



Advocacy - Governance - Renewal

Shri Devendra Fadnavis
Chief Minister, Maharashtra
Mantralaya
Mumbai 400021

December 1, 2014

Dear Shri Fadnavis,

लिपिक
मुख्यमंत्री सचिवालय
मंत्रालय, मुंबई-४००३२

Sub: Cabinet decision to extend use of reserved Playgrounds to 45 days in a year for non-sporting activities

We are writing to you regarding the cabinet decision taken by your government permitting the **use of reserved Playgrounds to 45 days in a year for non-sporting activities**. It is deeply disappointing that this anti children and anti citizen move is one of the first pronouncements of your government.

The importance of preventing Reserved Public Open Spaces from being diminished and in fact the vital need to preserve and increase them is borne out by the startling statistics that follow. There is a yawning gap between the universally accepted norms governing the requirement of open space per person in an urban environment and the **dismal ratio available in Mumbai**. Namely:

- **1.24sq m per person in Mumbai - MCGM's ELU (Existing Land Use) 2012**
- **10-12sq m per person UDPFI- (Urban Development Plans Formulation & Implementation -Guidelines of Ministry of Urban Affairs Government of India)**
- **9sq m per person -WHO (World Health Organization) /FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) / UN**
- **4.758 sq m per person – DDA (Delhi Development Authority)**
- **3 sq m per person – CIDCO Navi Mumbai**

You will agree that playground use for children not available for 5.5 months in a year (not usable for 4 months of the monsoon and not available for 45 days as per your new policy) is just not acceptable. In addition, every time an event takes place it ruins the ground and the extremely poor monitoring by the authorities leaves devastation behind! **Surely political rallies cannot be any government's priority over and above the right of our children to have good quality playgrounds!**

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Protection of Public Open Spaces has been an objective that NAGAR, through its erstwhile constituent CitiSpace, has long pursued. We are a not-for-profit organization seeking to improve the quality of life in Mumbai and work in the areas of preservation of public open spaces, solid waste management, improvement in air quality, preservation of beaches, mangroves, heritage places, efficient road space management and water conservation. NAGAR's creed has been strong and consistent advocacy with Government and its agencies for better implementation of existing laws, suggesting changes in policies for better governance in civic related issues and working towards urban renewal. It has a vast citizen base spread over the city and networks with other civic NGOs on specific issues. *(Brochure enclosed)*

New out-of-the-box solutions have to be found for holding public events which do not hijack as well as desecrate our scarce open spaces. **We urge you not to take this matter up in the December session of the legislature in Nagpur and defer it till you have explored alternate solutions** from experts and citizens of Mumbai.

We at NAGAR are keen to meet you on this subject as our long engagement with the issue of public open spaces has given us valuable insights and inputs to offer.

Looking forward to a positive response.

Yours sincerely,



Navana Kathpalia



Meher Rafaat

On behalf of Trustees

Anand Akerkar

D M Sukthankar

Gerson Da Cunha

Dinesh Ahir

Meher Rafaat

Nayana Kathpalia

Kunti Oza

Neera Punj