



1/2014

# CityMatters

30 CUTS International  
1983-2012

## Implementation, Implementation and Implementation



[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)

### INSIDE

- ◆ Human Brain Digital Library
- ◆ Indian Teen's Stroke of Genius
- ◆ Pink City Grabs Best City Award
- ◆ Record Corrupt Booked
- ◆ Metro Updates

**W**hen I write this, we are in the thick of the Lok Sabha elections. The guttersnipe language used by all has been shocking to many of us while delighting some. Should not our politicos speak about 2030 or beyond, rather than continue harping on the riots of 2002 and 1984 to garner or deflect votes? Can we not bury the dead past and move on, not that I suggest that these were not horrendous bad dreams.



The last five years' tenure of the Government was a bad dream, because of humongous scams, ineptitude and resultant policy paralysis. As one senior bureaucrat told me, 'We are watching our backs and not files'. Even retired officers are under the microscope of enforcement authorities, so why should any officer take a decision. Our misfortune is that we had a hamstrung Prime Minister during the last five years who was certainly guilty of acts of omissions, if not acts of commission. If only he had the courage of attacking the increasing scams, our situation would not have been so bad. But he just kept quiet like the silent mode of our mobile phones. Our growth rates continued to go down to the region of five percent from a high of eight and nine percent, over the earlier phase of 10 plus years. Jobs were being created and poverty was coming down. We were on a path to become a developed country by 2030, but that has now slid back.

On the contrary, the government indulged in profligacy by launching pro-poor schemes without having the wherewithal. Equity can only be promoted if there is growth, i.e. one can share the cake if we have a bigger cake. For example, the new land acquisition law will only make it more difficult for industry to acquire land. National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) too has created labour scarcity in industries and made people dependent upon the dole. So, who wants to work when they can earn sufficiently to sustain. Nearly 86 percent of our rural population comprises landless farmers and they need jobs, which can best be created by manufacturing. That means land, and not by doles through NREGA and other such schemes. The fiscal situation too has become precarious. This is the central factor for causing high inflation and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) by raising the interest rates regularly has only harmed growth. Our policies should have been designed to give people fishing rods and not fishes.

One hopes to get a stable government with a strong leader and without the baggage of rent seeking junior coalition partners. The new government will have a Herculean task to revive the economy, carry out financial re-engineering, bring down inflation, curb corruption and red tape, and restore trust among and between the people to be able to pull us out of the morass.

On the other hand, we also need a strong opposition for a healthy democracy. It will certainly come in, as any of the two coalitions are unlikely to get a brute majority. It will, therefore, be necessary for the ruling coalition to work in a cooperative manner with the opposition to enable smoother functioning and healthy growth.

The way forward is implementation, implementation and implementation. Enough reforms have been done.

*Pradeep S. Mehta*  
Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

## Google Earth for Time Travel

The Scientists of the University of Anglia, Norwich in UK have been successful in preparing a database of the temperatures and weather conditions of the past years up to the year 1850. The weather conditions of any particular day



from any of the past years can be easily explored using this data, which is available at Google Earth.

This new application of Google Earth enable the users to visit and travel up to 6,000 weather centres of the world and in addition, can also study the climatic conditions and annual temperature of the past years.

The good thing about this application is that by zooming in at any place on the Google map and the database one can view the weather conditions of that place.

(RP, 12.02.14)

## Human Brain Digital Library

The researchers of the Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, are building a detailed digital library of Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans collected from children with normal and abnormal brains to help the doctors reaching the



right conclusions and making right decisions. This will give the physicians a Google-like search system that will enhance the way they diagnose and treat young patients with brain disorders.

This cloud-computing project, being developed by a team of engineers and radiologists will allow the physicians to access thousands of pediatric scans to look for any resemblance with their own patient's image.

This new technique will provide a way to share important new discoveries about how changes in brain structures are linked to brain disorders. (DB, 05.02.14)

## PC to Read your Mind

Researchers at the Ohio State University, Columbus, have found a way for computers to recognise 21 distinct facial expressions. Alex Martinez, a cognitive scientist and Associate Professor of electrical and computer engineer said, "We have gone beyond facial expressions for simple emotions like happy or sad. We found a strong consistency in how people move their facial muscles to express 21 categories of emotions".

Martinez and his team photographed 230 volunteers making faces in response to verbal cues, such as "you just got some great unexpected news" or "you smell a bad odour" ("disgusted").

The model is meant to be a tool for basic research in cognition, Martinez foresees its potential in the treatment of disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder or autism. (BL, 01.04.14)

## Discount on Mounting Everest

The tourist Ministry of Nepal has decided to reduce the mountaineering fee from the year 2015. Presently, the mountaineers have to pay \$25,000 (about ₹15.50 lakhs) and after discount they will have to pay \$11000 i.e. ₹6.8 lakh. In case, there is a group of seven people going for hiking then they have to pay a total amount of \$70,000 only.

Out of the 14 highest peaks, there are eight in Nepal. The country has more than 2,000 peaks of Himachal, out of which 326 are opened for the foreign

mountaineers. Not only this, mountaineering the base of Economy of Nepal as almost 4 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is generated from this.

The Government of Nepal is of the view that on reducing the mountaineering fee there will be an increase in the number of mountaineers but this will also cause more filthiness on the Everest. (NN, 19.02.14)

## Five Indians for Top World Thinkers

The 'Prospect', British general interest magazine, has been inviting the public to vote on its list of influential thinkers, since 2004 when it drew up a list of the top 100 British public intellectuals. In 2005, they extended the search to the rest of the globe and readers voted online.

The 2014 list has five Indians – of which four are economists for the title of 'the world's most important thinkers 2014'. The four economists are – Amartya Sen, Kaushik Basu, Partha Dasgupta and Raghuram Rajan. The Booker Prize winner writer, Arundhati Roy is the fifth Indian in the list.

The other heavyweights in contention are Pope Francis – the only religious leader to make it to the annual list – American Philosopher Thomas Nagel and the US political scientist Anne-Marie Slaughter. The list also includes South African businessman Elon Musk and Thant Myint-U, member of Myanmar's National Economic and Social Advisory Council. (Tol, 28.03.14)

## Indian Teen's Stroke of Genius

A 14 years old Indian origin student, Suvir Mirchandani claims to have found a way of saving the US Government's almost \$400 million (nearly 2,400 crore) – simply by changing the font it uses for official documents. Suvir calculated that if the US Government chose Garamond font instead of Times New Roman, it would use 25 percent less ink because each character is lighter and thinner in Garamond.

The idea took shape when he worked out how much his school in Pennsylvania could save in ink after watching multiple leaflets being handed out. "Ink is two times more expensive than French perfume by volume", he added.

He extended the study to the national level and concluded that if the Federal Government used just Garamond, it could save \$136 million per year. Moreover, an additional \$234 million could also be saved annually if the State Governments also jumped on board. Suvir's findings have been published in the Journal for Emerging Investigators (JEl), a publication founded by Harvard students in 2011.

(IE, 30.03.14 & Tol, 31.03.14)



## Brain Stimulating Cap

The US Psychologists Robert Reinhart and Geoffrey Woodman showed that it is possible to selectively manipulate one's ability to learn through the application of a mild electrical current to the brain and this effect can be enhanced or depressed depending on the direction of the current.

Reinhart and Woodman wanted to test the idea that this activity influences learning because it allows the brain to learn from the mistakes.

Using an elastic headband that secured two electrodes conducted by



saline-soaked sponges to the cheek and the crown of the head, the researchers after 20 minutes of stimulation, gave a learning task to the participants.

The researchers measured the electrical brain activity of each participant. This allowed them to watch as the brain changed at the very moment participants were making mistakes, and most importantly, allowed them to determine how these brain activities changed, under the influence of electrical stimulation.

(researchnews@vanderbilt, 21.03.14)

## 'OK' Celebrates 175 Years

It will be 175 years, since today's most commonly used word 'OK' (okay) first appeared in print, on page two of 'Boston Morning Post', then one of the most popular newspapers in the United States.

Allan Metcalf, an English Professor in Illinois who is the world's leading authority on the history and meaning of OK, said, "I think OK should be celebrated with parades and speeches". In his 2001 book, "OK: The Improbable Story of America's Greatest Word", Metcalf calls OK "the most frequently spoken (or typed) word on the planet".

Concise and utilitarian, it's quintessentially American in its simplicity. Etymologically, it has no direct relationship with Latin or Greek or any other ancient tongue.

According to Metcalf, it is an abbreviation of 'orl korrekt', a derivative of 'all correct' from the 1830s when jokey misspellings were all in the rage, like Internet memes are at present.

(Tol, 22.03.14)

## Track Record of Email

A system that uses Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to calculate the number of miles an email has travelled before reaching an inbox, has been developed. It will then calculate the total distance between the two and display it on the screen along-side a map.

The creator of the system, Jonah Brucker Cohen, a Design Lecturer said that he hoped it would remind people how quickly they can communicate that particular day.

The system shows how indirect the route of emails can be. An email sent from New York to Dakar, Senegal, shows how this works. It travelled 790 miles (1,271 km) to Chicago and went 2,163 miles (3,481 km) to Mountain View, California; 1,699 miles (2,734 km) to Dallas; 4,745 miles (7,636 km) to London; and 2,718 miles (4,374 km) to its destination – 12,115 miles (19,497 km) in all.

(Tol, 20.02.14)

## Private Taxi for Space

According to American Space Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), by the year 2017, the US Astronomers can travel in space by means of commercial spacecrafts. In this area, Boing, Blue Origin, Syara Newarda Corp and SpaceX named four companies are working presently.

The spacecrafts being made by these companies will be capable of carrying



the Astronomers along with the common people to space. Under this project, NASA has demanded a budget of \$848 million from the American Government. Boing Company has manufactured a CST-100 capsule, which probably in future will be used as 'Private Taxi'.

(NN, 26.03.14)

## Eldest Leaving Elders'House

Rishang Keishing, a 94 year old MP from Manipur, quietly left his seat and headed for the exit – for the last time in his life.



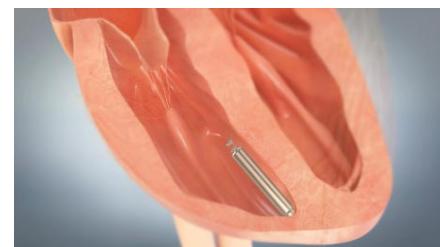
The oldest parliamentarian in the world will not attend the last two days of the ongoing session.

His term in the Upper House ends on April 9, 2014. Having had four terms in Parliament – in the first and third, Lok Sabha from 2002-2014 – and after spending over a decade as a Chief Minister of Manipur, Keishing has not known a life outside politics.

(IE, 19.02.14)

## Pacemaker without Surgery

Vivek Reddy, MD, of Mount Sinai Heart at The Mount Sinai Hospital,



Toronto implanted the US's first miniature-sized, leadless cardiac pacemaker directly inside a patient's heart without any surgery.

The leadless pacemaker is implanted by a cardiac electro physiologist directly inside the heart during a catheter-guided procedure through the groin via the femoral vein. The device, resembling a small, metal silver tube, is only a few centimetres in length, making it less than ten percent the size of a traditional pacemaker.

Reddy said, "This clinical research trial will be testing the latest innovative, non-surgical pacemaker option for patients experiencing a slowed heart beat. This new-age, tiny pacemaker may ultimately be safer for patients because it doesn't have lead or have to be inserted, under the skin of a patient's chest, like a traditional cardiac pacemaker".

(www.mountsinai.org)

# ‘MYCITY’ Initiative

In order to engage citizens and other relevant stakeholders to strengthen the roots of Local Self-governance, according to the spirit of 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment, CUTS is replicating the activities of ‘MyCity’ in eight new wards of Jaipur city.

This is an emphatic effort towards making the city of Jaipur convenient and prosperous. In the series of consultation with various stakeholders to get the support and suggestions, a consultation was organised with the elected representatives of Local Self-government on February 17, 2014, under the banner of this intervention.

About nine councillors of Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) took active part in the consultation and shared their views on how a Project can accomplish better outcomes. Manish Pareek, Deputy Mayor of JMC also took part in consultation and suggested ways for bringing more citizens in the circumference of ‘MyCity’ initiative.

### Health Dept.’s Vision 2020

The Health Department of Rajasthan has started the process of preparing Vision 2020 with an aim to set a vision in health care services. The Department has sought the



suggestions from different Health Department’s components and also various National Health Programmes.

The officials are preparing the vision, including those striving to bring down infant mortality rate, maternal mortality ratio, cardiovascular diseases, tobacco control, non-communicable diseases, immunisation and various other national programmes including blindness and vector borne diseases.

The Health Department will analyse the threat of various diseases including non communicable diseases like diabetes and cardio-vascular diseases, vector borne diseases and blindness in future. (Tol, 12.02.14)

### Developed State Machinery

Vasundhra Raje, Chief Minister of Rajasthan has reiterated the need for overall development of the state machinery. Raje emphasised for growth and peace and assured that the voices of the minority communities in the state will be duly heard.

The Chief Minister urged the officials to work for progressive Rajasthan. She even asked the District Collectors to spend nights in the areas of their district and hear issues of the common man.

A system should also be made for ensuring communal harmony and redressal of grievances. Effective monitoring and fast implementation of the 60-day action plan was underlined by Raje and she directed the Collectors for weekly review of the plan. (Tol, 09.01.14)

### New Techno-tourist Guide

In the best tourist destination, Jaipur, under the partnership with Private Firm Public Private Partnership (PPP) is planning to provide Tablet in the form of tourist guide.

After the tablet is issued to the tourist, he will be given an ID and password through which he can login. In the tablet, a Global Positioning



System (GPS) will be activated, under which the tourists will be aware of their location and he can visit the entire city comfortably.

The tourist will get the information of all the Historical Monuments and all the places to be visited in an audio visual form. (RP, 20.03.14)

### Facelift to Disaster Response Force

In an effort to be self-sufficient during any disaster or emergency situations like bomb blasts, Rajasthan police is all set to modernise its state disaster or emergency response force (SDRF). This will work on the lines of national disaster response force (NDRF).

The force is likely to procure gadgets like X-ray machines, blood pressure equipment, X-ray glasses, expensive torch lights, special ambulance kit, pocket masks etc. used for detecting and identifying chemicals used in bombs and will also get some medical equipment.

The training and recruitment of the personnel has already been started and with the help of the gadgets the SDRF would be ready to operate at the time of any emergency or disaster. (Tol, 19.02.14)

### Pink City Grabs Best City Award



Pink city was awarded as the ‘Best City’ by the Indian News Channel ABP, in an event organised in Delhi. The award was given by the renowned Indian film actor, Amir Khan to Jyoti Khandelwal, Mayor, Jaipur. According to the Mayor, the award was given on account of the development of Metro Project, Ghat ki Guni Tunnel and Street Light System in the city.

JMC in high spirits and highly motivated has already started with the planning of all sectors associated with cleanliness.

The engineering and health wing of JMC will mark all issues related with cleanliness and look for their solution. The CEO, Municipal Corporation, L C Aswal took an insight into the cleanliness scene in the city. (DB, 13.03.14)

## Record Corrupt Booked

The year 2013 was good for Anti-corruption Bureau (ACB) in many ways. The ACB registered a total of 354 First Information Reports (FIRs) in 2008 and number went up to 608 cases, in the previous year.

The officials claimed that it was the highest ever registration of cases with the ACB in Rajasthan. Moreover,

the ACB has been registering the highest number of cases against corrupt officials compared to other states in the country for the past three years.

After lodging 11 FIRs and booking over 102 people for the scam on December 07, the ACB arrested food inspectors, adulterators and some police officers.

In the Net			
Year	FIR	Final Report	Charge sheet
2008	321	71	354
2009	335	81	221
2010	407	70	281
2011	516	87	265
2012	567	79	253
2013	608	48	342

(Tol, 13.01.14)

## Drive against Exorbitant Fee Hike

The Committee constituted by Supreme Court to determine the fees of private schools has issued show cause notices to 400 private schools including 70 in Jaipur for hiking fees exorbitantly for 2014-15 sessions.

The Committee has termed the hike, a serious violation of rules as it had restrained the schools from increasing the fees until the Committee determine their fees.

The fee Committee headed by retired High Court Judge Justice, Shiv Kumar Sharma will determine the fees of private schools by seeking proposals from them. The Committee has to justify the proposed hike, according to the laid down parameters, under the Rajasthan School Fees Act.

(Tol, 24.02.14)



## Metro Updates

### Trials for Oscillations

The Jaipur Metro will see its first test-run with a team of Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) reaching the city. The officials will conduct trials for oscillation and emergency braking distance (EBD) on the stretch.

The Metro train will be tested to measure the lateral and vertical acceleration at different locations. Devices like accelerometer for recording and readings of speed, brakes etc. will be fixed. A series of trials will be conducted to check the performance of train on actual track, under various load capacities and speeds and then compare it with design values.

Meanwhile, Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) conducted its internal trials before the team reached Jaipur. Three trains were parked on inspection bay line (IBL) for testing. For this, the train will be run at a speed of 90 km, according to DMRC official.

(Tol, 01.03.14)



### JMRC Coffers Fast Drying

Indecisiveness on the part of the BJP-led Government might upset the financial condition of the Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC) leading to delay in the Phase-I (Mansarovar to Chandpole) corridor, schedule to be commissioned on June 2014.

With approximately ₹100 crore left in the accounts, the JMRC is in desperate need of the funds to continue with the pace of the ongoing project. Despite ₹627 crore

sanctioned from the Central Government, a decision to sign the memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the joint venture is still awaited.

As Metro deadline is approaching fast, the construction at project sites has gained momentum. While the amount from Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Centre Government remains on papers, the available funds with the JMRC are exhausting quickly.

(Tol, 06.02.14)

### ATMs at Metro Stations

The JMRC is planning to install automated teller machines (ATMs) of several banks in order to provide a facility to commuters and earn revenue. JMRC has planned two ATMs at each station and tenders have been invited, in this regard.

For banks, Metro stations are an ideal location to install ATMs because of the security measures put in place by the JMRC, according to an official. Metro stations are also ideal places to install these machines, thus providing people the facility to withdraw cash while on the move.

To earn the revenue the JMRC has put forth a condition that the bank has to give at least six months' advance rent to JMRC for installing the machine. The Corporation is also planning to rent out the available space to cafeteria and other stores to earn revenue.

(Tol, 28.02.14)

## JMC Budget – Charting the Way Forward?



*Consistent efforts are required to wash out the variety of problems plaguing the delivery of enhanced services in Jaipur city. However, a number of initiatives have been started by the JMC at occasions for betterment of the city, which it did not continue with the same zeal.*

Jyoti Khandelwal, Mayor Jaipur presented the total Budget of ₹1,128 crore for JMC in February, for the financial year 2014-15. Can we hope that the Budget passed for JMC, in the current year, will contribute towards the progress and prosperity for turning Jaipur into a 'World Class' city and will have a permanent impact on prosperity of pink city?

After a lot of criticism and hubbub for poor performance of JMC, time has taken a U-turn and presently things have started moving in favour for JMC it seems. In two consecutive events, Jaipur bagged two awards indicating better amenities to live in for people. Firstly, it got best city in Rajasthan award in an event organised by ABP news channel and Jyoti Khandelwal received this award from the renowned Bollywood actor, Amir Khan in New Delhi. Secondly, in another event 'Global Garbage Conclave-2014', Jaipur was given the token excellence award for its innovative initiatives in the area of solid waste collection and management. The CEO of JMC received this award for Jaipur. Both these events have given a tremendous boost to JMC officials to take an extra round of the city in order to make it a world class city.

The thrill was also evident from the uproar in the House while Jyoti Khandelwal presented the JMC Budget in February for the financial year 2014-15. Out of the total approved Budget of ₹1,128 crore, ₹556.9 crore has been allocated for the development of Jaipur city. Major thrust is on construction of roads, for which ₹150 crore has been apportioned; ₹100 crore for repairing of the roads and drainage and ₹100 crore has been kept aside for the development work in the slum areas. Establishment of its own police station to expedite action against the land mafia, online approval of building layout plan, replacement of all the street lights with Light Emitting Diode (LED) lights and bottle bio-gas from sewerage treatment plant are some of the other features of the Budget.

Several other endeavours of JMC are coming in the picture these days through media releases. In first of its kind, JMC organised a programme 'Roobaroo' in which a consultation with civil society organisations' (CSOs) resident welfare societies were organised for rejuvenating the process of civic engagement. In 'Prashashan shahron ke sang' (an initiative for redressing public grievances) senior officials of JMC spent two days in each zone office to listen

to and solve the problems of the public on an urgent basis. Several orders for strict enforcement to deal with stray animals, penalty on those who litters etc. have been issued in previous two months.

The flip side of this story is that the JMC is heavily dependent on the allocation made by the State Government. In this Budget, ₹456 crore will come from JMC sources and the rest will be given by the State and Union Government. This has been a trend in the past as well. JMC has never succeeded in achieving even 60 percent of its target in the past. As in financial year 2013-14, JMC was able to achieve only 54 percent of the estimated target. Moreover, the Corporation has also been failing in fully utilising its Budget allocations in the past. The councillors of both Congress and Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) believed that the Budget allocations are kept high just to mislead the residents.

It is also evident that in the financial year 2013-14, out of the Budget approved of ₹1,019 crore JMC was able to earn revenue of ₹440 crore only. The sources to generate revenue, which the JMC has claimed are not sufficient to generate this much income. A BJP councillor said, "The Corporation was unable to collect even a fourth of the urban development (UD) tax during the last financial year". A JMC official informed that ₹600 crore is the balance due on public in form of UD tax.

The problems in the allocation of money at the ward level also exist. As identified in a research conducted during an intervention of CUTS' 'MyCity' to improve the municipal service delivery, money is not allocated based on the need at the ward level but on the basis of influence or the linkages the councillors have. The wards having big geographical area and in more requirement of resources for the development work may get lower amount if the councillors do not hold any influence or linkages. Anyway, a good news that the media shared is the further delimitation of wards is in progress. It may lead to division of big wards.

In a consultation meeting organised by CUTS with the JMC officials, under 'MyCity' intervention, it came out as a fact that consistent efforts are required to wash out the variety of problems plaguing the delivery of enhanced services in Jaipur city. However, a number of initiatives have been started by the JMC at occasions for betterment of the city, which it did not continue with the same zeal.

(Tol & HT, 14.02.14)

Sources: BL: The Hindu Business Line; DB: Dainik Bhaskar; FE: Financial Express; HT: Hindustan Times; IE: Indian Express; NN: Nafa Nuksan; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; Tol: Times of India