

## Editorial

This period saw CIVIC engaged in a number of advocacy activities for better governance in Bangalore. The period also saw CIVIC forging ties with various groups and networks in Bangalore to enhance collective action. The almost 15-year-long violation of the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment in Karnataka, i.e., the failure to set up a Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC) for Bangalore, was brought into focus at a round-table discussion involving several stakeholders - politicians, bureaucrats, urban researchers, RWAs and NGOs. Useful suggestions regarding the structure and functioning of an MPC came out of the consultation. Light was also thrown on the possible shortcomings and pitfalls that needed to be avoided while setting up an MPC by looking into the experience of the only MPC in the country, the Kolkata MPC.

The Revised Master Plan 2015 for Bangalore, which sets out the long-term vision for the city, was brought under the scanner by a series of discussions with various stakeholders. Disturbing features of the Plan, such as the cutting down of the Green Belt, the destruction of the peace of residential areas by allowing commercial activities of all types in them, the increase in permissible limits for floor-area-ratios (FAR) in the city centre which would increase congestion, all posed a threat to the sustainable development of Bangalore. The partiality shown to the IT/BT industries in the allocation of land, infrastructure and services to the utter neglect of informal and other sectors of the economy, were all dissected by citizens and placed before elected representatives.

Simultaneously, the government brought in an Amendment to the Karnataka Town & Country Planning Act to regularize building bye-law and zoning regulation violations. CIVIC vehemently opposed this move viewing it as a measure that was un-Constitutional as it turned the Rule of Law and the principle of equality before the law on their heads. It rewarded law-breakers and punished law-abiders, while allowing officials who abetted such violations to go scot-free. CIVIC led a delegation to the Principal Secretary, Urban Development, to submit objections to the Act and proposed rules. The measure has been challenged in the High Court by several citizens' groups and the judgement on this eagerly awaited.

cont. on page 2

## Round-table discussion:

### “Setting up a Metropolitan Planning Committee for Bangalore”

– Legislators’ Home- I, Conference Hall – 28<sup>th</sup> July 2007.

A preliminary and exploratory round-table discussion with elected representatives, officials, urban researchers, NGOs, CAF, and other interested citizens on the possible structure and functioning of an MPC was held at the Legislators’ Home-I Conference Hall very successfully on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2007 in collaboration with CBPS and the Centre for Public Policy-IIM-B, headed by Dr. Gopal Naik. Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar, Hon’ble Chairperson of the Karnataka Legislative Council, was the Chief Guest. Dr. A. Ravindra, Dy. Chairperson of the Karnataka State Planning Board and member of the Greater Bangalore Expert Committee presided over the discussion. Mr. K. Jothiramalingam, Urban Development Secretary, GoK, and Mr. Shankaralinge Gowda, BDA Chairman and Commissioner and Mr. P. R. Ramesh, former Mayor of Bangalore also spoke. Mr. Barun Ray, Secretary, Kolkata Metropolitan Planning Committee, made a presentation on the structure, functioning, challenges and opportunities of the Kolkata MPC, which is the only MPC constituted so far in the country as per the 74<sup>th</sup> CA. Due to the sudden extension of the legislature session, MLAs and heads of BBMP, BWSSB, etc. could not be present.



Mr. Barun Ray, Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar, Dr. A. Ravindra and Mr. M. K. Shankaralinge Gowda look on as Dr. Gopal Naik welcomes the gathering.

cont. on page 2

*editorial continued*

Traffic congestion being the most-talked about problem in Bangalore currently, the Metro has been accepted as the solution for it. But it was essential to look at the social and environmental impacts of this mammoth undertaking which is going to guzzle the largest amount of the city's resources in the next few years. CIVIC provided the platform for looking into these aspects.

Karnataka being a receptive State for the introduction of structural adjustment programmes mooted by the World Bank and other International Finance Institutions, the negative impacts of these on the poor have been vexing several civil society groups. CIVIC was part of the process of studying these impacts and organizing discussions around these at a State-level workshop. The findings were then aired at the Indian People's Tribunal on the World Bank.

The long-awaited guidebook on government schemes for the urban poor was released during this period. In all these activities, CIVIC has been fostering the formation of broad-based networks to strengthen civil society's voice in decision-making.

## Round-table discussion:

### “Future of Bangalore”

on 3<sup>rd</sup> June

– Legislators' Home-I Conference Hall

Several issues were bothering Bangaloreans which needed to be brought to the attention of political representatives. The draft CDP for Bangalore put out by BDA allowing commercial activities in mainly residential areas, among many other issues, needed to be addressed. There was a need to advocate for a future governance structure for BBMP under a new law which would incorporate the elements of people's participation and remove the lacunae in the current laws regarding the constitution and functioning of ward committees, which were also objectives of our Project 1. The “Alternative Citizens' Budget for BBMP”, facilitated by CIVIC and prepared by Citizens' Action Forum, needed to be presented to MLAs who would be approving the BBMP's budget. All these issues were sought to be raised under the theme of “Future of Bangalore” in collaboration with Citizens' Action Forum at a round-table discussion at which several city MLAs, an MLC, former Mayors, Standing Committee

cont. from page 1

The following key points emerged from the discussion:

- According to the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment, 243ZE, a Metropolitan Planning Committee SHALL be constituted to prepare a draft development plan for the metropolitan area as a whole.
- Bangalore is growing at a rapid pace. Planning done in an *ad hoc* manner is leading to delay and lack of incorporation of the needs and wishes of the various stakeholders. Planning process does not take into account elected representatives and is wholly done by officials and various parastatal bodies.
- An MPC without finance to back up its plans is of no value and plans without sanctions are no good too.
- In Kolkata, the formation of the MPC has not guaranteed that resources for actualizing plans will be available or that coordination between multiple agencies and multiple layers of government will happen.
- Sub-committees dealing with specific sectors, such as education, health, livelihood, etc., could be constituted under the MPC, on the lines of the Kolkata MPC.
- Plans of the MPC should be development plans even for the social sector and livelihood promotion and not be restricted to spatial allocations and physical infrastructure such as roads, expressways, airports, etc.
- MPC should consist not only of elected representatives from local bodies but local civil society organisations should also be given representation.

*Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar, Mr. Roshan Baig and Ms. Mumtaz Begum look on as Ms. Kathyayini Chamraj makes a presentation*



Chairpersons, urban researchers, RWAs, NGOs, etc. were present. Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar, Hon'ble Chairperson of the Karnataka Legislative Council, presided over the discussion and supported the issues raised by citizens' groups. The discussion elicited a good response from citizens and political representatives. Key issues raised were:

On the RMP 2015:

- *The role of elected representatives is gradually diminishing into insignificance while the role of bureaucrats is becoming more dominant. Unilateral decision making should make way for consensual decision-making involving citizens' groups. An irregularity remains unlawful and cannot be made lawful. If you are regularising unauthorised occupations, a distinction should be made between personal and commercial purposes. Regularising premises being used for commercial purposes is completely unacceptable*

**Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar**

- *The Master Plan has reduced lung and green spaces from 65% to 35%. Open spaces have reduced from 15% to 7.5%, whereas the City and Town Planning Acts specify that open spaces have to be maintained at 15%*

**Dr. Gopal Naik**  
CPP – IIM-B

- *The Master Plan does not find favour either with citizens or the Review Committee. While citizens gave 7,000 representations, the Committee has given a 41 page list of its objections. As per the Plan, all residential areas will have main and ancillary activities. While having neighbourhood shops in residential areas is fine, some will have shopping malls, convention centres, multiplexes, hospitals, IT and corporate offices. What will be the plight of the residents?*

**Major Promod Kapur**

- *We spend Rs. 600 crore to remove water through storm water drains. If we spend 20-30% of this money, we can get water to percolate into the ground*

**Mr. P. R. Ramesh**  
Ex-mayor of BMP

- *The Right to Information Act should be used to find out how the MLAs, MPs and Mayor's funds are used*

**Mr. Roshan Baig**  
Ex-MLA, Shivajinagar

- *2.25% earmarked for commercial areas is very little and will give rise to illegal constructions. Increasing this allocation will reduce the number of illegal constructions*

**Mr. Naganna**  
Lok Paritran

- *It is difficult for a farmer to maintain his land declared to be in the green belt when his neighbouring land is being sold for a huge sum. Government should acquire these lands and maintain them. The Supreme Court has said so with respect to Pune's green belt.*

**Mr. Krishnappa**  
Ex-standing committee chairman, BMP

- *If such acquisitions are not done, then Bangalore will have 95% illicit buildings*

**N.L. Narendra Babu**  
Ex-MLA, Rajajinagar

- *One plan retained the green belt areas but the CDP that was chosen removes green belt areas. Who took the decision to remove the green belt areas and how?*

**Vinay Baindur**

On BBMP's governance structure:

- *At the BMP Council meetings the focus is on problems of the entire city. It is necessary to strengthen ward committees and sabhas so that they are able to sort out local problems at the local level effectively*

**N.L. Narendra Babu**

- *I will support the demand that every ward should have one committee and that the members should be directly elected.*

**Dinesh Gundu Rao**  
Ex-MLA, Gandhinagar

- *Pressure/civic groups should be vigilant and act as catalysts. Political accountability is brought up only during elections and is ignored during the intervening five years. It is necessary to have regular accountability – day to day, monthly, once in three months etc.*

**Anupama**  
Representative, Resident's Welfare Association

# Panel discussion on Revised Master Plan (CDP) 2015 for Bangalore & Building Bye-Law & Land Use Zoning Violations Regularisation Act

- Institute of Agricultural Technologists- 19<sup>TH</sup> September 07

The Government approved the Revised Master Plan-2015 and notified the Karnataka Town & Country Planning (Regularisation of Unauthorised Development or Construction) Act & Rules 2007. Both these have become operational. These affect living conditions of people of the city and state in various ways. Some have approached the High Court by way of Public Interest Litigations (PILs) to set aside or modify both of the above to make living conditions satisfactory.

With this background, CIVIC in association with CAF, organised a panel discussion at the Institute of Agricultural Technologists, Queen's Road, Bangalore 560001, on Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007, between 3.00 and 6.00 PM. The purpose of the meet was to highlight the issues confronting people and evoke responses and commitments for remedial action by them. Prof. B. K. Chandrashekar, Hon'ble Chairman, Karnataka Legislative Council, Mr. Shankara Murthy, Janata Dal (S), Mr. B. M. Vijayakumar, President, BJP City Unit, Mr. S. C. Kari Gowda, Member, PSS Thomas Committee, participated as panel members. Mr. Mathew Thomas of CAF moderated the discussion in the format of "The Big Fight" on NDTV.

## Analysis of "Reforms Process in Karnataka"

on 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> June – SCM House



*Mr. Gururaja Budhya speaks at the state level discussion on "Reforms process in Karnataka".*

As part of the above project and in preparation for the Independent People's Tribunal on the World Bank at New Delhi from 21<sup>st</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> September 2007, a state-level workshop to review the 'Reforms Process in Karnataka' was conducted by CIVIC in collaboration with Urban Research Centre, CASUM-M, Equations, etc., on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2007 at SCM House. Presentations were made by experts in various fields on the impact of reforms on various sectors, including governance, infrastructure, health, power, forests, water, micro-finance, banks, etc. The negative impacts of reforms on the poor were analysed and the abdication or weakening of the government's role in protecting the interests of weaker sections were criticised. The workshop was a fore-runner to the presentations that the Karnataka groups will be making at the New Delhi IPT on the World Bank. A report has been prepared of the proceedings which will be circulated soon.

## CIVIC at the World Bank –Independent People's Tribunal at New Delhi

A network of NGOs comprising CIVIC, Equations, URC, CASUM-M, etc., participated in the World Bank – Independent People's Tribunal held at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, between 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September 2007, and presented case studies on the impact of WB loans

and conditionalities on the water, power and forest sectors of Karnataka before an eminent jury. The Karnataka delegation was among the few that made state-level presentations and its presentations were much appreciated.

Excerpts from presentations at state-level meet on  
“Reform Process in Karnataka” 21st and 22nd June 2007 and  
World Bank Independent People’s Tribunal at New Delhi in September 2007

**On Health Sector reforms** - *“The Karnataka Health System Development and Reform Project funded by the World Bank is looking only to the techno-managerial aspects of health delivery systems and its focus is on capacity building, selective cost-effective treatment strategies and not at the wider determinants of public health like water supply, nutrition, sanitation etc and was neglecting the needs of the poor, indigent and the marginalized people.”*

- Naveen of Community Health Cell

**On Power Sector reforms** - *“The World Bank stated objectives for initiation of the reform process, namely, reducing losses and increasing customer satisfaction with power supply, do not emerge naturally or in direct consequence of operating in market based structures. The Karnataka experience so far also shows the same. There has been no substantial reduction in the T&D losses, no reduction in demand for subsidy, no increase in power supply to various types of customers or improvement in efficiency leading to reduced cost.”*

- Anjula Gurtoo, IISc

**On Water Sector reforms** - *“The World Bank which pile drives the water sector reform process in Karnataka is of the opinion (at least from the KUWASIP and GBWASP documents) that “Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) service in India, particularly in Karnataka, has a long history of poor performance, and the current trends indicate that the situation is worsening. Thanks to this influence, several reforms have been initiated including the privatisation of Operation & Maintenance (O&M) component in four cities in North Karnataka. While we are making this critique of the water sector reforms we are conscious of the fact that even today the problems that the urban poor face in terms of access to water is quite serious and would be heightened by these reforms.”*

- Campaign Against Water Privatisation-Karnataka’s deposition at WB-IPT

*The Forest Sector policy of World Bank of 1991 was to promote the involvement of corporates in the forestry sector. Fortunately the National Network of NGOs, academicians and some exceptional government officials spearheaded by the National Committee for Protection of Natural Resources*

*(NCPNR) have been able to successfully oppose this wrong policy of World Bank. The progressive National Forest Policy, 1988 and also the Amended Forest Conservation Act are in favour of seeing that the first charge on forest produce (fodder, fuel wood, small timber, and varieties of NTFPs) is by the tribals and other rural poor*

- S. R. Hiremath, Samaj Parivartana Samudaya (SPS) and NCPNR

*“The World Bank through its various project specific loans and also the state level reform and restructuring loans (KERL-I and II) to Karnataka has caused the conversion of a state government and its economy into a corporatised entity meant to generate funds for “private sector and enterprise development. This has created a highly lopsided development pattern based on mainly Bangalore centric cross -subsidy of the IT and BT sectors. The income of the highest 20 % is 60 X more than lowest 20% ( BDA draft Master Plan 2005 data)”*

- Karnataka delegation’s presentation before WP-IPT Jury

*“The Bank is promoting legal and regulatory changes the main focus of which appears to lessen the social and environmental compliance burdens for industry and investors, rather than protect the vulnerable livelihoods and environments of India’s poor majority. The net effect of many Bank prescribed policy “reforms” appears to be the reorientation of the Indian State priorities from striving to secure a safety net for the poor and vulnerable to providing a safety net for large domestic and international corporations and investors.”*

- Jury at World Bank Independent People’s Tribunal (WB-IPT)

*“...the bank seems to have developed the art of making policies whose safeguards are only on paper. It has developed a language game in which words like empowerment actually mean disempowerment, sustainable means unsustainable, public-private partnership means using the public to promote the interests of the private”*

- Jury at WB-IPT

# Release of “Guidebook on Government Schemes for the Urban Poor”

on May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2007 – Senate Hall, Central College



*Ms. Lakshmi Venkatachalam, Ms. Ruth Manorama and other leaders of NGOs at the release of the guidebook on government schemes.*

Work on the long-pending compendium of government schemes for the urban poor was completed. The book has been brought out in a very attractive manner and is much in demand. The guide-book was released at a well-attended function on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2007 at the Senate Hall, Central College, by Right Livelihood Award-winner, Ms Ruth Manorama, General Secretary of Women’s Voice. Ms Lakshmi Venkatachalam, Secretary for Urban Development presided over the function and lauded CIVIC’s initiative in compiling all the government schemes into one guide-book, which was not available even with government. She also commended CIVIC’s commitment to social justice. Leaders of several groups working for the urban poor and our partners, such as Mr. Lakshapathi of APSA, Ms Bhagyalakshmi of Paraspara, Mr. Ramachandrappa, project director of BRIDGE initiative, and Mr. N. P. Samy of KKNSS, spoke on the occasion praising the effort of CIVIC in fulfilling a long-felt need of the urban poor. A song on RTI and street-play on RTI, commissioned by CIVIC, were performed on the occasion to great effect and were much appreciated by the audience consisting of large numbers of the urban poor and RTI activists.

## Panel discussion on the “Socio-Economic & Environmental Impacts of the Bangalore Metro”

on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2007

With public consternation rising over the large-scale tree-cutting for the Metro rail and other feared socio-economic impacts of the Metro, on the livelihoods of hawkers, vendors, traders and other transport systems in the vicinity of the Metro, it was felt necessary to organise a panel discussion on the “Socio-economic and Environmental Impacts of the Bangalore Metro”. Such a public consultation and disclosure of plans was also necessary to fulfil the requirements of transparency under Section 4(1) (c) and (d) of the Right to Information Act.

Retired Judge of the High Court, Justice Michael F. Saldanha, presided over the discussion. Mr. V. Madhu, MD and Mr. Jayaram, Environmental Officer, of BMRCL made presentations on the Metro and plans of BMRCL to counter the adverse effects of the Metro respectively. Mr. Yellappa Reddy, chairperson of the Environmental Committee of the BMRCL also spoke. Mr. Vinay Baidur of CASUM-M and Mr. Leo Saldanha of Environment Support Group posed several uncomfortable questions vexing the public on the Metro. Justice Saldanha called upon the CM and Urban Development Secretary to organise meetings to clarify the various issues raised regarding the BMRCL.

*· An Environment Monitoring Committee is doing baseline studies on the planning, land acquisition, rehabilitation, loss of green cover, rainwater harvesting, etc., and making suggestions on each.*

**Mr. Jayaram**  
Environmental Officer, BMRCL

*· The earlier alignment of the Metro ran on government land on the Old Madras Road and about Rs. 600 crore would have been saved from the Treasury. Then why was the alignment changed to CMH Road where 900 shops would have to be demolished?*

**Mr. Ahmed**  
shop-owner, CMH Road

*· No one knows better than me the value of every tree. I will sacrifice the Chairman’s post if environmental issues are disregarded*

**Mr. Yellappa Reddy**  
Chairman,  
Environment Monitoring Committee, BMRCL

*· The government could have considered the monorail option, so that the city could have suffered less environmental damage. Bangalore City has lost 19,500 trees in the last nine years due*

to construction of various projects. In Delhi 230 small traders have committed suicide. On the other hand, the Kuala Lumpur rail system has been made without cutting any trees or destroying any houses. The financial cost also has to be taken into account.

**Justice Michael F. Saldanha**

• While the Metro Project will cost the exchequer Rs. 6,400 crores, Rs. 10,000 crores for the inner core ring road, peripheral ring road, the satellite town ring road, etc., have been approved. This will promote more private vehicles. The government lacks a unified transport policy and is actually catering to the car lobby. A United Metropolitan Transport Authority should have been set up to look holistically into the problem of transport in Bangalore city before the Metro Rail was commissioned and not after.

**Vinay Baindur  
Trustee, CASUMM**

• 'Namma metro' is a misnomer. There has been no consultation with the public. I am asking for a process. That process is missing. The problem is that the leadership here wants to leave a legacy but it is the wrong legacy. Mega projects should not be an ambition of the leaders. The metro project is catering to a number of lobbies and it should be dropped.

**Leo Saldanha  
Environment Support Group**

• This audience does not reflect the views of all Bangaloreans

**V. Madhu  
MD, BMRCL**

grievances that are aired at these gatherings and also to build a responsible, response relation with the administration. Efficiency of the system is monitored by evaluating the number of grievances resolved by various departments. The findings are presented at the programme itself. In these six months, three GRMs at ward levels (ward 67, ward 96 and ward 54) and two GRMs at slums of ward 67 were conducted.



GRM at ward 67



GRM at LR Nagar Slum

## Grievance Redressal Melas (GRMs)

CIVIC conducts GRMs at ward and slum levels with service providers (BBMP, BDA, BESCOM, BMTC, BWSSB and Traffic Police) and particular departments (such as Food and Civil Supplies and Health) respectively. The exercise is aimed at addressing the present and persisting

CIVIC studied and presented the efficiency of the departments in responding to grievances to the people in Ward 54.

### Efficiency of Service Agencies

Sl. No	Service Agency	No. of applications submitted under RTI	No. of replies got under RTI	No. of days taken to get answers	Action taken	Action promised	Percentage of applications converted into actions
1	BBMP	74	28	54 -113	10	18	14%
2	BWSSB	20	08	93	03	05	15%
3	BMTC	16	16	54	5	11	31%
4	BESCOM	04	04	56	0	04	0%
5	TRAFFIC POLICE	18	02	114	01	01	5%
6	BDA	08	08	56	02	06	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>Avg: 84</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>45</b>		<b>Avg.: 15%</b>

## Workshops on RTI act

The marginalized in the city have no voice and no platform to air their grievances. It is appalling that they are treated as second-rate citizens. Though they directly and indirectly contribute to the GDP of the city and ensure that the city is a dynamic organism, it is unfortunate that their living conditions remain unchanged since decades. Educating slum-dwellers on the powerful tool of RTI and how it can be used in getting information about services and schemes in the government meant for them and making sure they use it to better the services offered to them is one of the tasks CIVIC is engaged in. CIVIC conducted 15 workshops at various locations on RTI for the slum dwellers and equal numbers of follow-up trainings where they were assisted to file applications with various departments. CIVIC has forged ties with about 30 NGOs in the city constituting the NGO Forum to take RTI to the marginalized in the city.



Workshop at AK colony slum

## Workshops on Nagarapalika Act

(74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act)

CIVIC conducted workshops with proactive citizens in 10 wards, namely 64 - Jayanagar, 54-Srinivasanagar, 53-Srinagar, 92-Jaymahal, 50-VV Puram, 69-Ramamurhtynagar, 96-Hebbal, 67-Koramangala, 77-SR Nagar and 97-RT Nagar on the Nagarapalika Act and ways in which decentralisation is envisaged. CIVIC has developed a guidebook on the subject, "Power to the People", which provides the basic features of the 74<sup>th</sup> CA, Wards Committees, their limitations in their current form, how they functioned in Bangalore city and CIVIC's recommendations for their better functioning. The workshops also explore ways to use RTI in eliminating corruption and getting grievances heard and redressed.



Workshop at ward 50

**JOIN CIVIC TODAY AND SUBSCRIBE TO CIVIC space**

Name: Mr/Ms .....

Address.....

Age: ..... Occupation:.....

Tick appropriately in box:

- I would like to be involved in CIVIC's activities only as a donor [ ]
- I would like to attend CIVIC's meetings/panel discussions, etc. [ ]
- I would like to volunteer my time for CIVIC [ ]

### Newsletter Subscription (per year)

Individual: Rs.100

Residents' Welfare Associations: Rs. 200

Organizations/Corporates: Rs. 2000

Individual Life Subscription: Rs. 2000

Cut out this portion and send along with a cheque in favour of CIVIC Bangalore to:

**CIVIC Bangalore, #6, II Floor Kasturi Apartments, 35/23 Langford Road Cross, Shantinagar, Bangalore 560 025. Tel : 22110584 Email: info@civicspace.in Website: www.civicspace.in**