discussed the roles, responsibilities and measures required for proper plastic waste management. The participants were felicitated with gift items and freebies.
Key Findings:

- About 60% people voluntarily participated in the workshop.
- Initially, people preferred a complete ban on the use of Plastics but afterwards realised that sound waste management system was better.
- Volunteers had direct interaction with more than 400 passengers.
- The passengers from other states such as Rajasthan, and West Bengal highlighted the measures taken by their nodal agencies and alternatives to single use plastics.
- 172 Newspaper bags were made during campaign which will be distributed to Grocery vendors as an alternative to plastic carry bags.
- The participants realized the importance of multilayer laminated packaging structures and the hurdles for finding alternatives were shared.
- Measure with your finger activity engaged about 60 passengers which will be helping them to identify the banned and exempted packaging materials.
- The commuters working with FMCG companies enlightened us that bio-degradable plastic at a reasonable cost was not always possible.
- Awareness about dry and wet waste segregation was done and methods for proper disposal were shared.

During the Daan Utsav week "The joy of giving week" that is celebrated across India in the month of October. Lions Club of Babulnath donated two wheelchairs to the Mumbai Central Station for the convenience of the Physically Challenged commuters.
Socho Alag Campaign

Rewarding the champions through the Best Building Competition
Cuffe Parade – A war

Mumbai First along with Clean Mumbai Foundation has collectively adopted A-Ward to upgrade the quality of life following – cleanliness, street furniture, roads & pavements, greenery, painting of compound walls of the buildings & traffic. A lot of work has been done on all the above parameters and last few years we have been working towards reduction of volume of garbage created daily in A-ward.

About the campaign – “SOCHO ALAG”

In the month of October 2017, Clean Mumbai Foundation along with Garbage Free India and Hari Dharti Eco Solutions launched the “Socho Alag” campaign in Cuff Parade, to bring about a change in mind-set and to inculcate the practice of waste segregation among the citizens.

As said by Chitra Hiremath – Garbage Free India, “the reason behind this campaign was to primarily explore the possibilities of decentralized waste solution and options/alternative for waste segregation. This initiative was aimed at reducing waste in the dumping fields.”

Best Building competition To conclude this year-long campaign, in June this year a Best Building Competition was held for the buildings with a focus on Waste Segregation and Management. The event was supported by the Give Back Foundation, Mumbai First and the Rotary Club of Bombay.

All buildings were judged on several parameters, which included overall Cleanliness, Waste Management and other green practices adopted by the Societies, including the number of PET Bottles they were sending to be flaked in the PET Bottle flaking machine, which were installed in December, 2017.

The awards function was held on the 2nd of October at 10am at the CPRA Greens. It was attended by the local MLA, Mr. Raj Purohit, Ms. Harshita Narwekar, Corporator, Ward 227 also a Cuffe Parade resident and Chinu Kwatra. We were glad to see Cuffe Paradians in large numbers participating in the event.

The top 3 buildings were:

Winner – Iris Apartments
1st Runner up – Maker Tower L
2nd runner Up – Maker Towers A&B

Prizes

Winning building got a PET Bottle Collection & E-Waste Collection Bin. The 1st Runner up got a PET Bottle Collection Bin and the residents of these buildings received a Canvas shopping bag with compartments to discourage the use of Plastic bags.

Sunflower, Casablanca, Jolly Maker 3, Satnam Apartments, Maker Tower I, Maker Tower H, Palm Springs and Venus were given Certificates of Recognition for their participation and making it to the Top 11 Buildings.

The Youth Icon - Ms. Isha Bhatnagar - Sunflower Apartments
Community Mentor - Ms. Neha Jain - Maker Tower I
Housekeeping Champion - BablooWalmiki- Maker Tower
Resetting the Education Mission
Roundtable organized by Mumbai First

At Mumbai First, our main aim is to make Mumbai a better place to work, live, play and invest in. Education, primarily quality education plays a fundamental role in development and effective growth of an economy. A preliminary meeting was organised with like-minded organisations working in the field of education to understand & discuss the current issues and challenges primary education is facing in MMR.

Eminent representatives from organisations like Adhyayan, Muktangan, ATMA Foundation, School Leaders Network, EDUCO and Teach For India graced the occasion for having a meaningful dialogue and collaborate under the leadership of Mumbai First to tackle the challenges of primary education in MMR.

The discussion was focused around following questions:

1. According to your experience, what are the 5 big problems that our schools face in improving the quality of education?

2. For each of the above problems, could you suggest the stakeholders who need to come together to resolve the existing problems.

3. What role Mumbai First education mission can play, particularly from its strength to connect and take it forward to state government, MCGM, private sector and Corporates?

Summary of the Discussion:

The critical issues hindering the quality of education were put forth by the members. They were as follows: Rote Memorisation, Preparedness of Children for the future, Teacher Child Ratio, Quality of teachers, huge gap in Demand and supply of human resources, excessive regulation by government and teacher training.

Stakeholders identified who require to come together to resolve the problems were Government Institutions, Schools, NGOs, need for involving the corporate sector to bridge the gap between learning and applicability in real life.

Another interesting point discussed was isolated interventions, targeting only a few of the underlying root causes. It was observed that there needs to be coordination and collaboration among all the stakeholders whether government, private sector or civil society to effectively address the challenges and strengthen the entire educational system.

Plan Proposed for Future Actions:

Proposal for a second roundtable where all stakeholders will decide the challenges to be tackle by synthesizing their efforts and jointly collaborating to achieve the desired targets which will be jointly decided by all stakeholders.
Pseudo Stifling: Mumbai & Mumbaikars:
“Championing for Cleaner Air and Clearer Skies”
organized by Mumbai First and NEERI

We are presenting the initial summary post the successful completion of the first roundtable in the series Pseudo Stifling: Mumbai & Mumbaikars held on November 5, 2018.

The individual thematic sessions were summed up together as a culmination of the roundtable, where in consciously the lens being

- A way – forward futuristic approach
- Knowledge based informed decision making, predominantly backed by urban data
- On-ground planning
- Citizen centric adaptable solutions
- Alternatives based on needs and viability

The recommendations which majorly resonated with the attendees across the three thematic discussions were leaning towards green entrepreneurship in order to combat the particulate matter (PM) generated on a yearly basis due to construction and demolition that takes place across MMR, methods in which the air quality index (AQI) can be kept in check, decentralization of waste management with the aim to achieve zero waste wards, circular economy generation; wherein waste generated is converted into raw material, alternatives in infrastructure development such as quick build technologies, zero waste construction methodologies, first and last mile solutions to urban transport infrastructure mainly the metro, prioritization of the pedestrians, various other inclusive solutions looked through the environmental lens.

Some of the eminent experts who spoke at length and shared their insights across themes apart from NEERI & MF representatives were Dr. V M Motgare, Air – M PCB, Ms. Suparna Marathe, Deputy Chief Engineer SWM – MCGM, Dhawal Ashar – Manager, Sustainable Cities – WRI, Ashok Datar – MESN, Mukesh Patel, Director – Neelkanth Mansions & Infrastructure, D. Stalin – Vanashakti, Kedar Sohoni – Green Communities, Sudhir Badami – Transport Expert, Roshini Udyawar - MPENSYSTEM, along with Dr. Amita Athavale, Prof & Head Dept of Chest Medicine & EPRC – KEM.
Mumbai First Initiatives

The immediate key deliverables which were spoken about and gained consensus across the multi-disciplinary diaspora present were:

- Creating a citizen charter specifically leaning towards adaptable solutions which can be adapted as pointers for waste management techniques/disposals methods at a mass scale individually by all Mumbaikars
- A detailed report of the first in series roundtable would be prepared by National Environmental Engineering Research Institute paving the way for the next in line roundtable.
- Planning a two day panel discussion focusing and in continuation of the three themes in further detail with relevant field experts, discussion leading to developing a citizen charter/user guide for citizens’ awareness and information under the three themes.

We envision this initiative to eventually culminate into a world conference by spring 2019 focusing on a micro level citizen led movement which further leads into collaborative inclusive citizen led policy change.
Chinu and his Beach Warriors

Why would a Thane boy want to clean up the beaches of Mumbai? When I asked Chinu this question, he simply said that he was not just a Thane boy but also a Mumbaikar first. Besides, he said that Dadar is the closest beach to Thane and the one he remembers visiting as a child, particularly after a visit to Siddhi Vinayak Temple.

His ‘Save the Ganesha Camp’ began when he visited Dadar beach after the Ganesh visarjan. He was horrified, saddened and ashamed to see the idols that were just days before welcomed to homes and kept in pomp and splendour, lying in broken bits on a deserted beach. All they had for company was a few drunks and heaps of plastic waste. Starting out by just cleaning the debris from the Ganesh festival with his initial Save the Ganesha Camp, he moved on to clearing the entire beach of garbage (he can’t do too much about the vagrants on the beach though) and made it once again, a place that people could visit.

And what began as a solitary weekend camp turned into a 52 week end crusade thanks to his college professor Ms. Indu Mehta who suggested that a long term activity was far better than a one off clean up! Thus from his first camp of 11 people including Ms. Mehta and himself, the team gradually grew to around 25-30 volunteers at each clean up.
That’s how Beach Warriors came to be formed.

Chinu chose this name because in his typical self-effacing way, wanted to acknowledge the help of his core team of 30 who support him in this venture. Every weekend volunteers help clean up Mumbai’s beaches and the message is spread largely through Twitter and Facebook.

Starting out originally from Worli (because the garbage from the village used to wash up on Dadar), now he has moved on to Juhu as well, particularly Erangal beach at Malad.

According to Chinu, even though the BMC does its job, their job, we have to do our own bit to keep the beach clean and it is his mission to see that the air and environment is clean enough for the next generation. He is particularly fond of children and has started Project “Pathshala” where he has adopted 1000 underprivileged children in a Thane school to help them develop interpersonal skills rather than reinforcing traditional education.

He also has his own NGO, Khushiya, that aims at bringing activism into the mainstream, making it a more acceptable profession, so that more people are aware of their civic responsibilities and make our country the best it could be. Chinu is one of those people whose passion to do India proud led him to leave his regular 9-5 job and become an activist.

Adding another feather to the cap, Chinu and his team Beach Warriors have been featured on Limca Book of Records 2019 edition for successfully completing India’s first 24 Hours cleanup which was conducted on 14 July at Worli Fort.

Now if that is not called Mumbaigiri what is?
Table Tennis for all
Inclusive approach for promotion of Table Tennis in Municipal Schools

Mumbai’s hectic life leaves most people with very little time to indulge in sports. However, physical activity is essential for a healthy population.

With the simple equipment of a table, bats and balls, Table Tennis seems the best option for Mumbaikars who are strapped for time and space.

Mumbai First joined hands with 11SPORTS (ESPL) for spearheading an initiative “Table Tennis for all” in the municipal schools across the Mumbai Metropolitan Region. The initiative will facilitate a platform for table tennis in the municipal schools that will create equal opportunities and tap potential. The program will provide selected schools with international grade equipment, qualified coaches, and proper fitness training and diet regimes.

The initiative is supported by Municipal Corporation Greater Mumbai (MCGM.)

The first phase has commenced and it has been implemented in the following municipal schools:

- Colaba Municipal School, English
- Sahakar Nagar Municipal School, Wadala
- Nityanand Municipal School, Andheri East.
- Chembur Naka Municipality Shala Marathi, Hindi and Urdu School
- Jayamahashtra Ganesh School
- Kherwadi Municipal School
- Sanasi Ashram (Parle)
- PK Road Municipal School Mulund
- Limboni Baug Municipal School
Review Meeting of TT Coaches and School Teachers

A review meeting was organised with the Coaches and the School Teachers in charge to review the initial responses, impact and challenges post two weeks of TT coaching at the BMC schools. To review the responses of the students and their parents concerns and other challenges if any. The meeting was held at Mumbai First with 11Sports and the 10 BMC schools and Coaches.

There is a need to change the perception of Table Tennis as a leisure sport and educate kids as well as their parents that it is a competitive sport that can be pursued as a professional career.

Meet Mrs. Vita Dani, chairperson of 11Sports & Co. and Co-owner of Chennaiyin F.C. as she shared with us, after joining the sports business with football, what piqued her interest in Table Tennis and her insights and future plans for the initiative “Table Tennis For all” in municipal schools.

Mumbai First: You have supported many other sport ventures like Football, what piqued your interest in Table Tennis?

Vita Dani: In our family sport has always been an integral part of our lives. We even plan our holidays surrounding sporting events around the world and also choose destinations where we could indulge in sport as a group. As a family, it is at the core of our interests and passion, and that is where my interest in Table Tennis too originated from. I would say Table Tennis is an acquired love. My son Mudit loved playing Table Tennis from a very young age. At the same time I soon realized that the perception of the sport needed changing from that of a leisure sport to a competitive sport; and that has also contributed to the inspiration behind 11SPORTS and subsequently Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT).

M.F.: What is the future heading to for TT as a sport in India and Worldwide?

V.D.: It is my vision along with everyone else at 11SPORTS and UTT to see India achieve a gold medal in Table Tennis at the Olympics and the way we have been progressing over the last few years, I feel we are not too far away from achieving that dream. With 29 Indians in the top 100 of world rankings currently (across age categories), the growth and development of our paddlers have been tremendous. Their recent achievements in the Asian Games and Commonwealth Games earlier this year is extremely heartening to see.
The future is bright for the sport, not just with the current crop of paddlers at the senior level but also with the budding starlets coming up from the youth ranks. They have been winning accolades across the world, some of the most notable being - Archana Kamath becoming the first Indian to reach the semis of the Youth Olympics in Buenos Aires last month thereby reaching a career best World Rank 7 in Girls under 18 category, Manav Thakkar becoming World No. 1 in Boys under 18 category in February 2018, Diya Chitale holding World No. 4 position in Girls under 15 category from March to July 2018 and Payas Jain reaching a career best World Rank 6 in the Boys under 15 category in July 2018. Such achievements spur us on and provide massive impetus to our long-term vision for Indian TT.

**M.F.** What is the vision of this project “Table Tennis for all” which aims to facilitate and spread awareness of Table Tennis as a Sport in Municipal Schools?

**V.D.** I believe the 11SPORTS Table Tennis Development Programme supported by Mumbai First, launched at the BMC Schools under the ‘Table Tennis for All’ initiative has massive potential in urging kids from Municipal schools to take up the sport and moreover it connects with our overall organizational objective of providing equal opportunities.

‘Table Tennis for All’ as you say will facilitate and spread awareness of TT as a sport in Municipal schools. As mentioned earlier, we aim to change the perception of TT as a leisure sport and educate kids as well as their parents that it is a competitive sport that can be pursued as a professional career if the said kid has the prowess for the sport. It aims to give these kids a fantastic opportunity of showcasing their talent and being in contention to go further and represent their school, city, state and possibly the nation too!

**M.F.** Will TT for all initiative give the necessary boost and give a platform to the children from Municipal Schools and identify talented players?

**V.D.** Our future Sharath Kamal and Manika Batras are all around us while they probably aren't even aware of their potential yet. This initiative will surely help unearth hidden gems given our robust network. But to start off with, this initiative will help inculcate the importance of sport and recreation in our Municipal schools, given our special attention. Children won't approach sport just as a session in their school day that is there for leisure. This initiative brings a special platform for the Municipal school children to explore their potential in the sport while focusing on improving on their physical fitness too.

Meet **Mr. Neeraj Bajaj**, Chairman of Mukand, whose outstanding achievements go beyond business and industries. Between 1970-1977, Mr. Bajaj represented India in table tennis internationally, and was ranked India No.1 four times, and was also a recipient of the Arjuna Award. Now taking his love for table tennis to another level, he has become a Co-Promoter of 11even Sports Pvt Ltd. In conversation with him where he shares his insight on Table Tennis as a sport, how this initiative will help identify talented players from the Municipal Schools and his vision for this project.

**MUMBAI FIRST:** As an Arjuna Awardee recipient yourself, how do you see TT as a sport shaping up in India in next few years?
NEERAJ BAJAJ: The sport of Table Tennis has come up leaps and bounds from when I was playing back in the day. There is widespread interest and acknowledgment of the sport not just in India but around the world. In the second edition of Ultimate Table Tennis, we had 9 international players returning after the first season. That is testament to the growing popularity of the sport in India, not to mention the fantastic achievements of our national team players on the world stage that makes us so proud. All of this only points to further improvement and success for TT as a sport in India, with the day not far away from us making a dash for the pinnacle in world TT.

M.E.: What is the vision of this project “Table Tennis for all” which aims to facilitate and spread awareness of Table Tennis as a Sport in Municipal Schools?

N.B.: I believe the 11 SPORTS Table Tennis Development Programme supported by Mumbai First is a very noble and much-required initiative that has been undertaken in Municipal schools in Mumbai. It has great potential in providing equal opportunities in Table Tennis while providing systematic training and developing the skill and talent these budding paddlers possess. Their background and socio-economic stature has no standing in sport, all that matters is their talent and will to learn. And that is what this initiative will tap into. We hope this model is implemented across Mumbai city and it becomes a beacon of inspiration for other cities and states so that we can make it a nationwide effort and further generate awareness.

M.E.: Will TT for all initiative give the necessary boost and give a platform to the children from Municipal Schools and identify talented players?

N.B.: It absolutely will. Back in the day when we were playing TT, such initiatives were unheard of. Hence such a platform being provided to Municipal school children is the perfect shot-in-the-arm for grassroots development in the sport which will change its perception too. These kids will receive the best training and coaching from quality tutors that will aid their development and learning of TT. It is not superficial awareness we are after, it is holistic development of these kids which aims at exploring the talent and potential they may possess of becoming top-class paddlers.

Meet Kamlesh Mehta, the distinguished Table Tennis player of the 80's wants to give back to the sport that gave him so much. So when he was approached by Niraj Bajaj (himself a TT champion) Co Promotor and Vita Dani (whose son is also a TT champion) Chairman, 11Eleven Sports, he readily agreed to come aboard as its CEO. And in keeping with the mandate of the company to spread awareness of the sport, 11 Eleven Sports has in conjunction with the MCGM and the help of Mumbai First, launched a program in 10 select municipal schools in the Greater Mumbai region.

Mumbai First: How did you choose table tennis as a sport when most Mumbaikars are drawn to cricket?

Kamlesh Mehta: I would have been a cricketer, a Left Hand Batsman at that. But an illness prevented me from enduring the stress of long hours in the sun so my father chose Table Tennis instead.

M.E.: When did you start playing table tennis?
K.M.: As a 10 year old boy, I actually began playing table tennis on the floor with my brother. When we got the hang of the game, my father took us to Matunga Gymkhana Club where I got to see many talented players play. Kaity Chargeman the reigning national champion of the day, who trained there daily saw me play and encouraged me to play.

M.F.: Has the game changed much since you played?

K.M.: Of course! Table Tennis is a game that has evolved the most! The bats have changed, the glue has changed and rubbers used nowadays are quite different from the ones used in the 80's. The game has become so fast that it is almost un-recognizable.

M.F.: After a glorious career beginning with your first National win at 15 and spanning almost two decades as a player, coach and mentor what made you get into this program?

K.M.: The idea behind launching this program is to expose the young children to an activity that might just yield a champion in the future. The TT coaching will be held during the regular Physical Education class as part of the regular curriculum for the Elementary School students. Then if any of them show promise, they would be given that extra coaching.

M.F.: Does 11 Eleven Sports mean that you are going to introduce other sports as well?

K.M.: Not at all. Our focus is only on table tennis and the name is derived from the fact that it is a game of 11 points. The initial scope of 10 schools has widened to 14 when we discovered that there were already 4 schools that had their own tables! With 11 Eleven sports providing the tables, the basic equipment and the coaching, we are hopeful that this initiative will stimulate young minds. It will expose them to a sport that demands a high level of hand and eye co-ordination, quick reflexes and physical fitness. Besides this, the game also fosters decision making and helps in de-stressing. All games offer these benefits but, in a space constrained Mumbai, the 4.5’ x 5’ space that this game requires, seems just the sport for our school children to adopt.
Standard Chartered - Here for good

The Standard Chartered bank has been our patron member for many years and have supported Mumbai First in various initiatives. For this issue “Corporate Corner”, Here are the few excerpts from the Sustainability Review Report of Standard Chartered Bank for the year 2018 highlighting the work they have been doing for the community under their CSR activities.

Introduction

One of the oldest banks, with the 150-year rich history, Standard Chartered is a leading international banking group, with around 86,000 employees in some of the world’s most dynamic markets. Our purpose as an international bank is to drive commerce and prosperity through their unique diversity.

As part of our CSR activities, we seek to promote sustainable economic and social development within communities. Health, education, employability and entrepreneurship are the foundation of social and economic development.

We work with local partners to deliver community programs which include Seeing is Believing, to help eradicate avoidable blindness; WASHE, to provide access to water, sanitation facilities and education; Goal, to empower adolescent girls with life skills, and financial education to build financial awareness among young people. Employee volunteering underpins their commitment to the communities and therefore good brand promise.
WASHE

Through our flagship community program WASHE (Water, Sanitation Hygiene Education), we have provided access to safe water, sanitation facilities and education to adolescent girls in municipal schools and disadvantaged communities at large.

Between 2011 and 2017, we have impacted more than 100,000 girls in 18 municipal schools and influenced the knowledge of more than 400,000 family members, across Maharashtra and Delhi. We also provide safe sanitation facilities and behavioral change communication to tribal communities in Maharashtra.

Since 2017, we have directed our efforts to strengthen the following areas of WASHE in India.

1. Established 14 water ATMs to provide portable clean drinking water to communities at risk due to water contamination in technical collaboration with Piramal Sarvajal who is acknowledged as a global pioneer in deploying remote tracking decentralized water solutions and solar powered, smart water vending machines (Water ATMs).

2. We SURE project (Water for Enabling Sustainable Reforms) seeks to apply the WATSCAN tool to stabilize and improve the availability of water in four drought-prone villages of the Paithan Taluka in Aurangabad, Maharashtra.
   a. CII’s WATSCAN tool is a world-class, IT-driven geographic information system and remote sensing tool that facilitates planning and appropriate decision-making for an improved water scenario in an area.
   b. In 2018, the transformation of Paithan Taluka is being driven through a multi-pronged approach, which entails village-level assessment to understand the local perspective, inventorisation and mapping of existing strategies for improved water scenarios such as: Building village check dams and subsurface dykes, improving irrigation efficiencies through micro-irrigation systems etc.

3. We have scaled-up our WASHE footprint to 24 schools. In 2018, we invested in six new WASHE schools across Rajasthan and Haryana in partnership with World Vision India and Society for All Round Development.
4. Provide education for menstrual hygiene management to adolescent girls through our WASHE programs in schools - Bank's school WASHE program run across 24 municipal schools, provides an easy access to safe and clean drinking water, sanitation facilities and education for the girl child, thereby impacting their retention in schools.

**SEEING IS BELEIVING**

1. Lifting employability through a digital shift

Seeing is Believing, an employability program develops human capital and promotes gender parity through investment in the Certified Ophthalmic Paramedic (COP) program with Dr. Shroff’s Charity Eye Hospital.

The two year programme builds a consistent pipeline of professional mid-level paramedic officers by training higher secondary school educated underprivileged girls. Currently, 21 girls are meaningfully employed at Dr. Shroff’s hospital, and earn upwards of $130 per month.

2. Treating Cataract cost effectively

Cataract is the leading cause of blindness in the world. Presently, in developing countries, the small incision cataract surgery (SICS) is widely adopted to perform cataract surgeries which delays patient recovery, thereby, impacting their livelihood.

The Humming bird phaco emulsification (phaco) machine has been piloted by Auro lab, to develop a sustainable solution in eye care. It addresses the concerns of expensive equipment and recurring cost of consumables, including foldable intraocular lens making it a ten times more cost-effective solution than commercial system with superior technology to remediate cataracts.

Thereby, allowing people from marginalised communities to benefit from the modern phaco procedure - the accepted gold standard for cataract surgery, globally.
3. The Simply Reading app - unlocking digital reading for the visually impaired

Seeing is Believing has joined hands with the Daisy Consortium, to launch a unique digital innovation called the ‘Simply Reading’ app. Simply Reading is a first-of-its-kind app in India for reading digital books with Talkback and Braille back screen reading software.

The app provides users with complete control over the navigation including reading next or previous characters, words, lines, paragraphs or headings, and they can also adjust the font size and colour contrast based on their preferences. It allows books to be read in all major Indian languages.

4. Financial education

We have specially designed tactile and Braille financial education teaching and learning materials to help visually impaired people picture the banking instruments used by sighted people. Between 2014 and 2017, more than 11,000 youth of whom 60 per cent are girls, across our community programs, NGOs and various blind institutions have benefitted from our volunteer-driven financial education sessions.

GOAL

Goal is our global programme to empower girls and young women through sport and life-skills training. It reflects our belief that education is the foundation for economic opportunity.

Globally, between 2006 and 2017, the program reached more than 381,000 girls globally, and in India, during the same period, it has positively impacted more than 60,000 girls and nearly 250,000 family members across Goal sites in Delhi, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Since 2006, Goal economically empowered 116 girls in India who earn $100 or more per month. The Launch of the new fifth Goal module ‘Be Independent’ in 2018 will further prepare the Goal girls to be ready to generate their own income.