

‘Stagger office timings in Mumbai’

Tanvi Deshpande

MUMBAI, JUNE 12, 2020

Urban planner on tackling post-COVID-19 challenges

Mumbai needs to seriously consider staggered timings of offices and the city can't really restart unless the suburban trains start functioning, urban planner Pankaj Joshi said on Thursday while speaking about the city's post-COVID-19 challenges.

Implementing staggered timings will require cooperation from corporates, and many offices have already been moving away from South Mumbai, Mr Joshi pointed out at an online chat hosted by city-based organisation Gateway House on 'Post-COVID Mumbai: Governance, Planning and Realignment.'

"We (Mumbai) still have not been able to get a hang of the (COVID-19) situation. We need to invest in our public health infrastructure. Fever clinics being held right now need to be held all year round," he said.

"Delhi has had mohalla clinics for a while now. The public health and disaster management infrastructure being augmented for Mumbai right now seems temporary," Mr. Joshi added.

"In Mumbai, we see crowding every day at public toilets. We need to construct a toilet for every home, and if not that, for every two to three houses at least," Mr. Joshi said.

Nitai Mehta, managing trustee of Praja Foundation, highlighted the need for devolution of powers in the city's administration.

"We need to involve public representatives, NGOs and local people who know ground realities on issues such as migrants' issues. Each State needs to look at implementation of Nagar Raj Bill. Imagine a Mayor of Mumbai as powerful as the CM. It has happened in New York," Mr. Mehta said.

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