



4/2010

CityMatters

25 years
1983 2008
CUTS International

Where are Our Roads!

The level of progress of any city is judged by the conditions of its roads and footpaths. If we look at the Pink City from this perspective, then there arises a feeling of immense disappointment. Doubts about the city becoming world class creep in one's mind.

Rules and guidelines exist for construction and maintenance of city roads but the problem arises when engineers/contractors turn a blind eye towards the same at the time of implementation. The citizens are forced to pay for this callous attitude that result in poor roads. In order to hide their carelessness, a layer of pitch (*damar*) is laid by them every year bringing in its wake attendant problems like the level of footpaths (where they exist) becoming the same as that of the road, man-holes of sewers on the road causing bumps. Importantly, this results in increase of road accidents – often fatal ones.

Further, footpaths in Jaipur, if at all they exist, are largely unusable on account of poor design and maintenance. More distressingly, these are being lost due to road widening. There are few, if any, facilities for pedestrians to cross roads safely and conveniently. The pedestrian environment is so severely vitiated that walking, the most natural of human activities, has become an extremely unpleasant and hazardous activity.

A study entitled, 'Traffic Calming Strategies to Improve Pedestrian Safety in India' was carried out by CUTS to identify safety related problems for pedestrians. However, the measures suggested under the study have not been implemented by the relevant authorities till date.

The recent spell of rains in Jaipur swept away roads at various locations – they are no longer all-weather roads. The most crowded roads have been hit severely as these were prone to water logging when they were constructed. Entire portions of roads have caved at various locations posing danger for the passing traffic, particularly after showers when they fill up with water.

Civic agencies are yet to wake up and are expected to take stock of the condition of roads in the city after the monsoons by carrying out repairs. An official at the restoration site near *Sodala* said the quality of patchwork and filling of potholes could not be compared with the full fledged carpeting. Just before the arrival of monsoon the Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) and Jaipur Development Authority (JDA) usually undertake the work of patching up the roads, including streets and by-lanes, in order to control the damage. However, except for the main roads, it was skipped this year due to JMC's financial crisis.

Given the pathetic condition of the city roads, questions have been raised about the quality of work done by the civic agencies. Heavy rains have been blamed. This year the monsoon in Jaipur is about 15 percent above the long-term average; thus, it was 'normal' as per the Metrological Department.

Meanwhile, the JDA Commissioner, Sudhansh Pant, after reviewing road conditions, ordered disciplinary action and suspended three senior engineers for negligence in maintenance of roads. Further, the Commissioner has provided assurance of taking effective steps in future to improve the conditions of roads of the city.

Recent directives have banned all kinds of digging along the roads by any agency except under exceptional circumstances. As matters stand, citizens have to wait longer before they have a smooth ride on the city roads or able to walk safely on the footpaths (if they are built).



Dainik Bhaskar

INSIDE

- ◆ Food Adulteration
- ◆ Parking Woes Hit Traffic
- ◆ Meters to Curb Power Theft
- ◆ Licenses for Street Vendors

Pradeep S. Mehta
Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General

Food Adulteration

A Menace that Nobody Cares About



The people of the state, even after facing price rise of food items, are not certain about their quality. There is no state or city where adulteration has not been done. Adulterants are added intentionally to substances to increase visible qualities and/or for some other misleading purpose.

Adulterants may be laughing at those government-led initiatives across the country, which run campaigns to prevent adulteration, and under their nose they are selling substandard products. Government's intention is suspected: whether they are benefiting the people or providing shelter to the adulterants. This question should be raised before the representatives of the people because adulteration has been transformed into an organised crime and yet governments are unable to decide whose responsibility is to prevent adulteration. Is it the Health or the Food, Civil Supply & Consumer Affairs Department?

In a major operation against adulterated food items, the Medical and Health Department of the Government of Rajasthan recently raided two places at *Gopalji Ka Raasta* and seized 610 kgs of spurious *mawa*. The officials immediately destroyed it and legal proceedings will be initiated under Section 44 AA of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act if found adulterated.

The Health Department also conducted a special campaign to ensure better quality of frozen food products, cold drinks and other beverages and stop other malpractices such as black-marketing and cheating in weights and measures. A state-level committee has been formed to review the progress of the campaign every 15 days and ensure complete elimination of adulteration. More than 4,736 ice-cream factories,

prohibited for artificial ripening of fruits but it is rampant all over the country. Such chemicals used for adulteration are harmful to health and could lead to multi-system failure, including kidney failure. Consumption of adulterated ghee and vegetables could lead to dropsy disease and in some cases even death.

The Food, Civil Supply & Consumer Affairs Department is conducting *Shudh ke Liye Yudh* Campaign, which is marred by various controversies. During the Campaign, it was found that the negligence of hygiene the most common violation followed by the use of prohibited chemicals. Though the adulterated materials were seized and destroyed on the site, legal action against the culprits has to wait till the arrival of test reports and existing testing facilities are very few.

A study carried out by CUTS recently in 12 districts of Rajasthan under the *Grassroots Reachout & Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action* (GRANIRCA) project noted that system of controlling food adulteration is very weak (see Box). The study found that the problem of adulterated and sub-standard food items remains the foremost concern of the consumers. A proper and timely analysis of samples, which is crucial for booking the offenders, was found to be lacking. Only 26 percent of adulteration cases were disposed of within the prescribed period.

Districts	Population (in lakh)	Food Inspectors
Banswara	1,500,420	1
Chittorgarh	1,802,656	2
Bundi	961,269	2
Kota	1,568,580	3
Jodhpur	2,880,777	2
Jalore	1,448,486	1
Churu	1,922,908	–
Tonk	1,211,343	2
Dhaulpur	982,815	2
Alwar	2,990,862	8
Dausa	1,316,790	2
Sikar	2,287,229	3

juice shops and other places involved in manufacturing milk products were inspected and samples were collected for analysis.

Over 20 officials inspected the storages of wholesale fruit sellers, and recovered more than 100 kgs of calcium carbide. The use of this chemical, which is a cancer-inducing agent, has been

Jaipur - an Animation Hub

The Pink city is all set to leave Hyderabad, Pune and Kolkata behind in the race for becoming the country's biggest and the best animation hub. Known for its exports in traditional fabrics, gems jewellery and handicrafts, the heritage city will soon add animation in its list of exports.

Jaipur will shortly have a world class mega gaming and animation centre, with state-of-the-art facilities housed in first-of-their-kind twin towers. Rajasthan State Industrial Development and Investment Corporation Limited (RIICO), has tied up with Laser Infomedia for setting up large scale gaming cum animation centre at Sitapura.

The cost of setting up the studio is estimated at R260.10 crore and the allotment of land in Sitapura falls under the powers of the state government. The project, with its unique features, is going to be first-of-its-kind in the country giving employment to over 3,000 people and generating export earnings of about R500crore. (RP, 11.05.10)

Parking Woes Hit Traffic

The introduction of about 190 low floor buses in the city has brought respite to thousands of daily commuters, who have been deprived of a proper public transport system for long. However, on some of the routes, especially the walled city, the movement of these big buses causes major traffic hassles.

One of the reasons is unauthorised parking outside the shops, which takes up most of the road space, leaving little for traffic movement. The traffic police on duty in the area also agree. The JMC does not seem to be in a mood to remove the unauthorised parking from the sides of the roads.

Meanwhile, Malini Agarwal, Managing Director of the Jaipur City Transport Service Limited (JCTSL) said, "We are open to suggestions from public to improve our services, and have received requests for plying these buses on more routes even in the city". (Tol, 23.06.10)

15000 Families to be Displaced

In order to make Jaipur slum free, 15000 families will be displaced. People living in 22 settlements will be relocated to *Jaisinghpura*. A proposal is being made by the JDA for the same. GS Sandhu, Principal Secretary, Urban Development

Department said that these settlements are at important places and it was necessary to relocate the people.

The JDA will spend an average of R2lakh to construct houses and provide basic amenities to the families which will be relocated. A budget of R300crore is available for the same and the Central Government is also likely to provide some funds. (DB, 18.05.10)

Need a Lesson in Sanitation

Jaipur needs to take a lesson in cleanliness from cities such as Chennai, Nagpur and Delhi. Even though Chennai and Delhi are bigger than Jaipur and produce much more waste, they are cleaner than Jaipur. Even Nagpur, which has half the number of sanitation employees compared to Jaipur, scores better in terms of cleanliness.

The JMC is divided into eight zones and two more are proposed to be added. There are 77 wards and the city's population is over 30 lakh. In spite of a huge spending, nothing seems to have happened as far as cleanliness of the city is concerned. Private companies are responsible for transporting waste in urban areas. Contract has been given for three wards in *Mansarovar* area.

Due to lack of co-ordination and monitoring, the garbage is lifted once in three or four days. Poor drainage system ensures water logging in the rainy season. A garbage treatment plant in *Langadiyavas* and a biodegradable waste treatment plant in *Khori Rupana* have been put up. Garbage is dumped at *Mathuradaspur* on Delhi road and *Sewapura* on Sikar road. (DB, 04.05.10)

JDA to Take Over Ring Road

The JDA on the direction of the state government has decided to take over the project of building Ring Road from National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). A proposal will be sent for the same to the Urban Development Department. JDA commissioner, Sudhanshu Pant has directed the officials to prepare a construction model.

It may be recalled that the Chief Minister, Ashok Gehlot, in his 2009's budget speech announced that

construction work of the Ring Road will be given to NHAI, after which NHAI had also obtained records from the JDA. However, no further progress has been made in last one year. (RP, 02.06.10)

Slow Pace of Medical Services

Emergency cases for CT scan and MRI centre at *Sawai Mansingh Hospital* have to wait for up to 24 hours to get the test done. The centre is being run as



public-private partnership (PPP). A person accompanying patient named Rampyari said that the doctor had asked for an MRI test in the morning, but the appointment for the same was given for 10.18 pm. Considering the ill health of the patient and the heat, it was very difficult to wait for so long.

When asked why emergency patients were being asked to wait for long, the hospital superintendent said that there was a provision of giving immediate attention to emergency patients and he will find out the reason as to why they were being asked to wait. (RP, 28.05.10)

Meters to Curb Power Theft

Electricity department will now keep a tab on the power consumption of consumers having more than one air conditioner. Extra meters will be installed on service lines at electricity poles. This will show the difference between the readings of two meters and if substantial difference is found, action will be taken against the erring consumers. All the divisions have been asked to monitor connections with three phases and also which are using more than one AC.

Various experiments have been done by Jaipur Discom to put an end to the power theft but the same have not yielded any results. Consumers have also adopted new methods to control their electricity bills. (DB, 30.05.10)



Power Cuts Cause Water Woes

Erratic electricity supply is not only causing inconvenience to the consumers, but also contributing to glitches in the water supply. Almost 1,200 tube wells of the water works department are getting directly adversely impacted by this.

If these tube wells are shut down for two hours everyday, then people in the city will receive 20 million less water. There are 1,850 tube wells in the city out of which 650 are directly connected to the feeder from the Electricity Department, hence power cuts do not affect them. (DB, 16.05.10)

Three Level Traffic in Jaipur

Jaipur will now have a three level traffic system for almost 2.5 kms on *Ajmer Road*. In the new model, while the topmost level will be used by metro trains, the middle portion will be for normal traffic while Bus Rapid Transit System (BRTS) buses will ply on the lowest level.

To implement BRTS, 400 buses have to be inducted out of which 220 will cater to the needs of the city while 160 have been earmarked for the suburbs and 20 have been allocated for tourism. An elevated road will also be constructed from *Panipech* to *Khasakothi*. It will run from *Chinkara Canteen* to *Collectorate* and *Khasa Kothi*. (DB, 27.05.10)

Three Storey Parking Complex

The JDA has given approval for the construction of underground parking complex in *Ramnivas Bagh*. A three storied complex, costing around R30crore will be built where space will be provided for parking of 800 cars. JDA will also construct a mini market comprising 20 shops in the subway. These shops will be sold through the auction model.

The parking was earlier expected to be built on Build Operate Transfer with space for 1200 cars. But now this plan has been amended and JDA will implement the project itself. (DB, 25.05.10)

Fine for Polluting Jaldhara

Littering at the tourist spot *Jaldhara* will be dealt with strictly, the JDC Sudhansh Pant said. Those found polluting the water or bathing at the artificial fountains will be charged R100 while dumping plastic bottles and littering will attract a fine of R50. Additional security guards will be deployed at the tourist spot.

The officials said that soon notice boards warning visitors not to pollute the site will be installed and the remaining portion of the boundary will be covered with bamboo screens. JDA will also install 10 solar power lights at *Jaldhara*. The officials were also concerned about rainy season as flash floods could hit the spot. (Tol, 22.05.10)

Swanky Stops for Low-floor Buses

Jaipur will soon get metro train-like stations where the city buses can stop. In an effort to upgrade the city transport system, the JCTSL is all set to construct 512 bus stops on different locations across Jaipur, which will be quite similar to the Metro stations in Delhi.

The size of the bus stops will depend on the availability of land in the particular area. The larger the size of land available, the larger would be the bus stop in that area. 170 low-floor buses are operational in the city.

Meanwhile, the JCTSL also plans to place CCTV cameras in its 170 low-floor luxury buses in a bid to boost security in these buses. The company will also launch smart cards for the commuters, incident and emergency management system and central control system. (DNA, 18.06.10)

SWM on Lines of Pune

To bring sanitation up to the mark in Jaipur, the JMC will set up a plant on the suggestion of the Supreme Court on

Municipal Solid Waste (Management and Handling) Rules. To understand the working of solid waste management (SWM) system better, Jyoti Khandelwal, Mayor, Jaipur and RP Jain, Chief Executive Officer, JMC studied Pune's Municipal Solid Waste plant.

This plant would convert garbage into fertiliser. After this has been built in Jaipur, city's 85 percent waste will be recycled into fertiliser or fuel. An awareness campaign would also be conducted in the city in this regard. (DB, 06.05.10)

Bad Condition of JK Lone

A budget of R14 crore has been sanctioned to make *J K Lone* Hospital, the best children super specialty hospital in Asia. However, the present conditions in the hospital are not very encouraging. The hospital does not have its own ambulance and in case of emergency an ambulance from *SMS Hospital* is called.

The hospital also lacks adequate number of ICU and ventilators. To make matters worse, there is no blood bank in the hospital and people have to visit *SMS Hospital* to arrange for blood when need arises. Accessing the hospital is also not easy as the main gate is reserved for doctors. (RP, 04.05.10)

Licenses for Street Vendors

Soon Jaipur's street vendors will be seen operating out of fancy stalls. They will be provided with the license, which will ensure that the food at their stall is hygienic and healthy. The NGO *Hahnemann Charitable Mission Society* along with the JMC and Ministry of Food Processing has started with the survey of these food vendors. About 700 stalls have been surveyed out of 1800.

While providing the new mobile stalls to these food vendors, the NGO and both the government department plans to grant a loan as each mobile stalls costs R40,000. This upgradation of street food plan also includes the plan to provide insurance to the families of these street vendors. (HT, 02.06.10)



Sources: DB: Dainik Bhaskar; DNA: Daily News & Analysis; HT: Hindustan Times; RP: Rajasthan Patrika; Tol: Times of India