

A ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF POLITICIANS, ADMINISTRATORS AND CIVILIANS: A CASE STUDY OF WASTE MANAGEMENT IN AURANGABAD (AMC)

Executive Summary

Swachh Bharat Mission is one of the initiative by Government of India to make cities, villages, rivers etc. clean. Accordingly different programs are implemented. The growing garbage, disposal of garbage is one of the serious problem all over the world. Aurangabad city in Maharashtra is facing same problem from decades, but now a days this problem have attracted attention of all Indians and even from outside India. As Aurangabad is well known tourist place due to Ajantha- Ellora caves. Being a world tourist center it is necessary to develop the city accordingly. Hence role of Municipal Corporation, local government is an important one. But unfortunately Aurangabad is not developed or developing as per the expectations.

From six months, Tones of solid waste in many parts of Aurangabad city have been putrefying in the open. But still Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) couldn't get the solution to this problem. Peoples from the area where garbage was dumped from last 20-25 years protested and opposed to dump the more garbage. In some areas peoples became violent and burnt two AMC truck loaded with garbage. The Mayor, Corporators and officials of AMC are trying to find the solution but they are not able to come up with concrete solution. There are many reasons to this situation. Each city's development plan must demarcate spaces for decentralised waste management, and waste must be processed and converted to a resource than letting it pollute the environment. Also, no waste management system will function well till segregation at source is practiced. Experience and evidences built up over a number of decades has shown that citizens and civil society also have important roles to play in collaborating with AMC in improving and delivering public services, and achieving better outcomes. Governments are not alone in this endeavor, as recent experience shows that people can be part of the solution.

In case of Waste Management by the AMC it has been observed that there is poor communication, unhealthy relationship and non-co-operation among the officials, political representatives, lack of proper training, lack of sufficient number of ground level staff, lack of citizen's participation and awareness.

In order to solve the issue the officials and political representative should work harmoniously, without having blame game amongst them. Already 30 percent of the urban population is estimated to be living in slums. Each local authority of the AMC should enter into dialogue with its citizens and through convocation process should resolve the problem and increase the awareness among the citizens. Without people's participation no single mission is possible. To address this problem every person (including city dwellers, government workers and officials, politicians) needs to have an active role to play and this issue needs to be addressed rather than postponing it.

About Aurangabad

One of the most historical city and district place, Aurangabad city has a Bench of the Bombay High Court, Mumbai, the world famous Ajanta-Ellora caves, Bibi Ka Maqbara, Deogiri fort of Daultabad, Panchakki, Ghrihneswar Jyotirling as well as total 52 gates built in Mughal era. Alongside the large industrial sector, educational hub leading as a faster developing city in Asia. Due to the historical places like Ajantha- Ellora caves it is one of the world famous architectural heritage. Which is an attraction for tourist from all over the world. Being a world tourist center it is necessary to develop the city accordingly. Hence role of Municipal Corporation, local government is an important one. But unfortunately Aurangabad is not developed or developing as per the expectations. The Aurangabad municipal Corporation is one of the oldest Municipal Corporation. Aurangabad is known as capital of Marathwada region.

Aurangabad Municipal Corporation

The Aurangabad Municipal Corporation is the governing body of the city of Aurangabad. The municipal corporation consists democratically elected members, headed by a mayor and administers the city's infrastructure, public services and police. Members from the state's leading various political parties hold elected offices in the corporation. Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) is the local civil body. It is divided into six zones. The Municipal Council was established in 1936, having area about 54.5 km². It was elevated to the status of Municipal Corporation from 8 December 1982, and simultaneously including eighteen peripheral villages, making total area under its jurisdiction to 138.5 km² extended its limits.

The city is divided in 115 electoral wards called as Prabhag, and each ward is represented by a Corporator elected by the people from respective ward. There are two Committees, General Body and Standing Committee headed by the Mayor and the Chairman respectively. AMC undertakes various development programs in the city. But since last six month the citizens are facing the crisis of waste management. The officials are not able to find the solution for the solid waste management.

A Case

From six months, Tones of solid waste in many parts of Aurangabad city have been putrefying in the open. But still Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) couldn't get the solution to this problem. Civic agencies have been refusing to take them away simply because there's no other place to dump them. Aurangabad city generates 436 tonnes of solid waste every day. Till about 1980, the waste was dumped at the city *naka* behind Mahatma Gandhi Mission College, but as the city expanded, the dumping of waste was shifted to Naregaon village in the outskirts of Aurangabad. Between 1980-85, Naregaon was the dumping ground for the daily garbage of the city, but soon this village came within the expanding municipal limits of the AMC.

Sometime in 1985, dumping of waste was shifted to 50-acres (over 20 hectares) of *gairan*(grazing) land in Mandki village, about four to five kilometres from Naregaon.

For the last 33 years, the civic agency has been collecting unsegregated waste from the city-dwellers and dumping the entire mixed waste on Mandki's grazing land. As per court records, "nearly 20,00,000 cubic tonne solid waste in mixed condition is lying at the dump site, whereas ... an equal amount of mixed solid waste was dumped beneath the ground."

There is no treatment or processing of solid waste in Aurangabad. The entire mixed waste is dumped at Mandki, which has not only destroyed the land and contaminated the groundwater, but is also caused various health problems to the villagers. There is also extensive groundwater contamination due to the waste dumpsite. It is found that in the core zone area of dumpsite, 100% of water samples has coliform bacteria levels above the prescribed standards. Almost all the groundwater samples assessed are of bad quality and even poisonous.

For the last 25 years, villagers of Mandki have been fighting to get rid from the waste dumpsite on their *gairan* land closed. The large scale protest was organised more than two decades ago after which the civic agency assured the villages of an immediate action. Thereafter, a composting plant was installed, but it shut down within two years and indiscriminate dumping of mixed waste continued.

Even in 2003, villagers had approached the Aurangabad bench of the Bombay high court and the latter directed the state government to shift the dumpsite within six months. But, no action was taken during 15 years. In 2013 another mass protest was held by the villagers following which the corporation assured the people that waste would be shifted to an alternate site. But, no progress is being made in this regard either.

Meanwhile, in 2016, the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board informed the high court that the Corporation had not taken necessary authorization from the board for disposal of waste. Also, the 7/12 (land record) clearly showed the dumpsite land to be *gairanzameen* that is not officially transferred to the corporation. The civic agency had also not bothered to take a no-objection certificate (NOC) from the *gram panchayat* of Mandki for dumping waste on their grazing land.

Fed up with the Civic Agency's callous attitude, last October 2017, villagers held another protest and did not let garbage trucks dump waste on their *gairan* land for three days. Another settlement was reached with the AMC which had asked for three months' time to settle the issue. But, when the civic agency failed to divert the waste away from Mandki, villagers formed a human chain and refused to let garbage trucks enter in their village. Since mid-February, the corporation has not been able to dump any waste at Mandki.

Since mid-February, the villagers of Mandki, at the outskirts of the city and where the Aurangabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has been dumping waste for over three decades, have not been allowing garbage trucks to enter their village. They are armed with an order from the Bombay high court (Aurangabad bench) restraining the AMC from dumping any more waste in Mandki. The corporation has approached several villages around Aurangabad for permission to dump solid waste. In every instance, officials met with strong resistance from the villagers, some of whom even dug up the approach roads so that AMC trucks couldn't use them.

On 7th March 2018, the situation went out of control when residents of Padegaon-Mitmita villagers burnt two AMC trucks that were carrying waste to their village to dump. After villagers began to pelt stones, the police conducted a *lathi* charge and used teargas to disperse the protesting mob. Eight police personnel were injured in the incident of protest.

This has brought the residents of Aurangabad face-to-face with their daily garbage, which is now strewn all around the city, and is fast becoming a health scare.

The AMC has meanwhile challenged the High Court's (March 9, 2018) order and approached the Supreme Court of India for relief. According to officials of AMC they have approached the Supreme Court to put facts before it so that they can be granted some time to resolve the issue. According to them entire process of setting up a proper solid waste management system in the city would take at least six months.

After receiving strong directions from the High Court, the State Government and the civic agency have gone into a swift action mode to look for solutions. The state government has prepared a time-bound action plan to manage the city's waste, which includes immediate segregation and composting of wet waste, technical sanction of the detailed project report (DPR) on solid waste management by March 15, release of funds by the state government by March 21 and central funds by April 30, etc.

Under the Swachh Bharat Mission, every urban local body (ULB) has to prepare and implement a DPR on solid waste management, which has to be in line with the Solid Waste Management Rules 2016 and the guidelines of the Swachh Bharat Mission. According to officials they prepared DPR and sent it to the state government in January this year. The state asked them to make certain changes and making necessary changes they have resubmitted the updated DPR and got sanction in the month of July. Apart from mechanical composting, the corporation is planning to set up a Waste-to-Energy (WtE) plant with the help of a Chinese company, which will initially process 30 tonnes of waste per day, going up to 300 tonnes per day in the later stage.

Incidentally, composting and decentralised waste management isn't new to the city of Aurangabad. In the year 2015, on January 26, the municipal corporation

signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with a local non-profit, Civic Response Team, to train its civic staff and *karamcharis* in waste management and decentralised composting. The project went on for a year and officially ended in January 2016, and even Civic Response Team continued (unofficially) its work for one more year, till January 2017, using CSR funds.

According to the officials of AMC, areas that have composting sites haven't been affected much by the protests at Mandki. But, congested areas like the old city do not have sufficient land for composting. Waste has become such a crisis that one zone of municipality does not want to accept waste of another zone.

Up to end of July 2018 AMC is not able to find the solution for waste management nor can come with concrete plan for it.

Perception of the Case Writer

The municipal corporation have complex structure that involves dynamic processes directed towards transforming the entire society that ensures its economic, social, political and administrative aspects. Ensuring the provision of good quality public services is an essential function of AMC. Each city's development plan must demarcate spaces for decentralised waste management, and waste must be processed and converted to a resource than letting it pollute the environment. Also, no waste management system will function well till segregation at source is practiced. Waste management in the city has been historically poor and instances of tiny garbage dumps and overflowing dustbins are a common sight in Aurangabad. The Commissioner of AMC, Mayor, Corporates and officials of AMC are trying to find the solutions. Experience and evidences built up over a number of decades has shown that citizens and civil society also have important roles to play in collaborating with AMC in improving and delivering public services, and achieving better outcomes. Governments are not alone in this endeavor, as recent experience shows that people can be part of the solution. Some of the aspects for the rising issue are as following

Poor communication and cooperation

In solving the problem of waste management there should be cooperation, communication in between the administrators, politicians, and citizens. Also there should be willingness towards the work. From last one year the officials and political representatives of AMC visited different places in India and abroad to study their best practices for solid waste management. They came out with detailed project work to get rid of garbage menace permanently. They short listed four places to set up plants to process garbage. Besides they had also invited tenders to install three different processing machines in each zone offices. There are certain areas who succeeded in disposing garbage at source with the help of Civic Response Team (CRT) and former corporator. But till now this work cannot be undertaken due to unhealthy relationship and non-cooperation attitude in between the representatives and officials. Another aspect is also a lack of ground level staff. The number of permanent employees in the AMC is reducing consistently due to retirements but the vacant posts have not been recruited. Hence corporation has appointed some employees through outsourcing. It has hired 362 such workers through self-help groups for cleaning in Cidco-Hudco areas. In addition to it, 255 more workers were hired through private agency. After the recent garbage issue it appointed ten conservancy workers through self-help groups in each zone. Thus a total of 717 sanitary workers are appointed through outsourcing. Despite such a large number of these workers, there is no cleanliness in the city. The one of the important factor is blame game by politicians. Due to this blame game there is increasing influence of politicians in administrative work leading delay in decision making.

Lack of proper planning

Aurangabad is one of the fastest growing city in Asia due to increasing industrialization. But there is lack of proper town planning. Along with the waste management there are so many other problems like poor drinking water supply, improper roads, faulty drainage system, insufficient space for parking, poor city

transportation etc. There is unwillingness and apathy towards the development work. There is no proper planning or dedication towards the work.

Citizens' awareness and participation

Citizens are the principal wealth of cities. People must actively contribute to the common development plan. Hence in solving the issue of waste management, to create the awareness amongst the citizen is foremost priority. Without their help it is not possible to solve the issue. It has been found that citizens from different colonies, apartments are segregating the waste. Some are making manure from waste and using it to their gardens. But in slum areas due to lack of space these peoples are not segregating the waste. Even the civic bodies are not collecting that waste, the waste is dumped elsewhere by these slum area peoples. The AMC is not able to create awareness among the people. Meanwhile AMC distributed pamphlets about the segregation of waste and schedule of collection of wet waste and recyclable waste (plastic, glass, papers etc.), but the workers were not following the schedule. Hence it is necessary to create awareness among the workers and citizens. Help of NGOs should be taken to educate these peoples. The awareness drive should be launched as a movement. Along with the awareness campaign penalty should be imposed for illegal dumping of waste elsewhere.

In India due to political multiparty system, different levels of government are controlled by different parties, thus pursuing differing goals in the same policy area. Sometimes the ruling party implement and convey message according to their perception, when another alliance party works according to their perception, hence the end result is either incomplete or improper implementation of program. Such is the case in Aurangabad Municipal Corporation. Every politician is working according to their perception neglecting the citizen welfare factor. In the implementation of program of segregation of waste and waste management the role of political members is crucial. If the peoples are not cooperating in waste management then only by firm sustained political determination they can

convince the citizens to segregate waste and not to dump waste anywhere in the city. Hence political persons act as a communication link between administration and people.

Lack of proper training:

Unpreparedness in the field is a reason for poor implementation. The field staff is not receiving proper training regarding the actual work at the sites hence they are not sure of the methods and techniques for execution of programs. Hence it is necessary to train the ground level staff/ sanitary workers about the handling of waste, dealing with the citizens, management of wet waste etc.

Lack of motivation of government officials:

There is no reward system to government officials for best work done. Officials lack will power towards the work there are many reasons like political interference, lack of motivation etc. Government officials are not rewarded, their work is not appreciated hence there is low morale towards the work. The excellent and best work of the officials should be appreciated and rewarded so that others will be motivated for the best.

Public Private Partnership

Now a days many programs are undertaken through public private partnership. There are certain companies that are undertaking different development programs under social corporate responsibility. In Aurangabad many companies and NGOs came forward to prepare compost from the wet garbage and to collect the recyclable garbage. But due to internal conflicts among the politicians AMC is not able to implement PPP model.

According to one of the NGO SajagNagariKritiSamiti if Excel Roka Machine (which costs 1.25 lakh Rs) is implemented in each colonies then the youth will get

employment as this machine processes 90 Kg garbage in to compost. Income can be generated by selling this compost.

Concluding Remark

The Aurangabad Municipal Corporation is not able to resolve burning garbage issue since January 2018. The garbage is dumped anywhere in the city. Now Aurangabad is gaining a identity as 'City of Garbage'. Aurangabad is one of most important world tourist center due to Ajantha and Ellora caves. Tourist from all over world are visiting to these places. - with several foreigners writing to the state tourism office about the unhygienic conditions in Aurangabad. Their complaints with the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) are mostly about bad roads, poor infrastructure, spilling bins of garbage and unhygienic conditions, making the city unfriendly of the tourists.

If the AMC provides basic amenities like regular water supply, waste management, transportation facility, roads in good condition etc. the revenue from tourism can be generated. Another important aspect is growing industrialization in Aurangabad, as various big industries like automobile, pharmaceutical industry, electronic industries etc. in Aurangabad. Now Delhi-Mumbai industrial Corridor is introduced, with this regard international airport has developed. Ultimately this will available more opportunities for employment. But due to mismanagement of AMC, lack of basic infrastructure facilities industrialists are not willing to invest in Aurangabad. Also due garbage issue the number of tourist are decreasing day by day. The situation is aroused due to apathy and unwillingness of officials and politicians towards the work. Lack of proper planning, co-ordination and cooperation, interference of political representatives in official work, delay indecision making are some of the reasons. The civic body is paying no attention to facilities which make the tourists feel comfortable and safe in the city.

In order to solve the issue the officials and political representative should work harmoniously, without having blame game amongst them. Already 30 percent of the urban population is estimated to be living in slums. Each local authority of the

AMC should enter into dialogue with its citizens and through convocation process should resolve the problem and increase the awareness among the citizens. Without people's participation no single mission is possible. The problem of waste management is a multi-faceted one and affects every person equally irrespective of their social position. In that it has many different factors ranging from responsibility of the AMC, to involvement of politician to active participation of the residents. To address this problem every person (including city dwellers, government workers, and politicians) needs to have an active role to play and this issue needs to be addressed rather than postponing it. Only by identifying weak links in the waste disposal process (like absence of an efficient disposal system), increasing healthy communication, and proper education do we stand a chance at improving the standard of living in Aurangabad.

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