

Resources diverted in pandemic, BMC took longer to address civic complaints in 2020-21: Report



THE [COVID-19 pandemic](#) seems to have had an adverse effect on the speed with which the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) resolves civic complaints.

The civic body took an average of 39 days to resolve complaints of citizens over the last one year, according to the Praja Foundation Report on Status of Civic Issues released on Tuesday.

The report, which studied the civic complaints that were raised between April 2020 and March 2021, said the average number of days it took to resolve a complaint has seen an increase from 30 days in 2019 to 39 days in 2020, showing “deteriorated performance of the complaint management system.”

The report, though, also took note of the fact that the city has been in the grip of the pandemic throughout the period as a result of which restrictions were imposed and major resources diverted towards Covid-19 management.

Praja Foundation, an organisation that works towards enabling accountability in governance, compiled the complaint data from the 1916 helpline, MyBMC 24X7 mobile app, MCGM (Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai) website and written complaints to the designated officer in the ward.

According to the data, close to 93,774 complaints were registered in the period and most of them were related to drainage, buildings and water supply. Even as the number of complaints decreased by 27 per cent from 2019, the fraction of complaints attended also saw a downfall from 96 per cent in 2019 to 82 per cent in 2020.

According to the procedure, after a citizen raises a complaint, it is referred to the respective department for necessary action and, if not solved within the stipulated time, is escalated to the next level of administration. This is based on the “escalation matrix” which has been adopted by the civic body to address the problem of complaints remaining stuck at the lower level of the civic administration, with no way to enforce accountability. Through this system, the higher administration is mandated to take note of and address complaints if they are not solved on time. Once the complaint is resolved, the complainant is notified of the same.

The citizen’s charter, prepared by the BMC in collaboration with Praja, prescribes almost all major complaints to be solved in one day. However, the key civic service complaints such as sanitation took an average of 50 days to resolve, followed by solid waste management (garbage), which took 43 days, drainage (36 days) and water supply (29 days).

Praja, in its report, also appreciated the BMCs efforts, including decentralisation of the control room in each of the 14 wards (Covid-19 war rooms), in handling the pandemic.

“Being the economic capital of the country, Mumbai needs to run efficiently and the citizens of the city deserve apposite basic day-to-day civic services. Praja understands that a lot of citizens’ issues could not be attended to, due to major focus being diverted towards COVID-19 this year, and this has been reflected in our Civic Report as well,” said Nitai Mehta, trustee, Praja Foundation.

T (Mulund), P/N (Malad) and R/S (Kandivali west) wards took the most time in solving complaints — 77, 57 and 55 days respectively. The T ward (Mulund), according to the report, took an average of 13 days to resolve a complaint related to contamination of water supply but took 211 days to address sweeping of the roads.

Link:- <https://newsdeal.in/resources-diverted-in-pandemic-bmc-took-longer-to-address-civic-complaints-in-2020-21-report/>