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COMMISSIONER" REPORTEDLY ADMITS "POTHoles HAPPENS IN RAINY SEASON" "CREATE STF TO FIX POTHoles" "WHICH EXISTS IN BBMP' LIMITS"



By: M.S.Yatnatti: Editor and Video Journalist Bengaluru: There is no one-time solution to many of these road problems. These issues require constant monitoring and engagement between citizens and the authorities. The BBMP on Sunday — a day before the deadline set by the high court to make Bengaluru pothole free expired — didn't release any official data on the status of potholes in the city. Reportedly Sources in the civic body said all eight zonal heads claimed there were no potholes left in their respective jurisdictions and only about 60 potholes on major roads needed to be fixed. Let BBMP create STF for fixing pot holes and black spots in BBMP limit. Trash heaps are not hard to find as the stench is not easy to miss. Still, BBMP chooses to be ignorant of Bengaluru's ground realities. Heaps of plastic, wet waste and empty containers may dot the city's streets, but recent data provided by ward-level engineers to the solid waste management wing of the BBMP reportedly shows there are about 500 black spots in Bengaluru. Citizens too, who have been complaining about inefficient waste collection system, said people are forced to dump waste on street corners as the BBMP's vehicles are not regular. The Palike usually counts transfer points and major daily dumping points as black spots, so their numbers are often lower than what the public sees on the road. A fair estimate is an average of 10 black spots per ward (of which three to four would be transfer points, and the rest major black spots). People with poor civic sense are largely to blame for this mess. Act against faulty officials, impose hefty fines on defaulters. How many more wake-up calls are needed to fix the problem?. The intermittent pre-monsoon showers are all set to intensify with the onset of monsoon in June first week. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) announced its monsoon preparedness plan, stating that it would fill 3,629 potholes in next couple of weeks. It has identified 950 potholes along the major roads maintained by its road infrastructure division. At the zonal level, most are in Mahadevapura (650) followed by Yelahanka (580), Bommanahalli (480), East Zone (354), South Zone (325), Rajarajeshwari Nagar Zone (150), Dasarahalli zone (80) and West Zone (60). BBMP decided to increase the number of control rooms and rain squads to tackle damage. They decided to clear inlets and silt traps of 25 lakes to facilitate smooth flow of rain water. Filling debris in the pot hole is not the solution. Even in areas where potholes have been filled, the gravel and mud used was coming loose. Create STF to fix potholes problem. Let BBMP create a Pothole special task force (STF) with a chief engineer heading it with necessary equipments and trained staff to fix the potholes on war footing as and when they are formed. Instead of spending money every time and every year in a unplanned manner BBMP can minimize the expenditure with special task force.

With money once again being earmarked the need for this campaign to hold the BBMP accountable is more important than ever. Even after the countless deadlines given by leaders and various promises being made by BBMP officials, the state of Bangalore's roads is pathetic. We must take responsibilities into our own hands and ensure proper spending of the money to fix the potholes. Every year, the problem of potholes arises and every year crores of rupees is spent. There is public outrage and media coverage around it and the problem of potholes are temporarily fixed. A part of the money allocated is used to actually fix potholes while the rest of it remains stagnant or just disappears. Cheap incompetent engineers and contractors who get the work every year are contracted to fill the roads, and they do so with gravel and dirt, and sometimes pour a layer of asphalt over the potholes. The shoddy job results in potholes coming back, and the entire cycle repeats itself resulting in public money being misused. The BBMP needs to ensure that all potholes identified are properly fixed with the help of experienced contractors and engineers for a long-term solution to this problem. BBMP will set up 63 temporary sub-division control rooms to operate from May 20 to August 31 at a cost of Rs 1 lakh each. The supervisors of control rooms will maintain a ready cache of raw materials like pipes, sickles and other items for repair work. They'll also be responsible for cleanliness of shoulder drains and storm water drains in their area. Special teams of the forest department have been formed for each zone for emergencies, mandating that every fallen tree should be cleared within three hours. The teams also need to ensure that all old and vulnerable trees are taken care of before the rain. Four forest teams each for East, West and South have been planned, with two each for Mahadevapura, RR Nagar, Bommanahalli and Yelahanka with one for Dasarahalli. They'll also identify vulnerable points for water logging and take proactive action.

Media reports tips for motorists to keep in mind when driving in the rain in order to lessen their chances of being involved in an accident. And note to drive slower and with more caution in rainy season. It is very important to drive at a slower and safer pace when driving in the rain. It takes longer to stop when the road is wet, so driving at an increased following distance will mitigate the chances of a collision. Take into account greater traveling time as it will take motorists longer to reach their destination. Drivers must also avoid hard or sudden braking, as this may cause the vehicle to slide across the road and cause an accident. Rather start braking earlier, less forcefully and take your foot off the accelerator to slow down little by little. This will also signal to any drivers behind the vehicle that you are slowing down. Turn on the headlights: Motorists should switch on headlights even in light rain, foggy or overcast conditions. This will help the motorists to see and be seen by other drivers and improve overall safety for all motorists on the road. Be sure to check tyre traction and wipers on a regular basis: Tyres with a low or illegal tread significantly reduces the vehicle's traction on a wet road and offers very little resistance to hydroplaning. It is also important that tyres are properly inflated and that the pressure is checked at least once a month. The correct air pressure for tyres is specified by the vehicle manufacturer and can usually be found on the door edge of the vehicle or in the owner's manual. Replace old or brittle wipers as defective wipers will hinder visibility as the wipers will not clear water from the windshield properly. Keep a spare pair of wipers in your car to ensure that you can replace faulty wipers immediately.

Do not use cruise control: Cruise control might allow drivers to be less vigilant to take their foot off of the pedals, which is not a good idea when driving on a wet road. Driving on a wet road requires the full attention of the driver and cruise control will slow his or her reaction time to brake or accelerate. Driving in rainy weather conditions severely increase the chances of collisions. Therefore, it is imperative that motorists arm themselves with knowledge on how to ensure that they are being safe on the roads to avoid dangerous accidents from occurring. It is pertinent to note that potholes are not formed by BBMP or BDA as they happen every where in the world during rainy season in asphalt roads. A pothole is a type of failure in an asphalt pavement, caused by the presence of water in the underlying soil structure and the presence of traffic passing over the affected area. Despite hundreds of crores being spent annually and promises being made by the government, there is no noticeable difference in the state of Bangalore's roads. With tens of thousands of potholes and regular accidents, public complaints and media coverage have continued to rise. Pothole Wikipedia definition: A pothole is a type of failure in an asphalt pavement, caused by the presence of water in the underlying soil structure and the presence of traffic passing over the affected area. Introduction of water to the underlying soil structure first weakens the supporting soil. Traffic then fatigues and breaks the poorly supported asphalt surface in the affected area. Continued traffic action ejects both asphalt and the underlying soil material to create a hole in the pavement.

How Do Potholes Form? : Potholes are holes in the roadway that vary in size and shape. They are caused by the expansion and contraction of ground water after the water has entered into the ground under the pavement. When water freezes, it expands. Think of when ice cubes are made. A tray full of water is put into the freezer, and when you remove the tray from the freezer, you will notice the water has expanded. This same effect happens when water gets into the ground under the pavement. If it has a chance to freeze, it will take up more space under the pavement, and the pavement will expand, bend, and crack, which weakens the material pavement. Then when ice melts, the pavement contracts and leaves gaps or voids in the surface under the pavement, where water can get in and be trapped. If the water freezes and thaws over and over, the pavement will weaken and continue cracking. As the weight of cars and trucks pass over the weak spot in the road, pieces of the roadway material weaken, which will cause the material to be displaced or broken down from the weight, creating the pothole. What happens when salt is brought into the picture? Water will freeze at 32 degrees Fahrenheit. When salt is used, it lowers the temperature that water will freeze. This creates an artificial freeze-thaw cycle that permits more occurrences of the damaging cycle to occur. This happens more often in the spring because of the melting that takes place and because the temperatures fluctuating above and below the freezing point very frequently.

According to a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers publication, *Pothole primer—A public administrator's guide to understanding and managing the pothole problem*, (Eaton, et al.), pothole formation requires two factors to be present at the same time: water and traffic. Water weakens the soil beneath the pavement; traffic applies the loads that stress the pavement past the breaking point. Potholes form progressively, first from fatigue of the road surface, which can lead to a precursor failure pattern known as crocodile cracking. Finally, chunks of pavement between the fatigue cracks gradually work loose, and may eventually be plucked or forced out of the surface by continued wheel loads to create a pothole. In areas subject to freezing and thawing, Frost heaving can damage a pavement and create openings for water to enter. Spring thaw of pavements accelerates this process when thawing of upper portions of the soil structure in a pavement cannot drain past still-frozen lower layers, thus saturating the supporting soil and weakening it. Potholes can grow to several feet in width, though they usually only develop to depths of a few inches. If they become large enough, damage to tires, wheels, and vehicle suspensions is liable to occur. Serious road accidents can occur as a direct result, especially on those roads where vehicle speeds are greater. According to Eaton, et al., potholes may result from four main causes: Insufficient pavement thickness to support traffic during freeze/thaw periods without localized failures. Insufficient drainage. Failures at utility trenches and castings (manhole and drain casings). Miscellaneous pavement defects and cracks left unmaintained and unsealed so as to admit moisture and compromise the structural integrity of the pavement.

Prevention: Surveying of pavements for risk factors. Providing adequate drainage structures. Preventative maintenance. Utility cut management. Drainage structures, including ditching and storm sewers are essential for removing water from pavements. Avoiding other risk factors with good construction includes well-draining base and sub-base soils that avoid frost action and promote drying of the soil structure. Adequate crowns promote drainage to the sides. Good crack control prevents water penetration into the pavement soil structure. Reportedly the BBMP has promised, yet again, to make the city 'pothole free'. However, potholes are not the only obstacles users of the city's battered and bruised roads have to deal with. An estimated 67,309 sq mt have been identified as 'bad reaches'. Though the palike claims to have smoothed out most stretches, with just over 5,000 sq mt remaining to be repaired, no mention appears to have been made of taking care of these stretches on Monday. Repairing these 'bad reaches' (worn out portions of roads, cracks on surfaces, material scraped out around speed breakers, sunken surfaces), mainly found at junctions, turns, speed breakers and around structures such as transformers, are admittedly more time consuming and difficult. BBMP officials said while small stretches of bad reaches can be repaired using the pothole filling machine for quick results, longer stretches need more equipment and space. "The paver and truck need space. We would also have to block the lane to carry out the work," a senior official said. Though bad reaches in arterial roads have been repaired, work in other areas can only be taken up at night, he admitted.

According to reports appearing in all news papers the promises from the BBMP, apparently, re-appear as often as the potholes on the city's roads. After a gaping pothole claimed the life of a software engineer few months back, the civic body has set itself another deadline to make the city free of potholes. All major, arterial and sub-arterial roads in city will be pothole-free. Elections and torrential rains in the last three months damaged the city's roads. Now, the BBMP authorities would get into action to fill up all potholes on a war-footing, he said, adding that the joint commissioners and chief engineers of all eight zones will be held responsible for potholes and uncleared garbage in their respective zones. So far, executive engineers and assistant engineers were held responsible for the same. The Minister said tenders had been called for Rs. 347 crore of the total Rs. 1,000 crore promised by the State government to fix potholes. Contractors who do tardy jobs would be blacklisted and would not be given any civic work in future. A total of 20,000 km of roads come under BBMP but the previous dispensation failed to improve main, arterial and sub-arterial roads, he added.

Reportedly Just another promise?: However, citizens are taking the new promise with a pinch of salt. Government to make promises that were not honoured. "Why are they not even looking at the history of why this has failed? There is no accountability; repairs are being carried out for the sake of it. Potholes are inevitable due to poor quality work, rain, population or growing traffic. When they are closing them, they should do



in collaboration with the residents by making a survey of the area.” No auditing: there is no need for auditing the existing potholes. The real problem had been lack of coordination among various agencies, such as BWSSB, Bescom, BSNL and others. A coordination committee comprising heads of departments had been constituted. It is headed by the BBMP commissioner. Even the process of seeking permission for road cutting has been made online, he added. He also said that work on preparing road history of all roads is in the final stages and is likely to be completed before November.

There is no one-time solution to many of these road problems. These issues require constant monitoring and engagement between citizens and the authorities. Reportedly when asked for names of specific roads that will be tarred under the present budget, no official could give a clear answer. “Not a single road laid by the BBMP is in accordance with the guidelines of the Indian Road Congress. According to the guidelines, the details of the roads should be put up on both sides of the road during the road construction.” Reportedly 20,000 km of road under BBMP limits, around 2,000 km are arterial and sub-arterial roads. The potholes that were fixed before the rain resurfaced. And the blame game is on between the BBMP, BDA and Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board. Tarring the roads is very essential in any area. In the absence of proper tarring of roads the area residents and other commuters undergo lots of avoidable troubles. Gandhi Nagar comes under Ward number 94 : which includes Seshadripuram, Ramakrishna Layout, Nehru Nagar, VV Giri Colony, Bangalore City, Kempgeowda bus Stand, RK Puram, Gandhinagar, Upparpet, Chikpete (P) . Corporator was several time requested by residents to get the tar done the roads after they have been dug since several months .All roads in Gandhi Nagar are waiting to be tarred from many years. When can residents expect the road to be tarred?. There are several people who are affected by this bad road including school going kids. “Roads are in a bad shape despite repeated appeals to the local corporator to asphalt them, The situation is really worst in the rainy season. It is full of mud and people are not able to walk. Women do not feel safe here after sunset, as there are no proper street lights here. The residents have approached civic authorities by sending letters, besides bringing the issue to the attention of the corporator of the area. They have also submitted a memorandum signed by various residents in the locality. School authorities have approached the Minister on this issue. However, nobody has shown any interest in solving the issue so far. Having faced the issues for years together now it feels we do not live in the IT City. The road is more like a remote village road; may be now days the village roads are better than ours. Reportedly many citizens have seen undamaged roads being re-tarred every now and then at many places in Bangalore and damaged one left out ...So the only question to the civic authorities and public representatives is when we will get our right to a tarred road, proper street lights and proper sewerage system? govt gets a lot in taxes from people living in this ward . Why can't they utilise 10% of it to tar the road.

Pregnant and old age woman's couldn't take an auto as doctor advise to avoid bumpy roads .Residents had to start back from work at 4 PM so that they can walk back at home when there is sunlight . There are upmten dogs and no proper streetlights as well. street lights in Gandhinagar Bangalore in first main and Y Ramachandra road is not working since more than a year and few people i have filed several complaints and posted on internet .that is from sagar theatre to Kanakadas circle and palace road to Kanakadas circle. They have requested for action . It is pure luck that few did not slip on the road during the rains. Not just elders, little kids in the school buses sway from side to side .I wonder their head might hit the bus .It is pretty dangerous. 70 yrs old slipped and broke his arm due to the slippery nature of the road during rains. Find it very strange that government authorities have done nothing to improve the road in the past decade yet apartments are mushrooming by the day in the area.Why is it so hard to expect basic amenities like roads in a city like bangalore? Why in spite of multiple pleadings the politicians are turning deaf ears? Why are they even elected if they cant take care of such basic amenities? When self volunteered group of people approached ward Corporator during the rains , they were assured by respectable Corporator that road work will start after rain stops and street lighting would be done with immediate effect and all the those promises and assurance proved to be false and just election gimmick. Walking on the road is very difficult. Even two wheeler riding also dangerous as the road is skidding too much. Many humps, water stagnation, no street light & full of mud on the road always a stressful exercise to commute in this road. As we are paying property Tax to BBMP every year, its our right & BBMP's responsibility to provide us the proper road & other basic amenities says residents. All of us should protest against BBMP & politicians to get these road tarred as early as possible.

The Accountability is checked by public under 4 (1) (d): The citizens who are affected by decisions made under RTI ACT 4(1) (a) (b) (c) can seek reasons for their administrative and quasi judicial decisions .PA can provide reasons to affected person and copy of such reasons can be provided to anybody under 2(f) of RTI Act. Public is fully authorized to ask how and why and under what rules and regulations such decision is arrived at under 4(1) (a) (b) (c) of RTI ACT 2005 using 4 (1) (d).An RTI application can force the PA to create information on his application to PA under 4(1) (a) (b) (c) of RTI ACT 2005 and at the same time he can check the information whether it is provided as per 4(1) (a) (b) (c) of RTI ACT 2005 by invoking 4 (1) (d) of RTI Act 2005.And whereas democracy requires an informed citizenry and transparency of information which are vital to its functioning and also to contain corruption and to hold Government and their instrumentalities accountable to the governed.

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