

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE ON STATUS OF MUNICIPAL EDUCATION IN MUMBAI

Date: 13th May 2013

Venue:

MCGM Committee Hall, 1st Floor, MCGM Head Quarter,
Mumbai C.S.T.

Organised by



Round Table on Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai

Praja Foundation is a non-partisan voluntary organisation which empowers the citizen to participate in governance by providing knowledge and enlisting people's participation. Praja aims to provide ways, in which the citizen can get politically active and involved beyond the ballot box, thus promoting transparency and accountability.

Our studies and work towards the four core sectors in Mumbai's development and issues faced by Aam Mumbaikar namely: Health, Education, Civic and Crime over the last few years have been well published and have significant reach amongst the policy makers and policy influencers other than the common citizens. Praja comes out with white papers at regular intervals on the 4 core issues mentioned earlier. The white paper on education, published in December 2012, brought to the limelight several facts about the Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai.

To further the discussion that initiated through the Education White Paper, Round Table conference on Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai was organized on 13th May, 2013, where a few specifically invited domain experts from the Education fields presented their paper followed by a discussion on possible solutions for the issue. The main objective of the conference was to evolve consensus on priorities for remedial measure for making public (municipal) education system of the city effective and efficient.

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कार्यकारी सारांश

मुंबईत महानगरपालिका शिक्षणाच्या स्थिती वर गोल मेज परिषद

प्रजा फाउंडेशन एक पक्षनिरपेक्ष स्वयंसेवी संस्था आहे जी नागरिकांना ज्ञान देवून व त्यांच्या सहभागांना सूचीबद्ध करून राज्यकारभारात सहभाग करण्यात समक्ष करते. प्रजा, मुंबई महानगरपालिका व श्री मनोज कोटक (अध्यक्ष, शिक्षण समिती, मुंबई महानगरपालिका) ने दि. १३ मे २०१३ रोजी मुंबईत महानगरपालिका शिक्षणाच्या स्थितीवर चर्चा करण्यासाठी एक गोल मेज परिषद आयोजित केली गोल मेज परिषदेच आयोजन प्रजा द्वारा प्रसिध्द आपल्या डिसेंबर २०१२ च्या श्वेत पत्रिकेत मांडलेल्या सार्वजनिक (पालिका) शिक्षण पध्दती विषयक बाबींवर चर्चा करण्यासाठी केल गेलं. ह्या गोल मेजचा उद्देश होता शहरच्या सार्वजनिक (पालिका) शिक्षण पध्दतिसाठी उपाय योजनांवर परिणामकारक व कार्यक्षम सर्वसामान्य मत व अग्रक्रम विकसित करणे. परिषदेची अध्यक्षता सह अध्यक्ष श्री. मनोज कोटक (अध्यक्ष, शिक्षण, समिती) व सह अध्यक्ष आणि नियामक श्री. डी. एम. सुखटणकर (माजी महानगरपालिका आयुक्त, मुंबई व माजी मुख्य सचिव, महाराष्ट्र शासन) यांनी केली. ह्या गोल मेज परिषेदत सर्व राजक्रिय पक्षांचं प्रतिनिधीत्व करणारे नगरसेवक, पालिका प्रशासनाचे सदस्य राज्य शिक्षण खात्याचे प्रतिनिधी, माजी अधिकारी शिक्षण विभाग व नागरी समाजाचे प्रतिनिधी शिक्षणतज्ञ सह यांनी सहभाग केला.

श्री. निताई मेहता, व्यवस्थापन विश्वस्त, प्रजा फाउंडेशननी चर्चेस सुरुवात केली. त्यांनी अध्ययनांचे काही निर्णायक निष्कर्ष प्रतिपादित केले, ते म्हणाले, शिक्षण हे महानगरपालिकेचं बंधनकारक कर्तव्य आहे. ज्याचं चार लक्षांपेक्षा जास्त मुंबईच्या मुलांना लाभ होती. तथापि, मागील दशकात गळतीच्या संख्येत वाढ झाली आहे. चांगली पायाभूत सुविधा व अर्ह शिक्षक

असतांना सुध्दा ते पुढे म्हणाले की एका कौटुंबिक सर्वेक्षणात असे निदर्शनास आलं आहे की, ८३ टक्के पालकांनी पालिका शाळा ऐवजी खाजगी शाळांसाठी प्राधान्य व्यक्त केलं. श्री. मेहतांनी विशद केलं की गोल मेजचा उद्दिष्ट आहे शिक्षणाच्या गुणवत्तेत सुधारणा घडविण्यासाठी काम करणे गरजेचे आहे ह्या विषयावर चिंतन करणे.

श्री. मनोज कोटक यांनी व्यक्त केलं की पारंपारिक व सांस्कृतिक रित्या देश भरात पालिका शाळा सामाजिक व आर्थिक दृष्ट्या वंचित वर्गांना सेवा प्रदान करतात, म्हणून अध्यापनाचा माध्यम देशी भाषा आहेत. गळतीत वाढ ही सामान्य कल खाजगी देशी भाषा शाळेत सुध्दा आढळते; ह्याच कारण आहे की पालकांचा कल इंग्रजी माध्यमांच्या शाळेकडे वाढत चालला आहे.

श्री. सुखटणकर यांनी व्यक्त केलं की, भारतासारख्या विकासशील देशात सामाजिक व आर्थिक रूपाने वंचित समाजांना संधी उपलब्ध करून देणे नेहमीचं आह्वान कारक आहे.

पुढचा मार्ग

श्री. मिलींद म्हस्के, प्रकल्प संचालक प्रजा फाऊंडेशन व श्रीमती फरिदा लांबे, सह संस्थापक व विश्वस्त, प्रथम यांनी बृहन्मुंबई महानगरपालिकेच्या शिक्षण पध्दतिच्या उपलब्धी व कमतरता विषयी प्रस्तुतीकरण केलं त्यातून उद्भवणारे काही कृतिबिन्दु खालील प्रमाणे आहेत.

- मुलांच्या शिक्षण निष्पत्तिचं मोजमाप करण्यासाठी नियमित सर्व समावेशक मूल्यांकन.
- शिक्षकांच्या निर्माण क्षमतेच्या पाठिंब्यासाठी उचित, नियतकालिक मूल्यांकन.
- आधुनिक अध्यापनशास्त्र व तंत्रज्ञानांचं पुनर्स्थापन

- निवडलेल्या प्रतिनिधींनी आपापल्या प्रभागात समित्यांचं गठन व नेतृत्व करावं.
- शिक्षणाच्या अधिकारअंतर्गत प्रथम पाऊलं.
- वास्तववादी कालखंडावर सहमती
- समावेशक शिक्षणावर लक्ष
- दर्जेदार शिक्षणावर लक्ष
- अहितकृत नागरी क्षेत्रांमध्ये शाळाबाह्य व गळतीसाठी विनिर्दिष्ट युध्दतंत्रावर लक्ष.

सघन चर्चेदरम्यान खालील बिंदूवर (अध्यक्ष, शिक्षण समिती, मुंबई महानगरपालिका आणि शिक्षण खाते, मुंबई महानगरपालिका) यांनी प्रकाश टाकला

- १) गळती थांबवण्यासाठी अर्ध इंग्रजी शाळांची गरज ओळखली गेली.
- २) इंग्रजी भाषा कौशल्य विकसित करण्यासाठी सतत शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण.
- ३) विद्यार्थ्यांचं वाचन कौशल्य सुधारण्याची गरज, ज्यांसाठी ग्रंथालयांचा उपयोग स्थापित करणे गरजेचे.
- ४) ज्या शाळांकडे अपूऱ्या पायाभूत संरचना आहे त्यांना जास्त चांगली पायाभूत संरचना पुरविणे ज्यासाठी तातडीने कारवाई करणे गरजेचे आहे.
- ५) ज्या शाळा पूर्णपणे ताब्यात नाहीत व ज्या गैर शासकिय संस्थांना व खाजगी शाळांना वापरण्यास दिले गेले आहेत. त्यांच्या गैरवापरावर आळा बसविणे.
- ६) खाजगी अनुदानित शाळांच्या हालचालींवर संनियंत्रण.
- ७) सार्वजनिक शालेय शिक्षकांनी खाजगी शाळेस तसेच उलटपक्षी अनावृत्ती भेट द्यावी.

- ८) दृक / श्राव्य तंत्रज्ञानाच्या परिणामकारक उपयोगावर दर्जेदार प्रशिक्षण निविष्ट्या.
- ९) पात्र मुख्य अध्यापकाच्या योग्यतांना मजबूत करण्याची आवश्यकता व पदोन्नती पूर्व त्यांनी काही मापदंडे पूर्ण करणे अपेक्षित पार्श्वक प्रविष्टींना पण पदोन्नत केलं जावू शकते.
- १०) मुलांच्या शिक्षण स्वरूपावर झोपडपट्टी पुनर्वसन प्राधिकरणाच्या आघाताचे मापन करण्यासाठी अभ्यास राबविणे.
- ११) शाळेच्या कार्याच्या तृतीय पक्षी विश्लेषणासाठी ओळखीचे गैर शासकिय संघटना व तंत्रांचा एक बाह्य दल नेमणे गरजेचं.
- १२) शिक्षण निष्पत्ति सुधारण्यासाठी गैर शासकिय संघटना व तंत्रांच्या निविष्ट्या.
- १३) पूर्ण दिवस शाळा काम करणाऱ्या पालकांना मदत करू शकते.
- १४) काही क्षेत्रांमध्ये स्कूल बसची गरज आहे, अन्यथा काही मुलांना ३ कि.मी. चालून जावं लागतं.
- १५) शिक्षणाच्या अधिकार अधिनियमातून उत्तीर्ण होण्याचा कलम घ्यावा.

श्री. कोटक ह्यांनी गोल मेज परिषेदचं समापन करतां निम्न बिंदूवर संक्षेपण केलं.

- अर्ध इंग्रजी शाळांना त्यांच्या मातृभाषेत चांगल्या शिक्षण/ग्राह्यतेसाठी प्रोत्साहन दिलं पाहिजे जेणे करून ते इंग्रजी माध्यमातून शिक्षण देवून चांगल्या सेवा योज्यतेच्या दिशेने वाटचाल करू शकतील, गणित विज्ञान सारखे विषय इंग्रजीत शिकवणे गरजेचे.
- शाळांनी त्यांचा कल उत्तीर्णता पध्दती-कडुन वळवून शिकण्याच्या पध्दतिकडे वळवावा व शिक्षण निष्पत्तिचं मापन करावं.
- शिक्षण निष्पत्ति व शिक्षकांच्या क्षमता निर्माण मापण्यासाठी तृतीय पक्षी मुल्यांकन राबवावं.
- विकास कार्ये हाती घ्यावे व शाळा पायाभूत संरचनेत सुधारणा करावी, शाळा सूरू होण्यापूर्वी दूरूस्तीची कामे करावी.
- इतर पाठिंबा देण्याच्या पध्दति जसं खेळ व आरोग्य कार्यक्रम निकट भविष्यात राबविले जातील.
- गैर शासकिय संघटनांच्या सहभागास प्रोत्साहन द्याव व प्रक्रियेत प्रामाणिक गैर शासकिय संघटनांना समाविष्ट करावं.
- संपूर्ण २४ विभागांत समित्या स्थापन करावी ज्यांच्यात नगरसेवक, शिक्षण खात्याचे अधिकारी व गैर शासकिय संघटना प्रतिनिधी शिक्षण पध्दतिमध्ये आढळलेल्या कमतरता वर चिंतन करून त्यात सुधारणा घडवण्यासाठी एकत्र काम करतील. प्रजाला चिंतन प्रक्रियेस सुकर करण्याची जबाबदारी सोपवावी.
- बृहन्मुंबई महापालिका शाळांच्या विकास प्रक्रियेत सर्व दावेदारांना समाविष्ट करावं.
- आणि शेवटी, पुढच्या चिंतन व प्रगति संनियंत्रणांसाठी अध्यक्ष, प्रजा व बृहन्मुंबई महानगरपालिका संयुक्त रूपानी नियतकालिक पाठ-पुरावा सभा आयोजित करतील.

Executive Summary

Round Table Conference on Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai

Praja Foundation is a non-partisan voluntary organisation, which empowers citizens to participate in governance by providing knowledge and enlisting people's participation. Praja, the MCGM (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai) and Mr. Manoj Kotak (Education Committee Chairperson, MCGM) organised a round table conference to discuss the Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai, on 13th May 2013. The round table was organised to discuss pertinent issues from Praja's Education White Paper titled: 'Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai' raised about the public (municipal) education system in Mumbai in December 2012. ***The objective of this conference was 'to evolve a consensus on the priorities for remedial measures for making public (municipal) education system of the city effective and efficient.'*** The conference was chaired by Co-Chairperson: Mr. Manoj Kotak (Chairperson, Education Committee) & Co-Chairperson and Moderator: Mr. D. M. Sukthankar (former Municipal Commissioner, Mumbai and former Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra). Municipal Councillors representing all political parties, members of the municipal administration, representatives from the State Education Department, former bureaucrats from the Education Department and civil society representatives, including educationists participated in this round table.

Mr. Nitai Mehta, Managing Trustee of Praja Foundation, set the tone of the discussion. He mentioned a couple of crucial findings of the study. He said, 'providing primary (elementary) education' is an obligatory duty of the MCGM and it benefits over four lakhs children of the city. However the number of dropouts has increased over the last decade, despite better infrastructure facilities and qualified teachers. He further added that in a household survey about 83 percent of parents expressed preference for private schools rather than municipal schools. Mr. Mehta explained that the purpose of the round table is to deliberate upon what needs to be done to improve the quality of education imparted through Municipal Schools run by the MCGM.

Mr. Manoj Kotak opined that, traditionally and culturally, Municipal Schools all over the country cater to the children belonging to the socially and economically deprived sections of society and therefore the medium of instruction is vernacular languages/mother tongues. Increase in dropouts is a common trend observed in private vernacular language schools as well. He further observed that parents are increasingly getting more inclined towards English medium schools.

Mr. Sukthankar expressed that in a developing country like India it has always been a challenge to provide equal educational opportunities to children belonging to the socially and economically deprived communities/sections of society.

Way forward

Mr. Milind Mhaske, Project Director, Praja Foundation & Ms Farida Lambay, Co-founder & Trustee, Pratham, made presentations on the accomplishments and the gaps in the BMC education system. Some of the needs and action points arising from the presentations were:

- Comprehensive regular evaluation of the children to measure *learning outcomes*
- Proper, periodic evaluation of teachers and support for building their capacities.
- Introducing modern pedagogy and technologies.
- Elected Representatives to form and lead committees in respective constituencies.
- First steps as per RTE (Right to Education) Act
- Agree on realistic timeframes
- Focus on inclusive education
- Focus on quality of education
- Focus on specific strategies for OOS (Out of School) children & drop-outs in disadvantaged urban areas

During the ensuing discussion, following points were shared (by the Education Committee Chairman and Education Department) and discussed:

1. Need for semi- English schools was identified to stem the decline in enrolment in and incidence of drop-out from, municipal schools..
2. Continuous teacher training for developing English language skills.
3. Reading skills of students need to be improved, for which use of libraries needs to be encouraged.
4. Schools which have inadequate infra-structure should be provided with better infra-structure, for which immediate action needs to be taken.
5. Curtail misuse of schools that are not fully occupied and have been given to NGOs and private schools to use/run.
6. Monitor activities of government aided private schools.
7. Exposure visits of public school teachers to private schools and vice-a-versa.
8. Qualitative training inputs on effective use of audio/visual technology.
9. Deserving Head Master's abilities need to be strengthened and before promoting them they should be expected to fulfil certain parameters. Lateral entries should also be promoted.
10. Conduct a study to gauge the impact of SRA (Slum Rehabilitation Authority) slum redevelopment schemes on children's education continuity and progress.
11. An external team of identified NGOs & experts needs to be deployed for the third-party (independent) analysis of school performances.
12. Inputs from NGOs and experts to improve on Learning Outcomes
13. Full day schools will help working parents.
14. Some areas require school buses, as otherwise some children need to walk up to 3km.
15. "Passing clause" from RTE Act.

Mr. Kotak concluded the round table and summarised the following points:

- Semi-English schools to be encouraged for better learning/grasping by students in their mother languages as well as to cater to the need for English language education for better employability, subject like maths and science to be taught in English.
- Schools should change their approach from “passing” system to “learning” system and measure learning outcomes.
- Conduct third party (independent) evaluations for measuring learning outcomes and capacity building of teachers.
- Undertake development work and improve school infrastructure, conduct repair work before school begins.
- Other supportive systems such as arts and sports education/training and health programmes should be implemented in near future
- Encourage NGOs participation and include honest NGOs in the process.
- Form a Committee at the level of each of the 24 Municipal Wards that would include municipal councillors, MCGM Education Department officials and NGO representatives working in the field of education to deliberate on the gaps in the system and work together to improve the situation. Praja can facilitate and monitor the deliberations/process.
- Include all the stakeholders in the process of development in BMC schools.
- And finally, periodic follow-up meetings should be arranged jointly by the Chairperson of the Education Committee of MCGM, Praja and the MCGM officials for further deliberations and monitoring the progress.

Report

Round Table Conference on Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai

ABOUT PRAJA FOUNDATION

Praja Foundation is a non-partisan voluntary organisation which empowers the citizen to participate in governance by providing knowledge and enlisting people's participation. Praja aims to provide ways, in which the citizen can get politically active and involved beyond the ballot box, thus promoting transparency and accountability. Our studies and work towards the four core sectors in Mumbai's development and issues faced by Aam Mumbaikar namely: Education, Health, Civic and Crime over the last few years have been well published and have significant reach amongst the policy makers and policy influencers other than the common citizens.

PREMISE:

Praja's Education White Paper titled: 'Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai' released in December 2012 raised very pertinent issues that are crippling the public (municipal) education system in Mumbai. For e.g. less than a decade ago municipal education system used to cater to over 7.5 lakhs students now attracts less than 4.5 lakhs students. The Corporation's budgetary allocation for education seems to be adequate and also the teachers in municipal school are well qualified, however this is not reflected in the quality of education and the learning outcomes. Nevertheless in today's rapidly evolving social and economic environment, Municipal education deserves a high priority. Or else the gap between public (municipal) schools and private schools is bound to widen.

OBJECTIVE:

To evolve consensus on priorities for remedial measure for making public (municipal) education system of the city effective and efficient.

EXPECTED SHORT TERM OUTCOMES:

- 1. To understand and identify gaps and solutions within the Public (municipal) education system of the city;*
- 2. To collect ideas for improving Public (municipal) education system of the city; and*
- 3. To set priorities among the ideas collected to improve Mumbai's public (municipal) education system.*

EXPECTED LONG TERM OUTCOME:

To come up with policy document for making Public (municipal) education system of the city more effective and efficient.

OPENING REMARKS

Co-Chairperson: Mr. Manoj Kotak, (Chairperson, Education Committee) & **Co-Chairperson and Moderator:** Mr.D. M. Sukhtankar, (*Former Municipal Commissioner, Mumbai and former Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra*)

Mr. Milind Mhaske, Project Director of Praja Foundation welcomed all the participants and thanked them for being present for the discussion. He invited Mr. Nitai Mehta, Managing Trustee of Praja Foundation to share in thoughts. Mr. Nitai Mehta welcomed all the participants present for the round table discussion on 'Status of Municipal Education in Mumbai'. He said it is good to have different NGOs working on different aspects of education in this unique round table, in which electoral representatives are also present. He expressed his gratitude towards Mr. Dilip Patel for his cooperation and support since the beginning; he also thanked other political parties who agreed to participate in this discussion.

Mr. Mehta stated that Education is an obligatory duty of the Municipal Corporation. Over two lakhs children take the benefit of this facility, but over the period the number of dropouts has increased. There is something that has gone wrong with the Education system. There seems to be deterioration in quality of education provided in Municipal schools. The report tries to capture crucial issues of education in Mumbai. The purpose of the round table, he explained is to discuss what is happening in the Education department and what can be done to improve the quality of Education?

Praja he said conducted household survey last year, in which we asked questions to about 3000 household. One of the questions was that given a choice in which school would you send your children private school or public school? To this, 83% parents opted for private school. Mr. Mehta explained that this is an important factor that we need to reflect upon and identify solutions to bring about change. Mr. Mehta appealed to the participants to put a spotlight on 'child' while conducting the discussion as they are the future of this nation.

Co-Chairperson: Mr. Manoj Kotak, (Chairperson, Education Committee), welcomed all the members of Education Committee and all the other participants. He said that we have to accept the points Praja Foundation study has made about the depleting numbers of the students in the Municipal schools. Mr. Kotak opined that if one looks at the tradition and culture of the Municipal Schools all over the country, one needs to look at the class it caters to. Municipal Schools were basically started with a motive to provide education to children belonging to the deprived class. Similarly, the medium of teaching of Municipal schools all over India is to teach in vernacular languages, therefore status of these schools is more or less same throughout the country. Likewise, private school where medium of teaching is vernacular languages, those schools also struggle with increasing dropouts.

Mr. Kotak, further observed that currently, parents are increasingly growing more inclined towards teaching English to their children, so they aspire to get admission in English medium school. They believe it would help improve employment opportunities for their children.

Mr. Kotak agreed with couple of points Praja has posed. He said, “we agree with all the points you have mentioned here, and therefore we declare that wherever essential we would include NGOs, education experts and consult with them.” He further expressed that like Praja Foundation, Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai too is concerned about city’s development. “We are aware that people have elected us to do this work and we would definitely do our best to appropriately utilize the tax payer’s money. But we all would have to work together to make it better. If we all wish to resolve this issue then we all would need to walk together and take a step forward.”

Mr. Kotak further assured the participants that this meeting is just a beginning. The critique presented here, although harsh is constructive. We understand that the critique is not personal but directed towards the performance of the department. We do understand that NGO is playing a role of a watch dog. I therefore appeal all participants to share their constructive inputs and help us to move forward and do the needful.

Co-Chairperson and Moderator: Mr.D. M. Sukhtankar, (Former Municipal Commissioner, Mumbai and former ChiefSecretary, Government of Maharashtra)

Mr. D. M. Sukhtankar, welcomed Mr. Manoj Kotak, Chairperson, Education Committee), Mr. Bhise (Education Officer), all the officials of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai & Education Officers and members of esteemed NGOs & Mr. Nitai Mehta and other activists of Praja Foundation. Mr. Sukhtankar, said that for 12 years he was appointed as Deputy Secretary of Education Department and Secretary of Education Department and therefore he is keenly interested in development of Education systems in the country. During his appointment he had consulted several experts and dealt with pertaining issues at that point in time. “Our goal is to provide an opportunity to educate and provide quality education to children belonging to socially and economically deprived class.”

Mr. Sukhtankar opined that over a period of time he has come to realize that prime issues related to Education have not changed much. “Several issues continue to be

persistent and there are definite reasons for that. This does not mean that we have not made any progress, we have definitely moved forward. Nevertheless in a developing country like ours it has always been a challenge to provide equal opportunities to the socially and economically deprived communities.”

Mr. Sukhtankar shared that developed countries like England also encounter similar kind of challenges and arrange to make provisions for providing equal opportunities to socially and economically deprived community. For example in England several students of Asian and African origin belong to deprived class, therefore British government makes efforts to support these students. Similarly, in India large numbers of children going to Municipal schools belong to poor families; therefore it is very important for the administrators and the implementers to tackle this situation intelligently and attempt to provide equal opportunities and quality education to children belonging to this community. “For this, we need to include all the stakeholders and develop definite programme to resolve these issue.”

Mr. Sukhtankar expressed that if we accept the findings of the survey where it is mentioned that 83 percent of parents say that they would rather send their children to private school than public school then definitely parents would have some definite reasons behind making such a statement. He further opined that while developing a programme we should first develop it in draft format. We need to conduct several comprehensive discussions at multiple levels with different stakeholders, such as administrators and implementers and target group before finalizing the programme. As they are the ones who are most likely to share practical difficulties they may face in implementing the programme, and after one year after arriving at final consensus programme of action could be drafted. This he said could be a way forward.

SESSION 1: STATING THE PROBLEM

OPENING PRESENTATION ON STATE OF PUBLIC (MUNICIPAL) EDUCATION SYSTEM OF MUMBAI BY MR. MILIND MHASKE (PRAJA FOUNDATION)

Mr. Mhaske said that Praja Foundation had presented white paper in December 2012, after which they conducted discussion with different political party leaders involved in development of education system. Based on these discussions they have arrived at a consensus on the pertinent problems education system encounters. Mr. Mhaske said he would be presenting few key points of the study.

STATUS OF MUNICIPAL EDUCATION IN MUMBAI (ACADEMIC YEARS 2008-09 TO 2011-12)

Mumbai Municipal Education Factoids

- ✪ **Primary Education is an Obligatory Duty under Mumbai Municipal Act 1888.**
- ✪ Annual education budget for the year 2012-13 is Rs.2342 cores.
- ✪ MCGM has 1,319 schools which cater to 4, 39, 108 students* and has 12,407 teachers with a student-teacher ratio of 35.

Students going to municipal schools on a steady decline from around 7.5 lakhs a decade earlier to the present 4.4 lakhs.

- ✪ For the year 2012-13, the number of total students is not available; hence the last year student's number has been used.

COMPARISON BETWEEN MCGM AND PRIVATE SCHOOL SSC RESULTS

Year	No. of Candidates Appeared		Total Pass		Pass in (%)	
	MCGM School	Private School	MCGM School	Private School	MCGM School	Private School
Mar-09	10,269	155,334	5299	125,727	52%	81%
Mar-10	9,401	159,638	5545	131,332	59%	82%
Mar-11	11,515	159,572	6806	131,230	59%	82%
Mar-12	12,455	164,537	7623	136,187	61%	83%

He further added that the study had primarily compared four years data of SSC results in private and MCGM School as well as students awarded for scholarship. As per that, in 2009 MCGM result was 52 percent while in private school it was 81 percent. In the following years similar trend is observed. There is a difference of 20-30 percentage points between private schools and MCGM schools.

COMPARISON BETWEEN PRIVATE MCGM SCHOOL: SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED 4TH AND 7TH STANDARD

Year	Candidates Appeared		Scholarship Holders		Scholarship Holders in %	
	MCGM School	Private School	MCGM School	Private School	MCGM School	Private School
Middle school Scholarship Examination (4th Standard)						
2011	13551	35366	56	2152	0.4%	6.1%
2012	9637	31635	43	2087	0.4%	6.6%
High School Scholarship Examination (7th Standard)						
2011	9871	26104	14	1658	0.1%	6.4%
2012	7160	26387	8	1766	0.1%	6.7%

The study compared scholarship process of IV th std. and VII std. in both MCGM and Private schools. 0.4% student belonging to MCGM School bagged scholarship while 6.6 percent of Private school students got scholarship. In 2011 and 2012 same trend is continued for IVth & VIIth std students. It was observed that in 4th standard out of 100 who received the scholarship there were only 9 from MCGM School and 91 from private school.

R/NORTH, S AND D WARD EDUCATION INSPECTION DATA

	R/N	S	D
Dropout (Per 100)	10	6	12
Passout (In %)	NA	53%	41%
No. of teachers	225	522	118
No. of whom inspection report available	161	324	71
Preparation of lessons	Proper	93%	71%
			92%

Able to explain the Subject	Natural	92%	69%	89%
Teaching Technique	Modern	89%	65%	77%
Question Technique	Energetic	93%	66%	87%
Skill of the teacher to attract attention of students	Good	89%	66%	86%
Knowledge of the Subject	Enough	91%	66%	87%
Clarity in Explanation	Good	92%	66%	85%
Use of education material	Proper	93%	65%	86%
Annual Progress	Satisfactory	90%	69%	86%
Attention Paid to Weak Students	Enough	88%	68%	85%
Correction in writing of students	Proper	90%	68%	86%
Attention paid to the handwriting of students	Good	87%	64%	86%
Curriculum	Complete	92%	67%	85%
Attachments for daily teaching	Regularly	18%	42%	48%
Provision of education material	Repeatedly	87%	61%	82%
Liking in extracurricular matters	Good lecture taken	90%	69%	86%
Attention on Work	Healthy	77%	80%	87%
Attention on Students	Sympathetic	77%	81%	85%
Co-operation to colleagues and officers	Heartily Co-operation given	77%	85%	83%

Mr. Mhaske informed that Praja Foundation also studied an Inspection Report. This inspection report reflects performance of each school teacher, in which different abilities and capabilities of teachers are ranked. The study included all weak wards i.e. R/North, S, & R wards. These wards were identified as weak because historically here, dropout's rate is high, pass out rate is low. The three wards were from three different areas mainly, Mumbai city and western and central suburbs.

Mr. Mhaske further explained that used ranking method for each category, such Preparation of lessons- Improper; Teaching Technique- Average modern rational/Old/Old to some extent; Knowledge of the Subject- Average

enough/less; Clarity in Explanation – Average/Less; Curriculum – Incomplete, Attention Paid to Weak Students – Average/Ignore; Attachments for daily teaching – Prepared, Attention on Students – Unsympathetic.

In this study, it was observed that teacher's performance was graded good or better in those where students performed poorly, observed Mr. Mhaske.

HOUSEHOLD SURVEY *

In a household survey commissioned to Hansa Research in March-April 2012 across Mumbai showed that out of the total sample size of 15,191 households, **5,167 (i.e. 19% surveyed) households had children going to school** & the questions related to education were further administered to them. Findings of the study are as follows:

- ◆ 83% of the parents of the children going to municipal schools would like to send their child to the private schools.
- ◆ 89% of those willing to send their child to the Private school find expense of a private school as a major deterrent.
- ◆ 61% of the children going to municipal schools take private tuitions / coaching classes.

■ Mr. Kotak countered the last observation. He said we provide free education in our Municipal schools because parents of the children who come to our school belong to poor families, how can they afford private tuitions and coaching classes. On this Mr. Mhaske explained that these tuition providers are HSC pass out and charge small amount of fees.

KEY POINTS:

Mr. Mhaske, further pointed out crucial points, they are as mentioned below:

- Mostly adequate resources:
 - ◆ Funds – Rs. 2439 crores
 - ◆ Teachers – Student/Teacher ratio of 35

- Infrastructure
- More focus on peripheral issues – distribution of 27 free items, etc.
- Lack of focus on ‘*Learning Outcomes*’

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

- Comprehensive regular evaluation of the children to measure learning outcomes
- Proper, periodic evaluation of teachers and support for building capacities
- Introducing modern pedagogy and technologies

SESSION 2: IDENTIFYING GAPS AND DISCUSSING SOLUTIONS

By Ms. Farida Lambay, Pratham

Ms Farida Lambay before making a presentation introduced herself. She said she has herself studied in a Municipal school. Her parents were of the opinion that she and her siblings should go to a school which is in the neighborhood. A Municipal school was located in the close vicinity so she was sent to that school. She thinks by studying in a Municipal school she and her siblings’ growth has not hampered in anyway. So in a special way she feels attached to Municipal school. She also shared that she has been working in Education projects for last 35 years and feels honored to present her thoughts in this round table.

LANDSCAPE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN MUMBAI

Strengths of Municipal Corporation System

- Spacious buildings in good conditions
- Schools in every slum pocket ~ around 1,500 primary schools
- 97% Enrollment and only 3% Out of School (OOS) children.

Ms. Lambay noted that in 2004 when Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) was implemented 98% of students between the age group of 4-14 were out of school in Mumbai. It was mostly evident in five wards. Presently only 2 percent of children are out of school. The reason behind it is utter poverty due to which parents are unable to send their children to school.

- Access and availability: catering to poorest of poor
- Corporation giving almost 27 items to children free of cost
- Education being imparted in several languages. Mumbai Municipal Corporation is the only corporation that runs municipal schools in seven languages.

Similarly, teachers are well qualified and well trained therefore one needs to rethink whether trainings are essential for the teachers.

CURRENT ISSUES

- ✪ No accurate data on OOS, Drop-outs. Data presented by different people/organization varies. Therefore we need to work towards collecting exact figure of dropouts. In most cases they are incorrectly or wrongly displayed. Here would have to take some policy decision
- ✪ High drop-out rates and poor learning levels
 - o High dropout rate between std. 5 – 8
 - o Significant proportion of std. 5 children cannot read simple text, and this is not acceptable. Actually, children studying in std. V, lags behind by three years.
- ✪ Low attendance – In most cases it is claimed that children attend school regularly. But there are certain students who do not come to class regularly- Problem of regularly irregular children.
- ✪ ↑Enrollment in Private schools; ↓Enrollment in Municipal schools- this is not only the case of Mumbai, but throughout the country this sort of trend is observed. About 56% children opt for private school. There are different reasons behind it.

One among which is that parents aspiration for English medium school is growing high.

- ✪ Pre-school not yet part of Municipal schools. SSA has allocated certain budget for the pre-school, so as in Andhra Pradesh, Municipal Corporation has started balwadis in Public school. Similar such interventions need to be adapted by MCGM. This would definitely have positive impact on MCGM's school admissions. When parents were asked why they prefer to send their children to private school, several parents said that once they admit their children in balwadis private school, they do not have to bother about their school admission upto X std. But that is not the case of Municipal Schools.
- ✪ Parents not part of the teaching-learning process. Parents have started asking questions about quality of education provided in Municipal Schools and this she says is a good trend.
- ✪ Children living in scattered areas → no homogenous geographical community.

Ms. Lambay further explained that there are cases where parents believe that because there is Municipal School, their children get an opportunity to educate. They also say that these schools have contributed in disciplining their children. Children's routine has been set by these schools. Parents are definitely attracted towards private schools, the reasons behind it varies.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF RTE

- RTE focuses on Infrastructure and Academics
- Existing issues need to be seen in context of RTE compliance
- For example
 - **Infrastructure:** Classroom size, Pupil-Teacher ratio, Toilets, Disable-friendly schools, Child-safe schools, etc.

Ms. Lambay noted that all the municipal schools have not complied with the norms stated by RTE.

- **Academics:** Issue of Quality, Completion of std. 8, Age appropriate admissions and its implications, Inclusive education, Special schools, Role of parents and School Management Committees, etc.

Ms. Lambay shared that RTE's emphasis on quality education too needs to be properly implemented. There is a misinterpretation in the way child's academic performance is evaluated. In all state quality of education is draining out therefore more attention needs to be focused on it. She further added that we need to rethink about the 'quality of education' mentioned by RTE. If a 10 years old child remains out of school then and is included in the school process as per RTE norms/s/he has to be admitted in class IV, this needs to be improvised, as several factors are dependent on providing supporting education to the child. It is all dependent on teacher's capabilities, student's adaptability and their grasping abilities etc. We need to take steps forward.

🌀 **Teacher = key vehicle for transmission of Knowledge**

In couple of wards several children are physically challenged. In one survey we have identified 650 different types of physically and mentally challenged children. Municipal Corporation has provided special school and mobile teachers for these children. We have 18 session schools. But under RTE if we have to implement inclusive education we would have to look at all the necessary factors and develop a separate department.

MUMBAI SAMPLE SURVEY

Total number of communities	593		
Total child population	1,04,461		
3-5 year old population	22,010		
6-14 year old population	78,874		
	Private	Government	OOS
Pre-school	47%	35%	11%
Primary school	61%	37%	2%

Ms. Farida briefly presented Mumbai Sample Survey. In Primary School, Urdu language schools are also included. In pre-schools Aganwadis are counted. A very negligible number of children are out of school both in preschool and primary school.

STATUS OF READING

Data break up for 26,447 children from municipal schools all over Mumbai

	None	Letter	word	Para	Story
Std.I-II	11%	49%	32%	6%	2%
Std.III-IV	2%	11%	41%	32%	14%
Std.V-VII	1%	3%	13%	35%	49%
Total	4%	18%	27%	26%	25%

- ◆ It shows that 46% of children from std.III-IV can read simple paragraphs of which only 14% can read story (std.II level text)
- ◆ It shows 13% of children from municipal school of std. III-IV are at nothing and letter level.
- ◆ Also only 49% of children from std.V-VII can read story(std.II level text).
- ◆ Quality- of private school govt.aided should be thought about... many of these schools do not comply with the RTE norms

Data break up for 37,248 children from private schools all over Mumbai

	None	Letter	word	Para	Story
Std.I-II	15%	39%	36%	8%	2%
Std.III-IV	4%	9%	33%	32%	21%
Std.V-VII	1%	3%	10%	27%	59%
Total	6%	16%	24%	23%	31%

- ◆ Similarly it shows 53% of children from private school can read simple paragraphs of which 21% can read story (std.II level text).
- ◆ It also shows 59% of children from std.V-VII can read std. II level text.

STATUS OF MATHS

Data break up for 26,472 children from municipal school all over Mumbai

	None	No. recog. 1-100	Subtraction	Division
Std.I-II	18%	69%	12%	1%
Std.III-IV	3%	55%	32%	10%
Std.V-VII	1%	25%	40%	33%
Total	6%	46%	30%	17%

- ✪ It shows that 42% of children from std.III-IV can do subtraction of which only 10% can do division.
- ✪ 25% of children of std.V-VII are still at number recognition level.
- ✪ And it also shows that only 33% of children of std.V-VII can do division. Foundation of education is very weak. Quality is very important aspect that remains ignored.

Data break up for 37,232 children from private schools all over Mumbai

	None	No. recog. 1-100	Subtraction	Division
Std.I-II	11%	74%	14%	1%
Std.III-IV	1%	47%	38%	14%
Std.V-VII	0%	16%	37%	46%
Total	4%	42%	31%	23%

- ◆ It shows that 52% of children from std.III-IV can do subtraction of which only 14% can do division.

Ms. Farida, explained that only 46% of children from std.V-VII can do division and 16% are still at no. recognition of 1-100 level

WAY FORWARD

- **Elected Representatives to form an lead committees** in respective constituencies
 - ✓ Committees to focus on key education issues in locality
 - ✓ Comprising NGO members, Education officers, other officials & stakeholders
 - ✓ Greater collaboration to increase awareness and support compliance on RTE
 - ✓ Corporators should make sure that every child is learning in their *Prabhag* and no child is out of school and working
- **First Step as per RTE Act** – Declare the neighbourhood community of the school and that every child’s enrollment is the respective school’s responsibility. That means the onus is on school and not on the community.
- **AGREE ON REALISTIC TIMEFRAME**

WAY FORWARD – FOCUS AREAS

- ✪ Focus on **inclusive education**
 - ✓ More disability-friendly interventions
 - ✓ Schools should serve as hubs for community programs, study classes, reading rooms for std. 9-10 students, reading *melavas*, etc.
- ✪ Focus on **quality of education**
 - ✓ Pre and post tests, External evaluations
 - ✓ Role of CDOS – parent education, working with SMCs, Drop-outs
- ✪ Focus on **specific strategies for OOS & Drop-outs** in disadvantaged urban areas

- ✓ Explore pedagogy methods – Residential Bridge Courses, Support Classes, etc.
- ✓ Explore **rebranding of Municipal schools**, e.g. renaming schools, etc.

MISSION FOR THE CITY

***Ensure that every school is safe & beautiful and,
Every child is in school, learning well and not working***

DISCUSSION ON THE PRESENTATIONS

Mr. Kotak said that we have good infrastructure, we have resources, so money is no more an issue. “The issue as I see it is about medium of teaching. Our schools instruct in vernacular language, while Private Schools are mostly English medium school. We therefore need to discuss whether we need to make any alteration in this respect. We should also bar the word ‘dropouts’, as Ms. Lambay rightly said that these children are not school dropouts, they simply happen to shift schools.”

About 250 Municipal School teachers were given special training in English with support of British Council; these teachers would soon teach in English for students of Ist std. Through these classes we can stop migration of students from Municipal Schools to Private Schools. We are ready to make necessary changes required to improve our education system.

Mr. Ravindra Bhise, Education Officer, Education Department, MCGM shared his views on the discussion conducted. He said everybody here seem to have common focus to bring about good learning outcomes. He further shared the current scenario of schools; he said there are about 1151 Municipal schools. These schools teach in different vernacular languages, such as Urdu, Kannad, Tamil, and Marathi etc. we have no issues related to infrastructure. Our teachers are well qualified. Our schools are basically designed to provide education to socially and economically poor children who have no schools available for them.

Mr. Bhise shared an experience he had. During his visit to a school in close vicinity, he observed that a student living in Nalasopara study in that school. That is so because his mother works in same area. She brings him with her and sends him to school in Nalasopara. When her days work is done she takes him back from the school. School allows the child to wait until his mother returns. The point is that MCGM admit children of the poor and the deprived, the ones who have no other opportunity of learning. We admit every child belonging to any caste, creed or class.

Another point, Mr. Bhise, made was that several Marathi medium schools are going through similar issues. A school like Balmohan was forced to start English medium school due to shift in parent's attitude towards education. We understand that issues related to Learning Outcomes are very crucial. However, Praja has used only two indicators to assess quality of education; one is SSC and another of scholarship which are insufficient to derive at the conclusion. There are 145 Municipal High schools out of which 49 are old and 96 schools are new.

Mr. Bhise further informed that earlier all our students used to appear for scholarship now we select few so the ratio shows less. But school alone cannot be targeted for poor performance of the students. Children who come to our school are poor, they do not have environment conducive to education at home, and they do not have space to read. So, with the help of an NGO called Room to Read, MCGM has started 155 libraries. Children use these libraries and read books. It has received good response. Thus once every week we have started a reading period. *Mr. Kotak informed that 100 new libraries around the city would be soon opened for all children.* He further agreed that there is a lacuna of leadership among the decision making authorities of school machinery such as school Principal and BO. He expressed inputs in this regard. Mr. Bhise continued that under SEP- programme, three NGOs have come together and provide pedagogy as well as training for teachers and HMs. He further opined English is a need of Mumbai, parents believe that it helps to get them job, so MCGM has initiated training in spoken English for 250 teachers. Gradually, in phases all teachers would be trained in spoken English and communication which would enable them to take classes in English.

Mr. Bhise informed that Municipal Corporation has undertaken several good projects. There are four studios of virtual classrooms in Dadar, where e-learning classes are undertaken and developed animated films. Regarding trainings, he said, number of trainings given to teachers needs to be reduced and instead need based trainings should be provided. Out of the total budget about Rs.15,000/- are spent per student. “Therefore we would be able to build good infrastructure and other facilities suitable for children. But to improve quality of education we are open to take as many inputs from other’s experience.”

Mr. Rais Shaikh Party Head Samajwadi Party, MCGM

Mr. Shaikh expressed that medium of instruction is a very important aspect in teaching. “We also have to contemplate whether the students come to municipal school come out of choice or out of need. Generally, they come because they do not have any choice.”

Firstly, ideally speaking commencing semi-English is better option. To ensure quality, curriculum should be designed in such a way that we are not only able to educate children but also make them competitive with other English medium schools.

Secondly, third party gap analysis of school performance is essential. “We tried to get a social organization to evaluate our school. This sort of approach acts as a mirror. Most of the issues come in focus with these type of interventions.”

Thirdly, we need to reconsider micro-leadership. It hampers healthy leadership, because appointment of Head Master is based on experience by number of years. One automatically gets promoted to the post on basis of seniority. One’s capacity is not tested. Therefore either lateral entry for this post should be permitted or certain parameters need to be affixed for the post selection. Lateral entry may cause certain amount of displeasure among the staff as they may not be happy having outsiders.

On this Mr. Kotak commented that for this we need to get Unions point of view.

“I personally believe deserving candidate should be given priority, because at nodal point your implementer would be Head Master, therefore it is essential to strengthen it to create healthy environment.”

Fourthly, ICDS should be run by MCGM this would help save the creation of parallel infrastructure. We can do this with support of aganwadis at the same time run aganwadis.

Mr. Kotak commented that we would have to convince the state govt. to get ICDS under MCGM coverage.

Fifthly, we have are thinking about giving library, computer room and laboratory in school. We have discussed on this in detail such as to how we can make all these units accessible and functional.

Avkash Jadhav Municipal Nominated Councillor, Shivsena


Mr. Jadhav said that “Praja Foundation comes up with very crucial and alarming observations in their reports and therefore I always dread it. But here I think they need to cross check the facts they have focused upon. For example the ‘Focus of peripheral issue’ I think that is the core of the strategy, it has played a crucial role and acted as an incentive to reduce schools dropouts. Similarly, Praja has mentioned about RTE. But if they conduct survey to understand how many schools are really applying RTE norms? You would get disappointing results.”

Mr. Jadhav shared that few years ago he was involved in a pilot study conducted to assess girl’s dropout rate. It was found very low in MCGM Schools, which is an achievement. No other school except MCGM schools display children’s dropouts rates on black board. He further informed that MCGM schools are the only schools that provide education to children belonging to economically and socially deprived community.

Mr. Jadhav said that the only threats that he can see is that several NGOs have taken over our schools. We have surrendered some of our schools to others where people run their own businesses. We need to take our classrooms back.

Mr. Kotak commented that MCGM is trying to get back classrooms particularly from those who are running their business and earn revenue. They were given for different purpose. There are about 428 classrooms which are given away to others. Some of these classes are used by other private schools for schooling purposes.

Mr. Jadhav explained that he visited virtual classes in Dadar. He thinks it is a very good concept, but teachers do not use these resources effectively; they conduct regular classroom teaching. There is a possibility that they do not have enough training on use of Audio Visual technology. Thus special AV training needs to be provided. Similarly, if we are able to record good A/V lectures and make their DVDs, they can be reused. A comprehensive trainer's workshop should be designed with qualified Trainers for satisfactory output. Similarly, MCGM teachers should be taken for exposure visits to branded school and be exposed to different outlook of teaching.

 *Mr. Kotak commented that exposure visit is a good idea. This can be done both ways, like an exchange programme and let teachers of the elite schools get exposed to our schools and understand the challenges here.*

Mr. Kotak further pointed out that monitoring is conducted as mentioned by the Dhanuka Commission report. Presently, due to RTE obligations DEOs and BOs were engaged in restructuring work. Their main focus was to make necessary structural changes; where each one would specifically perform duties they have been assigned. Once that is done both DEOs and BOs would be free to take on their routine duties and be more committed to strengthen education system.

Mr. Jadhav further suggested that we should form sub committees in which we should involve members from other departments who are indirectly associated with Education department. Teacher's assessment should be seriously tackled. We can include

Teacher's Union in process. Similarly, parent's involvement is important in strengthening the process and build awareness about our interventions. On this Ms. Lambay, shared that in most cases parents do not come for PTA meetings because they do not know what to say.

Mr. Jadhav noted that, in our current education system there is non-committed staff, they too need to be made responsible. The 'no-penalty concept' plays a crucial role in making teachers lethargic. They become undeterred and complacent. If we could give some incentives such as giving away awards to best teacher of the ward, perhaps competition would instigate action. Similarly, councilor should conduct meetings once in a month with Principal and EO.

Anil Trimbakkar, Municipal Councillor MCGM, Shivsena

Mr. Trimbakkar said the percentage of dropout rates in private school is incorrect. Because weak children from class IX are failed, which means they are not permitted to appear for board exam. But in Municipal Corporation schools, all children appear for the exam.

He further commented that Corporators should be included in the Education Committee. In the current system they are not involved.

He further shared that in his ward, municipal school children along with private school children participated in some competition conducted in an event organized by an NGO. Children of municipal school won that competition. So such interventions need to be shared with parents. They need to be made aware about such activities school undertakes for their children.

Dr. Ajanta Yadav, Municipal Councillor MCGM, Indian National Congress

“In Kandivili east MCGM School was upto class IV. Each year we have increased one std. With great effort and now we have school upto class VIIth. But children who are in class VIII have to walk 3 kms to reach the school. Even after continuous follow-up with MCGM, it is not ready to take over responsibility of VIII std. students. These children go to govt. aided school where they are charged fees. They belong to poor families and cannot afford to pay those fees. So, can MCGM take some action and pressure the aided schools and provide free education to our children in their school, in such special cases. Other option is that MCGM should start schools upto Xth std. It is govt. moral responsibility.”

Mr. Kotak clarified that due to SRA, there is a geographical shift of schools as well as the community. Today 60 percent of Mumbai land is covered by slums. Due to SRA scheme developed on the slums people have shifted to different residential areas and so they are unable to come to their previous school, they are forced to study in school close to their resident. This is a very crucial issue and has contributed in increasing school dropouts. These are the outcomes of the SRA schemes.

Mr. Sukthankar commented that wherever essential MCGM should take responsibility of starting higher secondary classes.

Mr. Ashraf Azmi-Municipal Councillor MCGM, Samajwadi Party

Mr. Azmi has completed his schooling in MCGM School. Previously, he said, not many people were keen about education, there weren't many facilities. “I remember with great difficulty my parents used to purchase book and text books for us. The school I used to go had almost now broken down, yet we continued to study there and today we are sitting here discussing about education. Although things have changed since I went to school.”

“The status of schools has lowered. Previously, MCGM had posted 2 superintendents for Urdu school however since past several years they have not been appointed. Why?”

There is no answer for that. Since last six years, I have been trying to help my sister to run school in Vinoba Bhavenagar in which 1500 students study. Here Hindi, Urdu and Marathi languages are taught. The school is on the middle floor, water leaks from the floor above, and despite that students come to school. School Buildings are in bad state.”

In most schools PTA is in place, list of the members are also displayed on the board but it is not functional. There are no teachers to teach in the class? What would children learn in the class where there are no teachers? Out of 50 children of Vth std, 10 children cannot write their name. Teacher selection is really good. “I attended teacher trainings three times, nothing happens there, it is sheer waste of time. Therefore training should be stopped.”

As we are talking about Learning Outcome, he said he would like to ask who is responsible for it whether it is EO, Principal, teacher or others. There has to be some commitment towards it, we need to put responsibility on someone’s shoulders.

Foundation of the students should be made strong. Basic skills such as reading and writing should be perfected. Please do not make a school teacher a clerk this has to stop. Teachers should be unburdened from other responsibilities so that they can concentrate on teaching. He appreciated Mr. Kotak thought of starting Semi-English. He said it is a step forward.

Mr. Kotak appealed teachers to share their views. He assured participants that this is just a beginning. He said if everyone present here thinks that we have to take this forward then we would definitely meet again. This meeting is about building perspective, once we have clarity on it we can move forward.

Ms. Tere (BO) Education Department

While measuring learning outcomes has anyone considered measuring the amount of cultural inputs we teachers put in. We not only teach students but we also take efforts towards making them good citizens and human beings.

She questioned as to how would one measure Learning Outcome of the children who is deprived of conducive education environment at home. It would not be appropriate to compare students from private school with students of public school. Students of private school go to private classes; they are well trained to perform in exams. They may stand out in the merit list but what happens to them after that?

MCGM runs a very wonderful project which is called Shalasuhtar (School Improvement) project which is very effective. MCGM has already undertaken all those programmes mentioned here. We are very effectively implementing RTE, in which CCE is a very important aspect. It is generally misinterpreted. CCE is about strengthening student's capacities to perform better. In this students do not have to undergo drudgery of examination but their skills are tested and evaluated. It is a very creative learning process.

Education department has become an easy target to blame. The communities from which these students come are not very keen to educate their children. It is not the responsibility of the Education department alone to empower the community. Society in general is also responsible. Together we have to take a step forward.

Mehraj Shaikh, Municipal Nominated Councillor, Shivsena

Mr. Shaikh said had there been no MCGM schools then he would not have been here. "I am an advocate in Mumbai court. I was born in slums of Mumbai, at that time my grandfather was very keen about educating me. My mother sent me to Marathi Municipal School close to the vicinity. I was very lucky about my teachers since my 1st std. She took care of me like her child. And because our slum was not good, the school used to keep us back in school until our parents were free from their work. Our

teacher used to take me home and teach me. I have experienced humanity and affection among Municipal school teachers.”

“I welcome your decision to begin Semi-English in Municipal school. But semi-English is good upto V or VI std, but from VII to Xth std. language of instruction should be in English, at least crucial issues like should be taught in English language.”

Mr. Shaikh also suggested that different sports should be introduced to these students and encouraged. Along with academic inputs we need to create good sportsmen. MCGM schools should be given ranks. We can also adapt CBSE board. We need to put focus on IT sector, and build our children’s capacities. PTA committee should be strengthened in every community. Corporators should be involved in the process to reach out to the parents.

Mr. Kotak, expressed that Praja has instigated us to come together and think about these issues. At our level we undertake activities. We have to accept the good side of this study. He shared that we have decided to form a committee of 24 political leaders at corporation level in which 24 NGOs would be included in the process. This committee would be involved in fact finding and conduct these sorts of meetings and understand the status of the schools in each ward. NGOs that are willing to work in education sector and make good contributions may be identified.

Smita Kaushal, CFO The Akanksha Foundation

Ms Kaushal said that Akanksha runs 8 municipal schools and the dropout rates have dropped down considerably. School does not run upto SSC. They are increasing our classes each year.

“We follow all norms set by MCGM. But we have developed our own principles. We spend more time with students, keeping in mind that these children do not get any academic support at home. None of our students take external tuitions. We treat parents as partners. We run seven hours school. We have made PTA mandatory for parents. We can claim that it is of superior quality, 80 percent of parents participate

in PTA, and openly share their difficulties. We encourage community involvement. If student do not appear in school then we make home-visit and find out reason of absence. We try to resolve his issue. If child needs medical help we support him. We also provide support to parents. If they are suffering from alcoholism we provide them counseling support. And because we do all these things, our attendance has improved; parents also respects us and we get good support from them. Our results are very good. And several parents have shifted their children from private school and admitted them to our Mumbai Public School. We would like to share our model with you. Our cost is very less. We spend about Rs.15000-20,000 per students.”

Mr. Kotak, shared that there are 60 Mumbai Public School in Mumbai. These are English medium schools. Parents inclination is towards these schools therefore this school do not face much difficulty in retaining their students. Other MCGM have compulsion of teaching of vernacular language as medium of instruction. So within that frame-work how can we improve our outreach and stop children’s dropout is the question. We are open to get directions from NGO or any other experts from the field. Akanksha foundation can help improve status of our schools. MCGM has good infrastructure, good resources, now we have to channelize those resources in appropriate directions.

It is not that MCGMs schools are doing poorly,neither the dropout of children from MCGM school is only because bad performances of teachers, but it is largely due to shifting trend in the parents interest and desire to send his/her child in English medium school so that s/he could get admission in colleges. It is also because some of the colleges make preferences about school the students come from before giving admissions. I think it is important that we need to discuss all these aspects too. While working in this Mumbai city, presently we have got resources. We can use these resources for good purpose, wherever essential. Problem is not resources, but it is in the attitude of the parents and society the way they perceive the issue.

Mr. Sukhtankar intercepted to make a comment. He said almost we all are product of English medium school where certain subjects were taught in English while others in

vernacular language. And we all have balanced out well. The point is shifting over to entirely to English school would be a big step.

Mr. Kotak responded that we are completely aware about impact vernacular language has in child's learning process, and we do not intend to disturb that frame-work.

Vitthal Kharatmol, Municipal Councillor MCGM, Bharatiya Janata Party

Mr. Kharatmol expressed “while I was in school I remember when we used to come few minutes late after our lunch break our Head master use to punish us and ask us to wait outside the class. Do teachers today do such a thing? Regularly our teachers use to take our classes, we used to have different classes and we had teachers to guide us. Do teachers do that? Teachers should ruminare over their self-performance. We have recruited highly qualified teachers for our MCGM schools, but when we measure learning outcomes, why these teachers fall short.”

“When we were in school there were very few private schools. But now they have mushroomed and MCGMs schools cater only to the children belonging to poor and the deprived communities. In most cases parents really do not know whether their children go to school or not. Those children who come to school usually loiter around the slum after they go back from school.” To curtail this Mr. Kharatmol suggested that we need to merge schools with small capacity and reduce the number of schools. In this way we would be more focused. In same premise schools canbe conducted in shifts. So that we can increase number of hours of school and children can remain in school for longer hours.

He further mentioned that in each school there has to be School Development Committee, in this committee committed parent should be included, and they should contribute to strengthen it. This committee should be given the task of monitoring all school activities such as infrastructural development as well as academic. Committee members should be made aware of their rights and they should be actively involved in the process of development.

Mr. Kharatmol further added that currently large number of houses from the slums is shifted to other locations due to government development work such as road widening, construction of flyovers, implementation of SRA schemes. In such project work several students drop out of the school. Who is responsible for this? Government should take note of this. These children require support, therefore govt. should give them alternative support so they can complete their education and such as monthly bus fare should be given. Government has to take into consideration all these aspects when charting out development projects.

Ms. Vidya Bagul, Salaam Bombay Foundation

Ms. Bagul said “our organization mainly focus upon overall development of children. We believe that along with their academic growth, their other skills such as art, sports etc. needs to be enhanced. We are attached to few MCGM schools and we have certainly benefitted from it. We had organized an event for children in Mumbai where different schools had participated, but in a competition where private & international schools had participated in that MCGM school won the first prize. The point is that children going to MCGM School definitely have other special qualities and they need to be encouraged. Children from private school take special training, but MCGM children were trained by us. There are children from MCGM school who are playing for state, they are play hockey, Cricket etc.”

Ms. Bagul suggested that if MCGM runs its own academy then her organization would definitely support. She further added that when students begin to participate in such activities children definitely enjoy, but it also changes parent’s attitude towards school.

Ms. Aditi Ray, Consultant

“I have had the opportunity to work with several MCGM teachers and have found many of them to be highly committed and therefore have witnessed many encouraging stories in MCGM schools. However there are several gaps that I have

observed. There is a need for qualitative trainings not just for teachers but also for the monitoring personnel. There has to be a way to create accountability of teachers and the system. Who is accountable for children's learning processes? Can we increase accountability of the teacher, there is no motivation for teachers to go out of their way and do better. Lastly, there is a need to focus on infrastructure issues. You said budget is not the issue but there are several MCGM schools buildings which are not safe, there are schools where teachers are forced to teach children in corridor, there are no proper classrooms. In Mumbai public schools, principal are not recruited, etc.” She further said that instead of finding new solutions, we need to strengthen the existing system and reinforce the implementation of existing processes. “Teachers are well qualified, but with little more support they would do better.”

Kishor Bhamre, PCVC, Pratham

“The reason for mushrooming of private school & aided school is because they have realized that education has become saleable product. Most of these schools do not follow norms. We can bring back all these children back to our school if we decide to do something about this school. We also need to focus on strengthening MCGM schools. There are still issues of over-crowded schools in few wards which need to be tackled. Similarly, if we focus on strengthening the six weak wards mentioned here today, then our dropout rates would definitely improve.”

Several children migrate to the city every day; they are involved in child labour. Children are identified by campaigns for eradication of child labour. A residential school can be started for these children as a pilot project then most of these issues would be tackled.

CLOSING REMARKS AND VOTE OF THANKS

Mr. Sukhtankar, concluded the round table discussion. He said, that a general discussion was conducted here today. In the beginning of the discussion we expected to derive at specific issues but we were not able to achieve it, nevertheless it is a good

beginning. “I personally congratulate Praja for having provoked this kind of discussion and taking step towards constructive decision.”

“It appears to me that many of the solutions lie outside the school and school systems. For e.g. Akansha mentioned about spending more time with children, or involving community participation. All this is typically outside of the school system, nevertheless it is very important aspect of child development, considering social, economic background of these children. If we have to improve MCGM school system then it is essential to understand the issues and the background of the children. And to bring about this change we would definitely need community’s involvement. Though issues identified are outside school system nevertheless they are very important from my point of view. After discussion with concerned people you can circulate draft agenda and from that something concrete solutions would emerge.”

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Kotak said “the focus should be more on qualitative training. We should not just implement passing system but adapt to learning system. It is very tragic if child learning in Vth class cannot write their name. So we need to make alterations in our system. Another issue raised here was that of infrastructure. This is again very tragic state to know such a state of affairs in 2013. We have several of school buildings with us, so we should immediately begin repair work before school begins in June.”

“The most catastrophic situation is that our MCGM schools are closing down, so we have to first focus on this issue, and think as to how we can reverse the situation. We need to create other support system. We can definitely introduce sports and health programmes in coming years. We have to think about how much more we can give to our children. We have resources so we can channelize them in these two areas. We will not wait for central or state government to support us in this aspect. At corporation level we should do what we can. We have funds we should use them we have other resources that should be utilized, we can use our resources to identify students skills so they can use it in future, we can create our own support system. Other activities other than education, in this we would request for NGOs participation. I would like to

listen to NGOs. As I am aware how they work and if they are doing so well in their area then we should think about involving them in development of our school processes. And if their approach is honest then would also be honest. MCGM's Education Department need not feel threatened about their involvement. We would include NGOs at all levels and make our interventions effective." Finally, he asked Education department to identify 24-25 leaders having interest in education field, similarly, to include them in the committee. Praja foundation can take up a role of a co-coordinator.

Mr. Milind Mhaske gave a vote of thanks and concluded the round table. He said that in the next meeting we would have specific agenda covering two, three issues so our discussion would be more focused. He thanked all the participants for their active participation.
