

# CityMatters



2/2013

## “We are watching our backs, instead of files”

In this edit, let me address some fundamental issues which are vital for us to think about, rather than just deal with micro governance issues which affect all our lives as citizens of Jaipur.

Many are celebrating P. Chidambaram's one year in the Finance Ministry. Indeed, he is one of the performing minister and is trying to put the economy back on track but it is a Herculean task. We are in a downslide, and it is not only the Finance Minister who can do it, but all branches of the government need to work together.

The situation in the country is quite confusing if not alarming, both in the area of economics and politics. In the area of economics, we continue to grow in spite of the government. Alas, we are not growing sufficiently to be able to create more jobs, while a futile debate goes on about the poverty line. One politician says that one can get a meal for ₹5 and another says that it can be got for ₹12. As if eating a meal is the only yardstick for the poverty line. On the other hand, well meaning policymakers are speaking of 'inclusive growth', but as Sam Pitroda said, inclusive growth is happening for the rich and not the deserving poor.

Everyone complains of delays in decision making in the government, and policy implementation is paralysed. Investors are shying away and big projects have been scrapped. Many Indian companies are now investing abroad. The rupee value is falling faster than water at the Niagara Falls. Government coffers are getting depleted, and the fiscal deficit is rising to alarming levels. Civil servants are not taking risks after many tainted ones, included retirees, are facing enquiries for the large number of scams which have happened under the UPA government: 2G, CWG, Adarsh housing, helicopters purchase, coalgate and what not. As one senior civil servants told me: “we are watching our backs, instead of files”.

On the other hand, with politics in mind the government is pursuing entitlement schemes without bothering about the wherewithal to fund grandiose schemes, while the issues get lost in the Bhagwati-Sen slugfest on whether growth is more important than social welfare or is it the reverse. Indeed, growth is important to expand the cake and only then can we share it for doing other things. If the government decides only to invest in entitlement schemes like the food security law without having the adequate resources, let me assure you that we will go back to pre-1991 situation when we had to borrow from the IMF to save our skins.

In any event most of our social welfare schemes leak hugely. What Rajeev Gandhi said many years ago that only 15 paise of every rupee actually reaches the beneficiaries is a fact. Our own research has confirmed this. There is a pernicious political patronage design of running these social welfare schemes and thus every political party finds it convenient to maintain it.

In the sphere of politics, there is more confusion. Opinion polls conducted by *The Hindu* and others predict a hung parliament, if the elections were held today, and neither the NDA or the UPA will be able to form a government. The other alternative is a third front, which will be a *khichdi sarkar*, supported by either the UPA or the NDA from outside and it is unlikely that they will last a full term as we have seen in our history.

In this scenario economics will get trumped by politics and we will be far from becoming a super power, as we are dreaming.



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

## Scientists to design computers for dogs

UK scientists are designing computers that can be used by dogs to play, operate household appliances and even communicate with their owners. Researchers at the Open University are working with several dog charities to train animals and build 'smart kennels' that will have computers installed inside.



The project is aimed at helping the disabled in their homes by making it easier for dogs to perform tasks for their owners, such as turning on lights, switching on washing machines and answering the phone.

Unlike humans, who have learned to use keyboards and mice to control computers, the scientists are trying to find solutions that are easier for animals to understand. This includes using large bright buttons and touch screen technology. (BL, 12.05.13)

## 7 golden rules to live longer



A few simple changes to diet and lifestyle can protect you against a string of killer diseases and add years to your life, a landmark study has shown. Following seven golden rules not only cut the risk of dying from cancer by 20 percent, it also slashes risks of lung disease by half and heart attacks by 44 percent, the study of nearly 380,000 people by scientists at Imperial College London found.

The rules were drawn up six years ago by the World Cancer Research Fund and American Institute for Cancer Research. The seven rules are:

- Be as lean as possible without becoming underweight.
- Be physically active for at least 30 minutes every day.
- Limit consumption of energy-dense foods and avoid sugary drinks.
- Eat a variety of vegetables, fruit, wholegrains and pulses such as

beans. As well as five portions of fruit and veg a day, try to eat wholegrains with each meal.

- Limit consumption of red meat such as beef, pork and lamb to 500g cooked weight a week and avoid processed meats such as ham, salami and bacon.
- Limit alcoholic drinks to two for men and one for women a day.
- It is best for mothers to breast feed exclusively for up to six months.

(ANI, 29.04.13)

## WHO to curb childhood obesity

The marketing of unhealthy foods for children has proven "disastrously effective", driving obesity by using cheap social media channels to promote fat,



salt and sugar-laden foods, the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Europe office said.

The United Nations health agency called for tighter controls on such marketing, saying tougher regulations were crucial to winning the fight against childhood obesity.

The promotion of foods high in saturated and trans-fats, sugars and salt has for years been recognised as a significant risk factor for obesity in children and for diet-related chronic diseases such as heart disease and some cancers later in life.

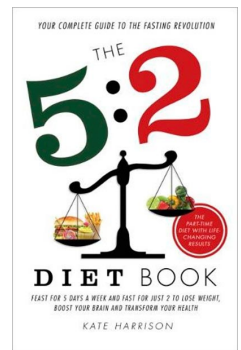
WHO Europe said the food industry increasingly uses cheap new marketing channels, such as social media and smart phone apps to target children. Television remains the dominant form of advertising and a large majority of children and adolescents watch TV on average for more than two hours a day.

(Reuters, 18.06.13)

## New diet craze: Feast 5 & fast 2 days

Forget abandoning carbohydrates or detoxing. The new dieting craze sweeping Britain and taking off in the US lets people eat whatever they like – but only five days a week.

"The Fast Diet", also known as the 5:2 diet, is the brainchild of TV medical journalists Michael Mosley and Mimi Spencer and allows people to eat what they want for five days but only eat 600 calories a day on the other two.



Their book, "The Fast Diet", has topped bestselling book lists in Britain and the US in 2013 and been reprinted more than a dozen times. Mosley said the diet is based on work by British and US scientists who found intermittent fasting helped people lose more fat, increase insulin sensitivity and cut cholesterol which should mean reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes.

(Reuters, 13.06.13)

## Beetles & Locusts on menu

Tasty dragonfly and grilled cricket accompanied by roast beetle or barbecued cicada: all of this and more could be on the menu of the future, in the view of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome.

Insects are already part of the daily diet for many in Africa, Asia and Latin America, particularly when meat and fish are scarce and expensive. The United Nations agency is now calling for people in the West to get over their



disgust at the thought of eating these protein-rich creatures and for the creation of more "insect farms" in south-east Asia among other places.

Until now the international trade in edible insects has been insignificant. With hundreds of millions of people going hungry around the world, and for various other reasons, the FAO is supervising research into the almost 2000 edible insects known on Earth.

(BL, 04.06.13)

## Summer jacket is an AC on the move

A jacket that promises to serve as a mobile air-conditioner is headed for the market. The Personal Cooling Garment is set for field trials after 17 years of



research and development, and the National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad, which has applied for a patent, expects to make the product available in a year, at an estimated price around ₹3,000.

Dr Sunil Kumar, Director in-charge of the Institute said, "It enables what is known as a microfinance auxiliary cooling system."

The jacket weighs about 750 gms. It has three layers, the coolant circulating between the two inner ones, which are of cotton, and a 2mm latex tube separating the middle and the outermost ones. The reservoir attachable to the belt has an immersed, battery-operated pump accessory that helps in continuous recirculation of the coolant.

After field trials, the jacket will be customised and made available in various body sizes and shapes.

(IE, 15.04.13)

## Vegetables get a new status

Thanks to a sustained rise in food inflation over the past two years, vegetables have become something akin to precious commodities. So valuable, in fact, that a gifting firm in Bangalore has deemed it appropriate to consider it an option for its clients.

So, instead of the usual chocolates and wines, this company's clients are now being given baskets of fresh vegetables.

(BS, 14.06.13)



## 'Hero dog' returns after face surgery

A mongrel is set for a hero's welcome when she returns to the Philippines following surgery in the US to reconstruct her face after apparently saving two girls from being hit by a motorcycle.

Kabang was released from the University of California's Davis Veterinary Hospital after eight months of treatment in which her face was partially rebuilt and she was cured of cancer and heartworm.

In 2011, Kabang, then aged two and pregnant, became a hero in the Philippines after running in front of a motorcycle in what her owner said was a deliberate act to save her daughter and niece who were crossing a busy road. In the accident Kabang's snout and part of her jaw were torn off when the motorcycle flipped over, also damaging an eyelid.

A website, Facebook page and Twitter account were set up in an online

fundraising drive, spearheaded by New York nurse Karen Kenngott, which raised more than US\$20,000 for Kabang to be treated in the US. (BL, 04.06.13)

## Is green tea better for you?

All teas contain antioxidant compounds called catechins. Black tea involves oxidising the leaves more than green, and hence black tea is slightly less antioxidant.



Studies have shown health benefits for both kinds of tea, including reduced blood cholesterol and lower rates of cardiovascular disease. However, green tea seems to have the edge.

This may be partly because it's drunk without milk. Black tea with milk has no cardiovascular benefit, according to a 2006 study at Berlin University. In addition, a 2012 study in China found that green tea also repairs age-related damage to brain cells. (ET, 14.04.13)

## The costliest hyphen ever

Grammar Nazis are often screamed down by those who think a misplaced hyphen or semi-colon is no big deal, but these examples of the costliest typos ever made can send a shiver up the spines of even the most hardened of bad writers.



In 1962, the lack of a single hyphen led to the failure of NASA's Mariner 1, America's first interplanetary probe. It was all set to approach Venus, but a single missing hyphen in the coding used to set trajectory and speed caused the craft to explode minutes after take-off.

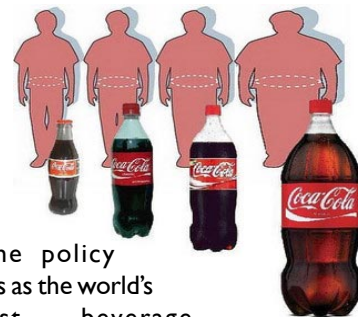
Arthur C Clarke called it the most expensive hyphen in history and with good reason: NASA lost about US\$80mn.

And very recently, some subscribers of department store Macys mailer got a great bargain when the retailer advertised a US\$1,500 necklace for just US\$47 (it should have read US\$497).

(ToI, 14.04.13)

## Coke tries to fend off obesity criticism

Coca-Cola has moved to head off rising concerns that sugary drinks are contributing to an obesity epidemic by adopting clearer calorie-count labels, promoting diet drinks and renewing a pledge not to market to children under 12.



The policy comes as the world's largest beverage company and its rivals draw fire from health experts and lawmakers over the high calorie content of their flagship products.

Coke would encourage consumers to adopt more active lifestyles and apply all the measures in the 200 countries where it operates. The company has tried to take a lead in the war on obesity, running ads that encourage consumers to burn more calories and highlighting its low-calorie and no-calorie drinks.

(FT, 09.05.13)

## Ramniwas Set for Facelift

Ramniwas Bagh is expected to get a facelift soon. Following directions of the Empowered Committee constituted to develop the Pink City as a world-class one, the Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) has drawn up a proposal to develop a piece of vacant land in the garden.



As ample land is available in the *bagh*, many special features have been designed to give it a facelift. A small amusement park for children has also been proposed for the residents. For the safety of pedestrians near the zoo, situated inside the *bagh* has been proposed in the area.

Officials informed that in phase-II of the development, a mini train is also proposed which would ferry visitors from the parking area to Albert Hall museum and to the amusement park. (RP, 04.05.13)

## Waste Management to Private Firms

The Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) is once again all set to award work to private firms to maintain the sanitation of the city. After the failure of A2Z Company, which was given the



responsibility for door-to-door garbage collection, JMC has now completed the planning of another model for an integrated waste management system.

As per the new plan, garbage collection and sanitation work would be outsourced to 10 companies in seven zones. The new model will

ensure proper sanitation as this kind of arrangement is running successfully in cities like Ahmedabad, Surat and Vadodara. The city will be divided into seven zones for garbage collection and each will have a dedicated garbage collector. In case one company is unable to meet the expectations, another company will come into action. (DB, 11.06.13)

## Monorail for Short Routes

After the Jaipur Metro rail project, the Urban Development and Housing (UDH) Department is contemplating a monorail project on a short route in the city. In a recent meeting, directions were given by the UDH Department to Engineering Project India Limited (EPIL), a company interested to join on the public-private partnership (PPP) model, to prepare the feasibility report.

Sources in the Department opined that in 2012, a Malaysian firm, M Rail International, was roped in to conduct a survey for the monorail project for the cities of Jodhpur and Kota. However, the officials of the firm never showed up for the survey. (Tol, 27.05.13 & RP, 25.05.13)



## Automation Technique

Landing and take-off from the Jaipur airport will be facilitated as a latest Airport Transit System was inaugurated by V.P. Agarwal, Chairman, Airports Authority of India. This technique will enable Air Traffic Control to see the location and position of flights within a radius of 450 km on a screen. This technique is connected to automatic flight display, situational data display, control and monitoring display.

The new system will minimise the chances of human errors, save fuel and reduce emissions. The biggest benefit is that it will reduce the distance between two flights from 80 nautical miles in the previous system to 40 nautical miles. (Tol, 05.06.13)

## Jaipur yet to be Smoke-free

After failing to declare Jaipur as a smoke-free city due to improper

compliance of Cigarette and Other Tobacco Product Act (COTPA) 2003, the Medical Health & Family Welfare Department in cooperation with other government departments launched a campaign against advertisements of tobacco products.

The survey conducted by the Medical Health & Family Welfare Department found that compliance of COTPA in the city was 80 percent. A Health Department official said the compliance of COTPA should be more than 90 percent to declare a city smoke free.

The Health Department has stepped up efforts to discourage people from consuming tobacco by removing advertisements from shops and also by putting up warning boards of no-smoking at public places. (RP, 31.05.13)

## Free CFLs

Residents of Jaipur, who consume less than 50 units of electricity in a month, will be given two Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs) free of cost. All they have to do is present the electricity bill with identity proof and take away the CFLs.



There are nearly 60,000 consumers who fall in this category. This is an effort by Rajasthan government to encourage people to save electricity. Jaipur discom is organising one week camps in every sub-division for a week to distribute the CFLs.

All domestic consumers will be given two CFL of 20 watts. 3,000 BPL consumers will also be able to avail benefits of these schemes. (DB, 27.06.13)

## Travel in Deluxe buses to Cost More

Rajasthan Roadways has increased passenger fare of deluxe buses plying the state. The fare has been increased in the range of 3 to 5 paise per km. The government has kept the fare of express and normal busses untouched so that common people do not suffer.

This decision was taken to partly offset the financial challenge arising out of 8 percent hike in Dearness Allowance of the Roadways staff.

The fare between Delhi and Ajmer has increased by ₹14, for Kota by ₹12, for Jodhpur by ₹18, for Bikaner by ₹17, and for a journey to Ahmedabad by ₹35. (DB, 01.05.13)

### Slow Pace of BRTS work

The slow progress in the Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) work on Ajmer road and Durgapura has made travel in the areas a nightmare. With the approaching monsoon and dug up narrow roads, possibilities of accidents have increased. However,



the JDA seems to be helpless in taking action against the contracting firm, despite extending the deadline several times.

The deadline for the completion of elevated roads and BRTS corridor

in the city was extended till December 2012, however, the work could not be completed. Neeraj Cement Structural and ARSS Infrastructure Project had taken up the BRTS work.

The JDA had recently issued a notice to confiscate the performance guarantee of ₹5 crore and also sought an explanation. Despite issuing notices and imposing a penalty of ₹10 lakh no improvement can be witnessed, said an official.

(Tol, 08.06.13)



## Metro Updates

### Metro Junction Skywalk

Train passengers arriving at the Jaipur junction do not need to exit the station to reach the metro. It has been proposed to connect over-bridge on platform number 1 to directly to the metro station which is under construction at Hasanpura. The distance between the foot over-bridge and the metro station is about 200-250 meters.

(RP, 07.06.13)

### Special Training for Metro Security

Police Commissionerate of Jaipur is in the process of appointing a security force for the Metro but personnel need to be trained. The process to prepare an experienced force has begun. The selected persons (age limit of 45 years and experience of minimum 5 years) will be given special training for metro. A list of all policemen who fulfil these criteria is being prepared. 300 policemen will be trained and the batch of 100 trained will be sent to Delhi to receive special training with the Delhi metro.

(RP, 01.06.13)

### Missing the Deadline Again

Jaipur Metro has earned a dubious distinction of missing deadlines. After missing the June and July deadline, the much-touted project is now set to miss the third deadline of August 2013. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) officials blamed price escalation and shortage of skilled labourers for the delay in completion of the project. The process for construction of Metro project phase I (B), proposed from *Badi Chaupar* to *Chandpole* based on an engineering-procurement-construction model, will be initiated in August.

(RP, 13.06.13)

### Technology to Help Metro Chug on Time

DMRC has installed an under-slung launching gantry machine at the *Mansarovar* depot. The gantry is expected to complete the civil work a fortnight before the deadline given to complete the project. DMRC's Chief Project Manager Atul Gadgil said, "The gantry machine has been installed at the *Mansarovar* depot and has started launching the girders. Expert personnel have been put in place to operate the machine." DMRC took the decision of installing the under-slung gantry after observing delays in the construction of ramps through which the Metro trains will get on and off on the track between *Mansarovar* and *Chandpole*.

(RP, 19.05.13)



### ADB Discusses Loan Modalities

The Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (JMRC) will procure a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for phase I-B of the on-going Jaipur Metro project. A six-member team of the ADB led by mission leader DK Lee visited Jaipur, held meetings with authorities of JMRC, discussed various aspects and also

visited several sites of the project. JMRC Chairman-cum-Managing Director N C Goyal briefed the delegates on the progress of the first phase which aims to ply the first metro train in Jaipur by August/September 2013.

(Tol, 16.05.13)

### Wait for Half an Hour

In terms of pace of construction, Jaipur's Metro is being described as the world's fastest next to Mecca's. In terms of commuting speed, it will possibly be the slowest when it is operational. With a partly finished signalling and telecommunications system, the upcoming 9.5-km corridor will be operated as a "single train system with line side signals". This will effectively mean that only one train will do the full journey back and forth. Passengers will get a train for either direction about once every 30 minutes, according to estimates based on average speed over the 19-km back-and-forth journey.

(RP, 05.06.13)

# Is Jaipur a World Class City?

*With reference to the Justice Dave's interview published in the last edition of quarterly newsletter 'CityMatters', the citizen's perspective about the city is now captured. Jaipurites perceive their city in different ways – some feel that it is a beautiful Pink City; others opine that it is the world's best heritage city. Lately, however, Jaipur is also being referred to as a 'World Class City'. For procuring the views of the residents, random interviews were conducted by CUTS.*

### What is the Deputy Mayor's understanding of a 'World Class City'?

Manish Pareek, Deputy Mayor, Jaipur, visualises the city as a beautiful Pink City with a rich heritage. The original planners of the (walled) city displayed rare foresight. It is resplendent with architecturally pleasing chowks and bagichis, wide roads, distinctive chaupads, sacred temples, etc. Perhaps, Jaipur is the only city in the world that reflects the ancient doctrine of *vastu shastra* comprising precepts born out of a traditional view on how laws of nature impact human dwellings. But it is unfortunate that Jaipur falls short of this criteria of a world class city.



### What are the problems?

Lack of a master plan and weak political willingness has hampered the course of development. Mismanagement and lack of coordination and planning are the root causes of most of the problems. The focus of the authorities is on the infrastructural developments rather on strengthening the basic amenities, such as drinking water, sewerage, parking, etc. In the face of lack of such basic amenities, expenditure on the metro appears misplaced.

### Vision

To make this city a better place to live in, Pareek urges that a revitalisation plan should be adopted where people are an integral part of the planning process.

## Excerpts



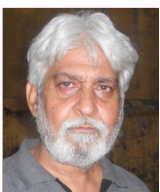
#### Pankaj Agarwal

A businessman by profession, Pankaj Agarwal, is of the opinion that Jaipur is far from being a world class city. In fact, Jaipur is struggling to protect its glory and title of 'Pink City.' His understanding of a world class city is a city with healthy environment, cleanliness, easy access to services, minimal political interference, strong infrastructure, good education, good roads with parking facilities and a controlled traffic system. The problem in getting all this is that no one wants a holistic development; issues are kept unsolved with an eye on votes. Civic sense among the citizens is under developed.



#### Manvi

Manvi, a student, is of the opinion that this city is underdeveloped with immense scope for development. She stated that we have rich heritage and culture but how far we rely upon philosophy and emotions. Though she appreciates the latest infrastructural developments, but at the same time raises the question of people getting access to their rights. In a world class city a person should get an environment for leading a free normal life with access to his/her rights as an individual. She considers political inaction as a major cause for slow development.



#### Kaushal Kishore

Kaushal Kishore, IIM Alumni, is often confused when defining the type of city Jaipur is. He points out the problems of this city and adds that there is a lack of proper planning and vision accompanied with mismanagement. Most MLAs do not have a visionary approach and are often vote centric in their approach. People's participation is almost nil. He suggests that for tackling the traffic problem, four wheelers should be parked outside the walled city as this will help reducing pollution and traffic snarls thus protect monumental heritage.

*Sources: ANI: Asian News International; BL: The Hindu Business Line; BS: Business Standard; DB: Dainik Bhaskar; ET: Economic Times; FT: Financial Times; IE: Indian Express; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; Tol: Times of India*