

| Parameter | Marks |
|------------|-------|
| Past | 7 |
| Present | 63 |
| Perception | 30 |
| Total | 100 |

In This Issue

Councillor
Report Card
Matrix



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DIALOGUE

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Big Story

“Democracy will cease to exist when you take away from those who are willing to work and give to those who would not”.

- Thomas Jefferson

A modern democracy like ours functions effectively when all those who are elected are involved actively and solely in addressing people’s issues through the available constitutional methods, and when necessary by suitably amending and introducing new ones.

The citizens, whom the elected representatives represent, have given them the representational mandate to take necessary actions on their behalf through the legislative houses for addressing issues affecting citizens’ lives to bring about progress in society. Very importantly, the mandate given is not permanent; representatives can enjoy it only till it is not challenged and proven otherwise through constitutional methods. Also, the mandate has to be validated at regular intervals through the act of elections. Democracy can be thus observed as faith in common man, his ability to exercise his choice to vote, and his active citizenship when required.

It is when there is dereliction of active citizenry and/or legislative responsibility, that democracy starts to get corrupted. This corruption gradually manifests into

several ills such as degradation of standards of living, government scams, lack of basic services, and more alarmingly into lack of ‘rule of law’. That is when democracy really ceases to exist.

Overall it can be said that Indian citizens have been voting diligently, but one cannot say the same with complete confidence about the performance of those who have been elected. However, to be fair to the elected representatives, it has to be understood that a standard scale for mapping their performance based largely on constitutional parameters is absent. Hence, the attempt in this initiative of the Praja Foundation team is to establish the scale - the matrix for ranking performance of the elected representatives.

The evaluation scale is made to be very fair and deserves the prompt and sincere attention of all those who consider themselves stakeholders of what truly is the largest and most vibrant democracy of the modern world.

(Late) B. G. Deshmukh,
IAS (Retd.) former Cabinet Secretary, GOI;
Former chairman, Praja Foundation

(Excerpt from Praja’s Mumbai MLA Report Card 2011)

Why was a Report Card needed and what does it contain?

In the last three decades we have seen a steady decline in the quality of governance due to various reasons, prime amongst them being commercialisation and criminalisation of politics. This has created a huge governance deficit in our country.

An assessment of the performance of elected representatives should not become merely a ritual that happens once in five years at the time of elections. However, the paucity of information on the basis of which they can be judged is a challenge in the process of ensuring sustained accountability. Thus, there is a need for a continuous dialogue and appraisal on the working of the elected representatives.

Praja’s report card is created keeping in mind the constitutional role and responsibility of the elected representatives and the opinion of their electorate. This report card covers the working and performance of the 227 elected municipal councillors of Mumbai.

We believe this annual report card will give to the citizens, elected representatives (ERs), political parties and the government valuable feedback on elected representatives’ functioning. We also hope that it will set standards and benchmarks of the performance of the elected representatives not only in Mumbai but across the country.

Methodology

For developing this assessment, we have created a matrix with inputs from reputed people with sectoral knowledge in governance, social science, market research and media. This matrix comprises of parameters involving both the present performance of the ER as well as the record of the person in the past i.e. prior to election to the post. It also takes into account people's perception of the representative.

The data used for the present performance and past background of the ER is collected from the following government sources:

- a. Election Department, MCGM.
- b. Under Right to Information Act from Municipal Secretary, MCGM (MCGM Head Office and BEST).
- c. Under Right to Information Act from Assistant Engineer (Maintenance), MCGM (from all the 24 Administrative Wards of MCGM).
- d. Under Right to Information Act from Mumbai Police.

To get a sense a public perception, a primary survey was conducted amongst the citizens in each constituency to evaluate the perceived performance of the municipal councillor.

The following were the areas in which we ranked councillors:

I) Present (Total 63 Marks)

A. Attendance in the Corporation and Committee Meetings (15 Marks):

It is important that the representatives attend 100% or near to 100% sessions of their respective houses. Hence the marking is based on percentage of attendance: 100% getting 15 while 0% getting zero.

However, in the MCGM a councillor is always a member of the Corporation and a particular Ward Committee, and apart from that some of the councilors are members of various committees.

Thus, it is understood that there can be two categories of councillors and they need to be allocated the 15 marks in different ways:

| Councillor | Cat. A | Cat. B |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Corporation General Body Meetings (GBM) | 9 | 7 |
| Ward Committee Meetings | 6 | 4 |
| Different Committee Meetings | N.A. | 4 |
| Total | 15 | 15 |

B. Number of Questions Asked (10 Marks):

Given the range and complexity of issues that our country is facing, it is necessary for the representative to raise as many issues as they can. Hence to stimulate the representatives to ask maximum number of questions the scale uses the percentile system for scoring.

The marking here is done against Group Percentage Rank: 10 being the top most percentile and so on to the lowest for 0.

C. Participation during discussion (5 Marks):

It is important that councillors participate in the ensuing discussion either on the question raised by their fellow councilors or on proposals received by the Municipal Commissioner. These discussions are noted in the General Body Meeting along with the councillor's name. 5 is the top most percentile and 0 is the lowest

D. Importance of questions asked by issues raised in the question (18 Marks):

The duties of the Municipal Corporation have been laid down under the Mumbai Municipal Corporation Act, 1888. They are further divided into obligatory duties (Section 61, 62) and discretionary duties (Section 63). The obligatory duties include issues related to roads, water supply, sewerage, buildings, disaster management, municipal properties, primary education, health, etc. are covered. The discretionary duties include issues related to slum development, open spaces, gardens, road transport, energy, electricity, etc.

In the present scale, we have culled out certain services from the obligatory duties that are essentially civic in nature and where the MCGM has monopoly for delivery of these services to the citizens of Mumbai. The issues that can be raised on these services are related to subjects such as drainage, roads, water supply, solid waste management, etc.

Apart from these issues, councillors can raise subjects that are not under the direct purview of the corporation but are covered by the state and central governments. These are, crime, foreign affairs, agriculture, animal husbandry, MMRDA (Mumbai Metropolitan Regional Development Authority), etc.

Based on the above classifications the weightages for the quality/ importance of the questions have been designated as below from the total marks out of 100 in the overall scale:

| Issues/Duties | Marks |
|--------------------|-----------|
| Obligatory | 8 |
| Discretionary | 6 |
| Civic (Obligatory) | 3 |
| State/Central | 1 |
| Total | 18 |

E. Issues raised compared to Citizen’s Complaints (10 Marks):

MCGM has developed a system for tracking, recording citizen complaints. These complaints are maintained under the Centralised Complaint Registering System (CCRS). They are registered into a software platform where they are classified into different categories by departments and the nature of the complaint such as drainage, road, water supply, colony officer, building, etc. As citizens’ representatives, it is expected that municipal councillors also ask questions or raise issues to resolve citizen's issues (complaints). Hence the current parameter is based on comparing issues raised by councillors related to the citizen complaints based on the RTI information procured related to the data maintained by CCRS. A maximum of 10 marks have been allocated for this parameter.

F. Total Discretionary Funds Utilised (5 Marks):

Municipal councillors get a total of Rs. 60 lakhs in every financial year. They can spend this fund as per their discretion on certain specified development work in their constituencies. If councillors spend 100% (or more) to 91%, 90% to 76% or 75% to 61%, they will be awarded five, four or three marks respectively. If they spend between 60% and 51% or 50% or below, they will be awarded two and zero marks respectively.

2) Past (Total 7 Marks)

A. Education Qualification (One Marks):

If the elected representative has declared in the affidavit education qualification as 10th pass or more then on the scale, one mark is allocated, else zero marks are given. Basic modern education is an important criterion for human development and several professions require a minimum level of education. However, we also believe that the educational parameter should be given a minimal weightage in the overall scheme vis-a-vis other parameters that are more crucial for judging performance of the elected representatives.

B. Income Tax (One Marks):

It is widely published and believed in India that annual income levels and wealth of those who are elected sees a manifold increase in the few years when they represent. Marks are allotted for possessing a PAN card (one mark), as per the affidavit; for not possessing a PAN card then zero marks are allotted.

C. Criminal Record (5 Marks):

Criminalisation of politics is a sad reality. Several elected representatives have a criminal record i.e. 1) they

have FIRs registered against them; 2) charge sheets filled; and 3) even convictions given by the courts of law.

There is no excuse for not having moral probity in public life. It is the right of the citizens to have people representing them with no criminal records.

- i. Those with absolutely no criminal FIRs registered are given five marks.
- ii. Those with FIRs registered against, with cases containing the following charges: murder, rape, molestation, riot and extortion are given zero marks.
- iii. Those with other FIRs registered against, other than those mentioned in No. ii above, are given three marks.

3) Perception (Total 30 Marks)

Since perceived performance was given a weightage of 30 points, we divided it further in to four broad areas in order to evaluate the performance in detail. The weightages were divided in the following scheme:

- A. Perception of Public Services (impression of the people about the facilities in the area) was given a weightage of 11 points,
- B. Accessibility of the Municipal Councillor and public awareness about him/her.
- C. Corruption index was given a weightage of 7 points and
- D. Broad overall measures were given a weightage of 7 points

The rationale for giving the above scoring points was to give more importance to the key issues like facilities in the area & corruption as compared to Municipal Councillor being accessible or overall opinion of the people being positive. This is because we believe that scoring positively overall or being popular is actually a function of work in different areas. Hence, these areas should be given more importance than the overall satisfaction.

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The next step after assigning weightages to government’s four broad areas was to make sure that facilities which come under local jurisdiction get more importance than the ones which come under the state or central government’s jurisdiction. Hence the weightage for perception of public services was further divided into a hierarchy of 3 levels:

Level 1 included facilities which are more critical to local government whereas Level 3 included facilities that are more critical to state government.

- Level 1 : This level included issues like Condition of Roads, Traffic Jams & Congestion, Availability of public gardens, Availability of public transport facilities, Water Supply, Water logging problems & Cleanliness & Sanitation facilities. It was given a weightage of 6 points.
- Level 2 : This level included issues like Hospitals & other Medical facilities & Appropriate Schools & Colleges. It was given a weightage of 4 points.
- Level 3 : This level included issues like Power Supply, Instances of Crime, Law & Order situation. It was given a weightage of 1 point.

Research Design:

Since our study focused on evaluating the performance of municipal councillors it was necessary to cover and represent all the wards to which each of these Municipal Councillors belonged. Hence, we decided to cover all the 227 municipal wards equally, with a sample of 100 in each ward. The next step was to define the target group for the study, which was as follows:

- Both Males & Females
- 18 years and above (eligible to vote)

Once the target group was defined, quotas for representing gender and age groups were set.

- The quotas were set on the basis of age and gender split available through Indian Readership Study (Large scale baseline study conducted nationally Media Research Users Council (MRUC) & Hansa Research group for Mumbai Region.
- The required information was collected through face to face interviews with the help of structured questionnaire.

In order to meet the respondent, the following sampling process was followed:

- o 100 interviews were conducted in each municipal ward.
- o 2 – 3 prominent areas in the ward were identified and

the sample was divided amongst them. These areas were mainly crowded areas such as market place, railway stations, malls etc.

- Sample composition of age & gender was corrected to match the universe profile using the baseline data from IRS.

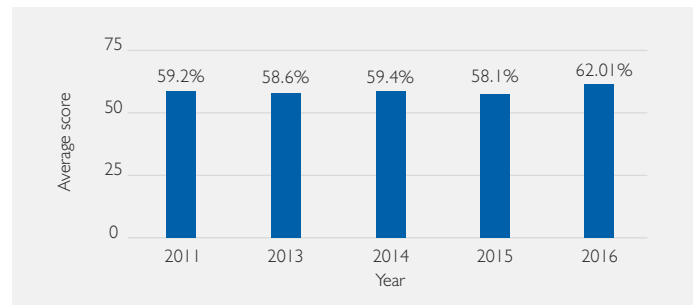
4. Parameters for Negative Marking

Negative marking for new FIR cases registered (-5 Marks)

If there has been a new FIR registered against the elected representative after his/her election, hence, five marks would be deducted.

Negative marking for chargesheet filed (-5 Marks)

A chargesheet signifies prima facie evidence in the case. This is again a serious concern for moral probity of the representative. Hence, five marks would be deducted.



(Note: As the municipal councillors were newly elected in the year 2012, Praja did not assess their performance in that year.)

As can be seen from the above graph, the performance of the councillors has improved in the past year. This is indeed a positive development. Praja evaluates elected representatives on a host of metrics, which range from present performance in the corporation and committee meetings to past record of transparency and moral probity, to perception of citizens in respective constituency about their representatives' performance, image and quality of civic services. The attempt is to cover all aspects of the performance of the elected representative and be as unbiased as possible. The scale is designed to be comprehensive and objective. If municipal councillors fare well on all these metrics, it is a healthy sign for democracy.



Watch out for our April 2017 Newsletter to know more about Civic issues in Mumbai and Deliberation by Councillors

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