Letter from the Chairman

Dear Friends,

Our Vision “Transforming Mumbai into a World Class City” prepared nearly a decade ago with McKinsey, had amongst various initiatives, and strongly advocated the need for a Ring Road around the city. The Western Express Way has been built and over the last couple of years, the Eastern Express Free Way has also been successfully completed. However, what is lacking is seamlessly connectivity between the two Express Ways. Bandra-Worli Sea Link has been completed and various proposals have been considered to extend this further up to Nariman Point and then connecting it to the Eastern Free Way.

On 6th June, 2015, Mumbai First had partnered with The Netherlands Government, to hold a seminar which was attended by our Hon’ble Chief Minister and also by the Hon’ble Prime Minister of The Netherlands when an agreement was signed between the two governments to work together for the development of infrastructure projects in MMR, particularly the Coastal Road and there have been much discussions in the recent months on the pros and cons of the Coastal Road. Our Newsletter this month carries different views on this topic.

We were very glad to facilitate a discussion on making BKC as an International Financial Centre when Mr. Mark Boleat, Upcoming Events

15 representatives from Mumbai’s MMRDA, MCGM, CIDCO, MTSU, MMRVC and BEST apart from Pune’s PMC will participate in the World Cities Program across three cities of the European Union from October 12 to 16, 2015.

The World Cities Program is a Mumbai First-EU and GIZ initiative and aims to promote long-term working relations between participating cities across the world and to contribute to better urban policy for the improvement of quality of life.

The delegates will discuss extensively on specific topics such as Urban–Rural linkages, Development plan, Sustainable Business growths and Smart city development.
Policy Chairman, City of London Council who shared with us on how the City of London is able to retain its leading position as an International Financial Centre. This interactive discussion was Chaired by the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra and attended by several leaders from the Finance world.

As a follow up of our successful conference “Mumbai Next – MMR Transformation” earlier this year, we have constituted a **New Mission on Art / Heritage / Culture / Tourism** and are grateful to Ms. Valsa Nair Singh, Principal Secretary, Tourism, Government of Maharashtra for agreeing to **Chair this Mission**. We are also very happy to make a small contribution to improve the quality of life of our citizens in Mumbai and have helped launch the “**Onboard Project**”. Our work in this area was particularly appreciated by the Joint Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India who was recently in Mumbai to launch the Hon’ble Prime Minister’s “**Accessible India Program**” in Mumbai.

I also want to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Javed Ahmed, on his appointment as Commissioner of Police in Mumbai and wish him a successful tenure. He can count on full support of Mumbai First.

Kind regards,
**Narinder Nayar**

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**Coastal Road**

In recent times, one of the most significant announcements impacting Mumbai has been a decision to build the Coastal Road along Mumbai’s Western coastline.

The Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnavis also signed a MoU with the Dutch Prime Minister for technical knowhow on Reclamation in early June. The 36.5 kilometre road will have Kandivali on the western suburb and Nariman Point in South Mumbai as the end points. There is already much discussion that has been generated. Mumbai First is committed to initiating informed discussions on the subject in the public space. Through this newsletter, we present three points of view.

While JoeriAulman from the Dutch team presents his technical point of view, Environmental Activist and Senior Journalist Darryl D’monte explains why he is opposed to the idea. We also have Sulakshana Mahajan, of MTSU making her case in support of the Coastal road.
Mumbai Coastal Road – A Different Approach

Mr Jeori Aulman is representative of a Dutch Platform of Companies responsible for the creation of projects such as the Palm Islands Dubai, Hong Kong Airport Island & the majority of reclamation projects in Singapore & The Netherlands.

The city's coast line offers an alternative that can prevent serious impacts on the daily city life that results from construction of a new transportation infrastructure within the city. Why not realize the Coastal Road on crescent-shaped reclaimed bunds that touch the city at the required intersections? (see image) This will help retain the existing mangrove areas straddling the coast and create storm water buffer areas that can prevent the annual flooding, thus saving the city billions of Rupees (thousands of Crores).

Subways with travelator can be executed at the intersection points so people can effortlessly move from the heart of the city to the new coastal transportation infrastructure & amenities. The entrances to these subways would be at the exact location where the metro stations are currently planned, namely within 750 meters from the dense population centers. Added advantage is that these subways also allow for safe public access to the city's waterfront areas.

Early stakeholder involvement is of key-importance to identify sensitivities and incorporate mitigations and compensational measures in the design of the coastal road. For example by creating new fishing harbors & model fishing villages, so their fishing business is invigorated, instead of threatened. Or by planting new mangrove areas to assure that there is a net increase in nature area.

The 'Dutch approach' requires Early Contractor Involvement;

To ensure a technically feasible design, to deal with the many unknowns (assure reclamation nurtures existing beaches, instead of eroding them!) and to integrate all interests and functions. This innovative 'Swiss Challenge' procurement, design and build process is being applied more and more worldwide and in India (Swiss Challenge bids for 400 Indian railway station redevelopments are on the cards). Similarly, the Coastal Road project can thus become a showcase for realizing large infrastructural projects in India, on time, within budget and aligned with all stakeholder interests!
There is a serious issue concerning people’s right to know when it comes to the controversial Coast Road proposed on Mumbai’s western sea front. The BMC appointed STUP Consultants with Ernst & Young to draft a new alignment as a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Rs. 8 crores. This was submitted early this year to the BMC, which – for reasons best known to itself – sat on it till June when it released an executive summary along with the voluminous document. Citizens were given only a month to send in their objections.

The report, to put it mildly, is a hotchpotch of ill-digested raw data with sweeping conclusions, including the contention that the road, for which some 170 hectares are going to be reclaimed 100-200 metres off the coast, will have no environmental repercussions.

It was difficult even for public transport experts to wade through the voluminous data, with traffic projections on the 35-km-long route by the hour, projected for a score of years. The report, like the DP in another context, is also riddled with errors. Ironically, the mandatory environmental impact assessment (EIA), included in it, contradicts the thrust of the report by pointing to all the environmental problems that reclamation will cause to Mumbai.

The city recently observed the tenth anniversary of the devastating July 2005 mega-flood, in which some 700 people perished when 944 mm of rain fell over (mainly suburban) Mumbai and its outskirts in some 12 hours. There was no way for the rain to escape.

On July 27, the deadline for sending in objections, the BMC found that there were too few – unlike a few thousand in the case of the DP -- and extended it till August 27. By August 10, it complained that it had only received some 400 objections, most of which were repetitive.

It is tragic that objections are being sought after almost all the environmental clearances have already been issued for the project, a travesty of the democratic process. As the Dutch PM and his consultants told the Chief Minister at a Mumbai First meet in April, in Holland all the stakeholders are taken into confidence before a project gets off the ground. This saves time and money. The BMC should expect a PIL against the project sooner rather than later.
“Why I think it is a good project”

Sulakshana Mahajan is a researcher in Urban and Women’s issues, with a particular focus on India. She has published several papers, articles and newspaper columns. Her writing appears in both English and Marathi language publications. Currently she is working as Sr. Urban Planning consultant, MTSU.

Four kinds of objections are raised against the proposed coastal road in Mumbai by activists, based on exaggerated concerns for environmental damage, high economic cost, limited use value to mass transport needs of Mumbai and adverse impact on the livelihood of coastal communities. I share some of those concerns only because of lack of faith in the ability of our municipal governance to undertake such project, shoddy implementation and disregard for follow through investments. In fact I see multiple benefits that can accrue from the project which, rarely are mentioned in the arguments put forward by those who are vehemently opposing the project.

Eroding Mumbai Coast: Generally speaking, one cannot deny adverse impacts of reclamation on the coast. However, the erosion of land by sea on the west coast and accretion of land on the east coast is a natural phenomenon for Mumbai. The coastal road would protect Mumbai from erosion. The loss of mangroves due to coastal road is largely limited to north-west, and if due care is taken they could be restored and even enhanced through design and vigilance just as the mangroves in the East at Palm Beach road were protected and nurtured. Looking back, it must also be noted that without reclamation, which improved habitable conditions for people, Mumbai could not have achieved its economic success.

Liability vs Assets: The cost of the coastal road is pegged at Rs. 12000 crores. However, even considering the value of additional land at 30 Crore/ Ha, the 400 Ha of reclaimed land would create assets worth Rs. 12000 Cr. Hence cannot be considered as a loss to public revenue. Besides the value of 250 ha area of green public spaces would be much more in environmental and social terms make the city secure from expected rise in sea level due to climate change. It is possible to effectively manage flooding due to rains in Monsoon while implementing the coastal road project. The project would make the Pedder Road Flyover proposal (cost R. 1400 Cr) and expensive sea link extension (which was planned earlier) redundant and effectively get the road at much lower cost with value addition.

Cars vs Public Transport: There is no denying that the coastal road would largely cater to the car traffic. But at the same time we cannot deny the possibility of a new opportunity to restructure the inner city arterial roads such as Western Express Highway and SV Road, by converting them to other traffic calming proposals, which would reduce noise and air pollution, improve urban street environment for non-car users, reclaiming road space on the mainland for mass transit like BRT or light rail on ground, reduce barrier effects of cars by increasing pedestrian spaces and cycle tracks in populated areas, boost local economic activities and make streets safe. Coastal would help create more than adequate capacity in public transport and improve quality of life in the present populated city areas.
For the Benefit of Fisherfolk: The project would also need to create additional land thru reclamation to settle the coastal communities, providing them with bigger spaces and enhance their livelihood and expand their habitat through planned development of infrastructure for fishing activities and provide more market spaces to improve overall economic activity for the community. I think for these reasons, one should support the proposed coastal road and persuade Mumbai Corporation to incorporate these ideas into the main project deliverables.

**Mumbai First will soon be hosting an informed public discussion on this subject, along with the Municipal Commissioner, and stakeholders at a few key locations across Mumbai. The date and venue will be announced shortly.**

*All are invited.*

**Round-table: CM Discusses IFC prospects with Bankers**

One of the outcomes of the memorable February 6 conference, Mumbai Next: MMR Transformation was to pursue the agenda of Mumbai as a Global Financial destination.

Mumbai First hosted a round-table chaired by the Chief Minister, Maharashtra, Mr Devendra Fadnavis coinciding with the visit of Mark Boleat, Policy Chairman, City of London Council. Eminent bankers and leaders from the world of finance attended the meeting. There was an equally promising representation from the Government, including Principal Secretary to the CM, Praveen Pardeshi; MMRDA Commissioner, UPS Madan; Commissioner, CIDCO, Sanjay Bhatia; Principal Secretary Urban Development, Nitin Kareer; Secretary GAD, Manisha Mhaiskar; Secretary to the CM, Pravin Darade and OSD to the CM, Kaustubh Dhavse.

Member of Parliament, Poonam Mahajan set the context of the round table in her address.

The Chief Minister said that his government has made strong progress on taking the IFC commitment forward and encouragingly is look for a launch before the close of 2015.

The attendees, which included Kalpana Morparia, CEO, JP Morgan; Zarine Daruvala, President, ICICI; Anand Jain, Chairman Jai Corp. Ltd; Nagnath Sundaresan, President and Chief Investment Officer at DSP Black Rock Investment Managers Ltd; Aashish Kamath, CEO, UBS India; Sunil Sanghai,
MD HSBS; Mihir Doshi, MD & CEO Credit Suisse; Anis Chakravarty and Abhay Gupte on behalf of Deloitte, Kumar Iyer of the UK High Commission and Ridham desai, MD, Morgan Stalney, pointed to the following challenges in making BKC successful as an International Financial Centre (IFC)

**a) Speed of execution:** It appears several firms are in the midst of making decisions regarding their IFC plans. It is imperative that the government remain in touch with such potential investors so that they do not make decisions away from BKC.

**b) Infrastructure:** The city's infrastructure, in general, is strained and BKC is also facing strain now. The Hon CM has reassured that Mumbai's infrastructure including that at BKC is being addressed with urgency.

**c) Improving quality of life:** While Mumbai has been a net recipient of talent over the years, the quality of life in the city has deteriorated measurably over the past few years thanks to lack of investments in infrastructure, rising pollution, and high real estate costs. One can see from how other cities are now being able to attract talent including entrepreneurial talent. Mumbai has missed the entire Internet investment boom possibly due to its poor quality of life. This matter needs urgent attention for the success of the IFC because that in turn depends on how Mumbai's life satisfaction factor improves

**d) Cost of Land in BKC:** Participants pointed out the high cost of land in BKC as an impediment to plans to host an IFC there. While this may be true for those looking to set up back offices, BKC rents have declined in real terms over the past ten years and are now more affordable especially for front office operations. Indeed, the government could look at land concessions as additional incentive (Gujarat is doing this) though the long term viability of such concessions are debatable

Both, Mark Boleat and the Chief Minister concurred that Mumbai has natural advantages of a ready pool of talent, nerve centre of India's financial markets, being the headquarters for most national and international financial firms. This natural advantage needs to leveraged quickly to make the IFC plan successful
Mumbai has always feared the rains. More so after the July deluge many years ago. Once upon a time, low lying areas would get submerged. Now, there appears no exception. Hundreds of crores of rupees have been spent every year everything seems to go down the drain. Except the accumulated water. Rishi Aggarwal, activist and a known voice against the system, voices his anger.

Making Mumbai flood resilient

Rishi Aggarwal is a Research Fellow at Observer Research Foundation Mumbai And has been involved since long with discussions and measures around flooding in Mumbai.

A more nuanced understanding of flooding is lacking in the city. For a decade now most flood conversation revolves around talking about BRIMSTOWAD and the Mithi river and a lot of news stories make it seem as if nothing has been done whereas the reality is that a very large new network of drains and channelizing of nullahs have been setup. But clearly it has not been sufficient and more so because we do not correctly recognize the true nature of flooding in the city.

The big floods and images around them abound. Train tracks submerged, buses and cars and people wading to water. What is truly, debilitating is micro flooding which is a result of the sheer callousness towards basic design measures and housekeeping.

The big problem is not the major flooding which happens a maximum of ten times during the three month monsoon period. The big problem is micro flooding where even with 50 mm or less of rainfall we see significant misery to millions of people in the city. Millions of spots emerge in the city where water collects in as little as one square meter space to a few square meters, disrupting motorised or pedestrian traffic in crowded areas. The monsoon experience instead of being magical becomes one of slush, puddles and delays.

What good is a drain if you do not clean it well, if you allow garbage to be thrown into it, if a simple thing like replacing broken manhole covers goes unattended for weeks and months?

How well our roads are engineered and designed, how good is our solid waste management system, how do we integrate ecosystem solutions into our flood planning are all intricately related to flood management in the city. If roads do not slope water into the drain but allow the formation of hundreds of puddles along their length what good is a good drain network?

The problem of flooding has taken different contours with changing land use, excessive concretization and disappearing wetlands and hence local area planning is more important than one standard approach for the city. And this is an important issue for a business city with clear economic costs arising from all the disruption. The issue cannot just be left to the political class with various stakeholders taking it upon themselves to push for solutions to their own local contexts.

Source - Global Annal: Bhavesh Kumar
Mumbai First rejuvenating Mumbai's Art, Culture & Heritage

As a follow up of Mumbai Next-Transforming MMR, a conference hosted by the Government of Maharashtra and Mumbai First on February 6, 2015 to discuss the regeneration of Mumbai region, Mumbai First convened a meeting of one of the key concern verticals. Art / Heritage / Culture / Hospitality / Tourism.

The larger agenda was to draw up an action plan of specifics which can be implemented across the region as an immediate step. Concerns were raised about the rapidly deteriorating conditions in these various genres despite concerted efforts.

The meeting was chaired by Ms. Valsa Nair Singh, Secretary, Tourism, Government of Maharashtra.

The following were the projects which, after due discussion, were accepted unanimously to be taken up as a process in implementation.

**Restoration and Rejuvenation of South Mumbai's Heritage precinct along Ballard Estate.**

The suggestions and offerings came from Ms. Abha Lambah and Tasneem Mehta. The work includes cleaning up of the area, illuminating the entire zones, beautification, creating walking areas, sit outs, coffee and relaxing zones, possibly Wi-Fi the area etc. apart from better signages. It was also suggested to explore the concept of equal streets practiced here. There is already a basic plan with estimated costs in place. Ms.Lambah said she will rework and share it for further action. Ms.Valsa Nair Singh expressed her support to the project. Sabbas Joseph said he would support the drive to collect funds for the same.

**Adopting Railway Stations as a culture zone:** It was also discussed to take up one railway station and convert this into a cultural zone in the late evenings for people to participate. Shishir Joshi will discuss this with the Rail Vikas Corporation for such an adoption.
Dilapidated Bungalows as Art Houses: It was suggested to identify and take up old (public/state owned) bungalows which are in decrepit condition and convert them into public places for art and culture promotion. Shilpa Gupta spoke of such avenues in Bandra and she will revert with a plan.

Restoration of Kanheri Caves / Banganga / Elephanta: Ms. Valsa Nair Singh spoke about the Government initiative to restore the lost prestige of Elephanta and Banganga through cleanliness drives to begin with. Ms. Abha spoke about the poor condition and absence of signages at Kanheri. These three areas would be taken up on priority. Ms. Singh promised funding from the government's department for such restoration.

Cinema/Art Museum: It was also decided to take up the cause of setting up a Globally attractive Cinema Museum in Mumbai. Tasneem Mehta spoke about the Films Division museum which exists but is badly maintained. Ms. Singh promised to look into that and if outside help is required, Mumbai First team will intervene, and help make it globally attractive on a parallel level; it was also discussed to work on an independent museum plan. Sabbas Joseph said they would be willing to fund it entirely, the plan would be presented to the Government by Sabbas and Mumbai First jointly.

Mumbai First proposed a BRICS cultural event (a conclave of performances from BRICS nations) which can be held in Mumbai sometime next year. The idea was shared by N K Nayar which was accepted by Ms. Singh and has requested a detailed plan proposal.

The meeting was marked by the presence of several Personalities from diverse arena – Devendra Bharma, Executive Vice President, The Oberoi Group Aabha Narain Lambah, Conservation Architect Tasneem Mehta, Managing Trustee & Honorary Director, Dr. Bhau Daji Lad Mumbai City Museum Sabbas Joseph, Founder Director, Wizcraft International Entertainment & Media; Shilpa Gupta, Contemporary Artist; Shivjit Sidhu, Principal Architect, Apostrophe A+uD; Sushma Gaikwad, Co-Founder and Director, Ice-Global; Vijay Nair, Founder and CEO, OML Kunti Oza, Clean Mumbai Foundation; Priya Ubale, Environment Expert; Narinder Nayar, Chairman, Mumbai First; Shishir Joshi, CEO, Mumbai First.
Have you donated?

We seem to have something or the other in abundance, but, seldom seem to part with it. Mumbaïtes of course can complain of the lack of time. DaanUtsav or the Joy of Giving Week is being celebrated from October 2, across India. For those who do not find the time, this is the week to make it happen. Donate something, material or otherwise that remains immaterial. Just Give.

Mumbai First is proud to be associated with this unique not for profit initiative. For starters, we donate this space to the DaanUtsav initiative.

India is a diverse country where we celebrate a large number of festivals. From celebrating the festival of lights to the festival of colours we see our country unite on these days and participate together. Even though our country maybe divided geographically into north/south/east/west and further divided into state, cities, districts, these festivals bring everyone together. It creates positive energy all around and brings a sense of brotherhood among the people of this country.

DaanUtsav (formerly known as the Joy of Giving Week) is the festival of giving. It is a 100% volunteer driven initiative that encourages people to do any act of giving of their choice. There is no blueprint and the idea is to get everyone to participate and experience giving. Started in 2009, the festival is celebrated between Oct 2-8, across the country. As of 2014, over 100+ cities and towns, several districts and villages all over India came forward and celebrated giving in their own way. This included auto drivers and maids donating food and grains, CEOs walking the ramp, being shadowed or singing to raise money, students across schools and colleges volunteering and giving, collection drives by many corporates; and several Govt depts. like the health, education, police and their associated bodies that have also participated.

Cities like Mumbai, Chennai, Pune, Bangalore, Hyderabad and others are a host to many philanthropic events such as the Battle of Buffet, Shadow a CEO, Footsteps4Good, Design4Change, Gift Compassion, India Giving Challenge, Vastrasamman and others. DaanUtsav is a great platform that brings together people from all walks of life and encourages them to celebrate “Giving” – time, money, material, skill or just love… This festival is like Diwali, Id, or Christmas, except it celebrates “Giving” across all religions, castes and social strata. A fantastic unifier that dissolves boundaries by the pure act of “Giving”.

As of 2014, 100+ cities have participated across the country, with 2+ million people celebrating giving from all walks of life, with 800+ events registered (from small individual events to those involving > 100,000 people) culminating in several crores generated in donations (cash and kind), and millions of volunteer hours.

There are 5 simple things you can do to celebrate and help change a life

• Take your office peon to lunch
• Gather friends and clean a public park
• Volunteer at an orphanage or elderly home
• Distribute tea to night watchmen in your area at 1 am
• Gather a group of friends and make sandwiches and distribute it to the poor
Felicitations

Mr. Javed Ahmed
Commissioner, Mumbai police

Mumbai First Congratulates Mr. Javed Ahmed as Mumbai's new Commissioner of Police. We extend our full support in making Mumbai a better place to live, work and play.

Applause

The OnBoard Project supported by IIT Delhi and Mumbai First, to install devices across all BEST buses in MMR got a huge boost, when the Jt. Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Department of Empowerment of the persons with Disabilities, Government of India, announced and acknowledged this initiative at the launch of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's accessible India Program in Mumbai's Y. B Chavan Center.

The Government's Accessible India initiative is to make the country disable-friendly. Under this they have chosen 48 cities across India through which three verticals: Transport, Communication and Infrastructure (100 buildings in each city to be made disabled friendly in the first year). In Maharashtra - Mumbai, Nasik, Pune and Nagpur are the selected cities.

Mumbai First in the news

Roundtable on the coastal road: Road to ruin or progress for Mumbai?

Hindustan Times, Mumbai, September 15, 2015


Congratulations and a gracious thank you

We owe to Dr. João Cravinho for his outstanding contribution in writing a new chapter in EU and Mumbai relationship.

Dr. J. Cravinho has served as the Ambassador of the European Union to India since 2012 to 2015 and has now taken over as Ambassador of the European Union to Brazil

We wish him all the best for your future endeavours.

Dr. João Cravinho
Ambassador of the European Union