

## **Praja report: 90% corporators in Mumbai fare poorly in raising citizens' issues, only two score A grade**

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Ahead of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) polls, which is scheduled for February 2022, the grading of corporators will help citizens understand the performance of their local public representatives in a better manner. (File Photo)

About 90% of corporators in Mumbai have performed poorly in terms of addressing citizens' issues and raising their questions in civic meetings, according to city-based NGO (Non-Governmental Organisation) Praja Foundation's report rating the performance of the councilors in the last four years. According to the report card, only two out of the 220 corporators reviewed fall in 'A' grade based on their overall performance.

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Ahead of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) polls, which is scheduled for February 2022, the grading of corporators will help citizens understand the performance of their local public representatives in a better manner.

Due to the [coronavirus](#) pandemic, which impacted the overall functioning of the BMC, Praja Foundation this year decided to publish a “Consolidated Report Card” from 2017 to 2021 instead of a regular annual report card.

For the grading of councillors, citizens’ complaints were one of the most important aspects of the issues they were expected to take up with the municipal corporation. According to the report, the corporators have failed to fulfil their primary responsibility of raising the citizens’ issues.

The report has also stated that there has been no improvement in the quality of questions raised by corporators in general body meetings or ward committees. Also, attendance of corporators at general body meeting has dropped from 82% in 2017-18 to 74% in 2019-20.

According to the report, top three corporators in terms of performance are Ravi Raja from the Congress, who also holds the post of Opposition leader, Samadhan Sarvankar from the [Shiv Sena](#) and Harish Chheda from the [Bharatiya Janata Party \(BJP\)](#). Raja and Sarvankar are only two corporators out of 220 who have been given ‘A’ grade. The report card ranked Gulnaz Qureshi from the AIMIM, Sagar Singh from the BJP and Parmeshwar Kadam from the Shiv Sena as the bottom three corporators.

Party-wise, Congress councillors performed the best with 57.21% score followed by the Shiv Sena (55.88%) and the [Samajwadi Party \(SP\)](#) (55.05%).

Raja said that Praja’s report has acknowledged the Congress’s efforts to take up citizens’ issues. “I am thankful to them as their reports highlight efforts undertaken by us in the last five years. The basic issues of the city need to be addressed proactively by the civic administration,” said Raja.

Based on the consolidated data, the overall average score of councillors in this report card is 55.10% whereas in the last term (April 2012-March 2016), it was 58.92%. In April 2017-March 2021, out of 220 councillors, 59 are positioned in

‘E’ category, 12 in ‘F’ grades (which is an overall score of below 35%) and 20 in ‘B’ grade. A large majority, 127 councillors, have received ‘C’ and ‘D’ grades.

“Now that civic elections are around the corner, we need to understand how our current elected representatives have performed in the last term and this can act as an opportune moment to introspect on the performances,” said Nitai Mehta, Founder and Managing Trustee, Praja Foundation.

The NGO also suggested that technology should be used for effective qualitative discussions and that the total number of meetings should be increased by leveraging telecommunications software as seen after [Covid-19](#).

“From October 2020 to March 2021, 26 ward committee meetings were held every month, which is more than the yearly average of last year (April 2019 – March 2020) due to the use of technology,” stated the report’s finding. As per the report, virtual meetings can help in raising more questions of the citizens.

“For efficient running of the committees and to be able to address citizens’ issues in a systematic and efficient manner, we need more councillors to transition to A, B, C and D grades while completely eliminating E and F grades of performances,” said Milind Mhaske, Director of Praja Foundation.

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