

DOWNFALL OF QUALITY, CHAOS ON STREETS AND INEFFECTIVE LAW AND ORDER: THE CONCERNING CASE OF MUMBAI

Dev Gupta *

ABSTRACT

In this article, I go through what every Chemburkar and Mumbaikar has in their hearts with fire in their minds with years of futility. Via this article I bring to light some of the problems prevalent in Mumbai, explaining them in a division of 4 parts. First is a unique point of view perspective to what a normal person living in Chembur experiences as he leaves his house and takes a train. The second part deals with problems prevalent throughout the city and those which are not area-specific anymore. In the third part, I try to explain and analyze some of the probable causes as to how it has reached such a dire scenario while in my amateur mind, presenting some possible situations. The fourth part is the concluding statement. A heavily researched and cited article, some might say this is a collection of blogs. Whatever it may be so, to its very core it is a call for help and is written with a heart filled with beams of hope coming through in dark times.

Keywords: Mumbai, Train, Slums, Congestion.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout History, it has been witnessed that Humans as a species have a deep-rooted feeling of curiosity, and exploration, and in this exploration, we have always tended to try and upgrade. The up-gradation can come in any form or way. Upgrade in terms of using better equipment, upgrade in terms of buying better houses, better cars, this also includes upgrading the surrounding we live in. India, after the economic turmoil caused by and after the British, did not have many towns that could have, as they were, the status of being the city that provides. It did not have for that matter, any town, which could provide opportunities. People living anywhere were always deprived of some or the other things in terms of quality and quantity. Anywhere except Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata (Calcutta as it then was), and Chennai (Madras, as it then was). These were the only cities that could have been termed as Tier 1, at least well into the late 70s and perhaps even 80s. Even among these cities, people in general looked at Mumbai

*BA LLB, THIRD YEAR, DR. D.Y. PATIL COLLEGE OF LAW, MUMBAI.

with a sense of fire in their hearts, ambition in their minds, and hope in their eyes. Mumbai was and even today, it still is, a city of dreams for people living outside of it. The hometown of the Hindi Film Industry, bustling real – estate ventures, and the sheer glamour – grandeur that one sees in Mumbai, can hardly be matched anywhere in India, all of this with a pinch of look at the times gone by. Museums, Historical architectural magnificence of the British, streets still stuck in the 1900s, the never-ending nightlife, and Marine Drive. Mumbai in the late 20th Century rose to such significance that it was well on its way to being considered the financial hub of Asia, goes without saying that it was that of India. Then why is it today that, despite mentioning all of the upsides, citizens living in Mumbai are not happy? Why is it, that today, Mumbai is largely covered with slums, pollution, crowd, and congestion? The hope that I mentioned above – shattered and the ambition moved from - moving TO MUMBAI – to – moving FROM MUMBAI-? A city that could and would have matched the likes of New York, Los Angeles, and Sydney is now being left as if it was just another city. In this article, I would like to cover some of the points that the average citizen goes through which invigorates and instigates the feeling of looking at other countries as a possible home in them. In this Four–part article, the First Part is the Point of View perspective of a traveler wanting to commute from Chembur (as an example) to other parts of Mumbai as the average working citizen and all the problems that are faced by them. The second part then deals with the problems which cease to be area–specific and transcend to be more prominent. Third Part deals with the possible causes and probable fixes. Fourth Part is the conclusion.

PART I: CHEMBUR

When we look at New York, we see the main parts being Downtown Manhattan, Times Square, etc. but it is impossible to live there for the average working citizen due to the high demand and subsequently the high rent and property prices. Similarly, when we look at Mumbai, the heart of it is the Fort Area, Colaba, Metro Cinema, Marine Drive, etc and similarly, it is impossible to live there as well due to the same reasons. So, like in the case of New York where people live in Queens (one of the residential areas) and commute to the commercial parts, so is it with Mumbai, where although the heart of the city is the aforementioned neighborhoods, the hearts of people who work there lay in Chembur, one of the residential areas among Ghatkopar, Tilak Nagar, Govandi, Deonar, etc. and commute to the above-mentioned commercial areas.

When the day starts for the average Chemburkar, most of whom travel to various parts of Mumbai by or near the train Station i. e. through bus – stops near the train station for example. The Main N. M. Acharya Road has to be used (famously and commonly known as Chembur Station Road). This brings me to the first narrow point of this vast article – the tip of the iceberg- the problem that is faced by about the bare minimum 30% of the population. A statistic before proceedings, Chembur has an area of 16.28 sq. km. and hosts a population of about 4, 14, 435 people which brings the Population Density to about 25, 454 people per sq. km. ¹From above, it is clear that Chembur is Crowded as it is. The Chembur Station Road is overtaken by the vendors, the footpaths are completely in-accessible, the parking areas are covered with one stall or another, the average citizen has to walk on the road, and only about 10% of the road is left for cars, which has to be used as a 2- way road. This is a cocktail of all things wrong with the Road. For many years, many people have overlooked the inconvenience caused by this stating it to be a busy road, a main road, and a plethora of other things, but now it has reached such a level that walking on the road itself is a risk to life and safety, especially during the evening when normal office hours end i. e. around 8- 9 pm. This is even further enhanced – deepened with adamant and a new generation of rickshaw – drivers being present outside the station and blocking whatever part of the road is still left accessible. The above-mentioned problems create a sense of frustration and exhaustion which depletes the mental capacity and productivity of an individual before they even reach their workplace. Not to mention that the after / side effects of all things mentioned are road – rage, fights, the rise of anti-social elements in the crowd, etc. to name a few. Ramdas Shinde, a Subhash Nagar Resident, who has lived in Chembur for more than two decades, has the perfect word to describe the situation outside the station – chaotic.² In the east, NM Acharya Road, or station road, which is parallel to the railway line, remains completely clogged at all times. Haphazard parking, illegal hawkers, and unruly auto-rickshaw drivers don't leave much space for vehicles and pedestrians on the four-lane road.³

¹ 'Chembur, Mumbai Suburban Locality' GeoIQ < <https://geoiq.io/places/Chembur/4Blfu6QCxz> > accessed 7th February 2024

² HTCorrespondent, 'Unclog Mumbai: No room to breathe in Chembur' (Hindustan Times, 30th November, 2015) < <https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai/unclog-mumbai-no-room-to-breathe-in-chembur-station/story-IXoZoojzXNOmM0dY69HR3J.html> > accessed 7th February 2024

³ HTCorrespondent, 'Unclog Mumbai: No room to breathe in Chembur' (Hindustan Times, 30th November, 2015) < <https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai/unclog-mumbai-no-room-to-breathe-in-chembur-station/story-IXoZoojzXNOmM0dY69HR3J.html> > accessed 7th February 2024

MUMBAI LOCAL TRAIN

It is said that the Local Train is the backbone of the people of Mumbai. Trains are the one thing that makes the far ends of Mumbai accessible relatively quickly. Lives as well as Bread & Butter for many people depend on the working of the railway system, in one way or another, as travelers and as workers as well. Began in 1853 by the British, The Mumbai Local (as it is famously called) is spread across a region of about 390 km, operates 2342 train services, and carries about 7.5 million passengers daily.⁴ These fascinating numbers, perhaps make the Mumbai Local a true marvel. Looking at it, even today achieving such a complex railway system seems an elephantine task. But the numbers impress, the facts do not. Trains are filled to such an extent today, that for anyone who does not have a habit of seeing them every day, it may look like hell since it does so even for those who do use it every day. The Mumbai Local is divided into 4 main lines, Central, Western, Harbour, and Trans – Harbour. Some of the stations on 2 or more lines are common. Each of the lines houses at least one station which brings with it (in some cases) and takes with it (in some cases) the majority of the crowd of the train. Some famous names are Kurla and Dadar, both being extremely densely populated areas.

The crowd, and no space to stand, and breathe, create a ruckus. As soon as the station approaches, people on the train start the habit of pushing, cursing, and shouting at each other. These are the lesser effects. Some fights escalate into physical ones. All these miscreants such as pick-pocketers take away personal, precious, pristine belongings of individuals. A statistic of 2022 reads as follows-

"According to the statistics provided by GRP, last year, 13,799 crimes were reported, as compared to 6,720 cases registered in 2021. The GRP officers claimed that in the pre-pandemic years like in 2019, around 16,948 criminal cases were registered"⁵

⁴ 'Mumbai Suburban Railway', (Wikipedia, 7th February, 2024)
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mumbai_Suburban_Railway > accessed 7th February 2024.

The last and final catastrophe that takes place on the railway track is that people lose their lives. Yes, due to the ever-so-robust behavior required in trains, not all can cope with it. Many people fall, slip under the train, and lose their lives. Some are just unfortunate to be pushed from the track and go between the gap in the stairs of the train and the platform and lose a limb or ultimately their lives. One of the prime causes of death on the railways is the activity of crossing tracks.

Hurry to catch local trains has claimed the most lives on the Mumbai suburban railway in 2022, according to the official statistics. While crossing rail tracks has killed 1,118 people, 700 others died after falling off running trains. Overall, 2,507 people died on the rail premises last year due to various reasons, with CR reporting the most fatalities.

While crossing of tracks is the prime killer, most injuries have been caused due to commuters falling from running trains, according to the data released by the Government Railway Police (GRP), acquired by activist Samir Zaveri through an RTI query. The statistics include figures from all 17 police stations across the Mumbai suburban railway network, which comprises 117 stations - 80 on CR and 37 on WR.⁶

The Point of View Perspective ends here since the problems mentioned hence-forth are not area-specific and are some that a person living in any part of Mumbai wants to rectify but cannot and hence their nature is such that they are present to any location the Hypothetical traveler commutes to.

⁵ Megha Sood, 'Crimes on railways doubled in MMR since 2022' (Hindustan Times, 24th January, 2023) <<https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/crime-on-railways-in-mmr-doubled-in-2022-101674502104593.html>> accessed 7th February 2024

⁶ Rajendra B. Aklekar, 'Mumbai: 2, 507 people died on railway tracks in 2022', (Mid- Day, 12th April, 2023), <<https://www.mid-day.com/mumbai/mumbai-news/article/mumbai-1118-people-died-on-railway-tracks-in-2022-23280474>> accessed 7th February 2024

PART II: SPITTING

The city of Mumbai has some of the most infuriating spitting problems. A person who, as much as gets out on the road can never be oblivious of the fact that people are spitting. This vandalizes the quality of the roads, walls, and even other public areas. One thing that people spitting are not able to understand is the hazardous effects of spitting. Since spit contains the germs of the person who did it, if the person has flu or a cold, it becomes easily transmittable. Some walls are painted red in Mumbai despite the ever-increasing voice of people who condemn the act. In an estimate, Indian Railways is spending about Rs. 1200 Cr just to clean the gutka spit patches and get rid of them.⁷ Needless to say, spitting gives off a backward look, especially at the amount at which it is done in Mumbai, it calls for alarms.

In The Bombay Police Act, 1951, Under Section 115 of the Act, spitting is included under the activities prohibited in or near any street, public place, or place of public resort. This is to prevent annoying a passer-by.

USE OF FOUL LANGUAGE

Any society which calls for appreciation and is perceived as a progressive one, promotes, attempts, and achieves decency in every public place. Roads, Parks, and Cinemas are some examples where public decency is a must and should be an unsaid rule. In Mumbai, the situation is such that people have a feeling of being authoritarian, dashing, and even heroic if they use foul language loudly. Many times, the nature of the environment is upset and moods are spoiled because of this sole reason.

The Indian Penal Code, 1860⁸ via Section 294 proposes punishment for any public nuisance caused by obscene acts or orally. The Text of the section is as follows-

Whoever, to the annoyance of others;

- (a) Does any obscene act in any public place, or
- (b) Sings, recites, or utters any obscene song, ballad, or words, in or near any public place,

⁷ Ravi Prakash Kumar, 'Indian Railways spends hundreds of crores to clean 'gutka' stains', (LiveMint, 12th October, 2021) < <https://www.livemint.com/news/india/indian-railways-spends-a-whopping-amount-annually-to-clean-gutka-spit-marks-11634041613304.html> > accessed 7th February 2024

⁸ The Indian Penal Code, 1860

Shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine, or with both.

PROLONGED PROJECTS – CHOKED ROADS

Due to the nature of Mumbai and the fact that the road system which was previously built was proving to be inadequate, new roads, and means of transport are being constantly built. Currently, the biggest projects going on are that of the subway, extending the metro lines, etc. This in turn results in the roads being dug and barricades being placed around them which then leads to a majority part of the road being inaccessible. The space taken for the metro's ongoing construction has reduced the number of lanes on the road to two or three on average in some parts of the city. Mumbai suffered an economic loss of INR 410 billion due to the time wasted in traffic. Potential business is lost and overall productivity is dampened due to the, at times, indefinite waiting one has to experience in traffic. Approximately the average citizen loses 121 hours of potential work time daily due to traffic congestion.⁹



FOOTPATH OBSTRUCTION

As mentioned above, one of the nuisances that people in Mumbai have to go through is the illegally built shops, and vendors occupying the majority of the footpath. In an official survey of the BMC, it was found that 47% of Mumbai's road accidents are accounted for by

⁹ *Addressing Mumbai's traffic woes*, (Observer Research Foundation –ORF, 17th January, 2024) <<https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/addressing-mumbais-traffic-woes>> accessed 7th February 2024

Pedestrians.¹⁰ Footpaths are meant to provide safety for walkers when they walk. In the case of Mumbai, due to the footpaths being non-existent in a lot of the parts, citizens are not left with a choice but to just walk on the roads. This creates a sense of demotivation demolishes the sense of exploration and going out on holidays and even gives rise to frustration when walking on the roads. The Municipal Corporate of Greater Mumbai, via its Pedestrian First – Footpath policy¹¹ has laid down multiple guidelines as to the specifications that have to be followed in building footpaths and remedies to encroachment. But very clearly, this policy has failed since there is only an increase in the rise of footpaths being taken over by illegal vendors. Justices Gautam Patel and Neela Kedar Gokhale of the Bombay High Court stated the following when hearing a suo moto Public Interest Litigation filed before the bench–

"We are not interfering with the system. We need to ensure there are footpaths available for pedestrians which are walkable. There are authorized or unauthorized structures on footpaths. The result is that because the footpath is narrow, pedestrians face difficulty. The road near Bombay Gymkhana is a classic example of the same. There should be some method or signage where there are no pedestrian walkways so that people know where to walk. Signage and crossing has to be clear and footpaths have to be accessible." They further emphasized that when the BMC has a right to grant a license to vendors permitting the putting up of stalls, it also has the right to take it away.¹²

Journal of Legal Research and Juridical Sciences

INCREASED SLUMMING

Mumbai has been known since time – immemorial for being home to the largest slum in Asia Dharavi. Dharavi has a total land area of about 0.92 miles or 2.38 sq km. And yet hosts a people of about 10, 00, 000. This brings the population density of Dharavi to approximately 277,136 *people per sq. km*. Dharavi, hence is one of the most densely populated places on the planet. Many other slums in Mumbai result in unhygienic, life-threatening, insect-ridden lives of people in them. Slums, in their nature, are devoid of any water sewage system, proper ventilation, and even an improper structure of a house with an unstable roof. Around 45% of Mumbai's population is currently living in slums. That is about 50 lakh people living in densely

¹⁰ Hepzi Anthony, '*Footpaths in Mumbai: Walking may be injurious to your health*', (Citizen Matters Mumbai , 31st March, 2023) < <https://mumbai.citizenmatters.in/footpaths-in-mumbai-walking-on-foot-maybe-injurious-to-your-health-48295> > accessed 7th February 2024

¹¹ Pedestrian First – Footpath Policy, 30th June 2014

¹² Vidya, '*Ensure Footpaths are walkable for pedestrians, says Bombay High Court to BMC*', (India Today , 7th February, 2023) < <https://www.indiatoday.in/law/story/ensure-footpaths-are-walkable-for-pedestrians-says-bombay-high-court-to-bmc-2331324-2023-02-07> > accessed 7th February 2024

populated, improperly organized slums. Subsequently, the statistic of Mumbai in terms of population density on paper is pushed to about 21, 000 people per sq. km. "The story of Mumbai and its slums is just not of despair but also hope, it's a dream but also a nightmare, it is as much an answer as a question. The slum poses a provocation not just to the paradigm of urban development but more importantly to the promise of citizenship and democracy."¹³



(The above image is clicked by me showing a fraction of the bigger picture)

Journal of Legal Research and Juridical Sciences

WATER POLLUTION

Due to the nature of human settlements, they are generally built around water and are structured around the use and throw of water. Similarly in Mumbai, the slums are generally seen around river bodies which, leads to a lot of waste being thrown into the river which in turn, leads to an exponential rise in water pollution among other reasons. Now just like the other ironies present in Mumbai, there are some of the most exhaustive and elaborative laws in India, the same is the case for the prevention of Water and Air pollution with the enactment of –

¹³ Simpreet Singh, 'Democracy in the dark: The story of Mumbai and its slums', (Outlook India, 23rd July, 2022) < <https://www.outlookindia.com/national/democracy-in-the-dark-the-story-of-mumbai-and-its-slums-news-211546> >accessed 7th February 2024

1. Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974

Section 24 of the Act prohibits the discharging of any waste / intoxicative substances in any stream or well of water. For a better look, here is the reproduction of Section 24 of the Act –
24. Prohibition on the use of streams or wells for disposal of polluting matter, etc.—

(1) Subject to the provisions of this section,— (a) no person shall knowingly cause or permit any poisonous, noxious, or polluting matter determined by such standards as may be laid down by the State Board to enter (whether directly or indirectly) into any [stream or well or sewer or on land]; or

(b) no person shall knowingly cause or permit to enter into any stream any other matter which may tend, either directly or in combination with similar matters, to impede the proper flow of the water of the stream in a manner leading or likely to lead to a substantial aggravation of pollution due to other causes or of its consequences.

(2) A person shall not be guilty of an offence under sub-section (1), by reason only of having done or caused to be done any of the following acts, namely:—

(a) constructing, improving, or maintaining in or across or on the bank or bed of any stream any building, bridge, weir, dam, sluice, dock, pier, drain or sewer, or other permanent works which he has a right to construct, improve, or maintain;

(b) depositing any materials on the bank or in the bed of any stream for the purpose of reclaiming land or for supporting, repairing, or protecting the bank or bed of such stream provided such materials are not capable of polluting such stream;

(c) putting into any stream any sand or gravel or other natural deposit which has flowed from or been deposited by the current of such stream;

(d) causing or permitting, with the consent of the State Board, the deposit accumulated in a well, pond, or reservoir to enter into any stream.

(3) The State Government may, after consultation with, or on the recommendation of, the State Board, exempt, by notification in the Official Gazette, any person from the operation of sub-section (1) subject to such conditions, if any, as may be specified in the notification and any condition so specified may by a like notification be altered, varied or amended.

From the above, it is clear how well thought of, the government was, in putting down what was right and wrong while penning the act. Furthermore, the Act consists of having extremely intricate details as to the remedy of pollution of water, wherever it is to be found. Yet the image below speaks volumes as to what I am trying to put across ¹⁴



The image above is of the Mithi River of Mumbai, it flows from the Vihar and Powai lake and has its mouth in the Arabian Sea. The clean-up proposal for the River has been delayed again and work has been averted.

AIR POLLUTION

As mentioned in an earlier section, the situation of Air pollution in Mumbai is not any better. At the time of writing i. e. at 8 pm on 8th February 2024, the Air Quality Index of Mumbai is at the lowest, 100, and at the highest 486- which is downright hazardous¹⁵. As is the case with water pollution, there is an act in place that applies to the whole of India – The Air (Prevention & Control) Pollution Act, 1981. Sections 19 – 22 of the Act include specifics on which are to be allowed and not allowed in pursuit of controlling Air pollution. Section 20 laid down emphasis on control of emissions from automobiles, this led to the mandatory nature of having

¹⁴ Badri Chatterjee, “Will Mumbai’s Mithi river live up to its name? Maharashtra government promises change in 2 years”, (Hindustan times, 24th June, 2019) < <https://www.hindustantimes.com/mumbai-news/will-mumbai-s-mithi-river-live-up-to-its-name-maharashtra-government-promises-change-in-2-years/story-aQmVF7tuDYB4KH1eoGV00H.html> > accessed 8th February 2024

¹⁵ Real Time AIR QUALITY INDEX, AQI < <https://aqicn.org/city/india/mumbai/chhatrapati-shivaji-intl.-airport-t2/> > accessed 8th February 2024.

a PUC - Pollution Under Control document for every automobile and automobile owner. The image produced in the "Road Congestion" subsection is an amp example as to why more untreated vehicles also lead to increased air pollution apart from rampant construction, improper use of dirt, etc.

PART III: UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS - MIGRATION

The ecological balance of India is such that the majority of its population is heavily centered and based in metropolitan cities. After the independence era, approximately 50% of the population of Mumbai constituted of migrants. Even as late as 1999-2000, 37% of people in Mumbai were migrants. Around 70% of the people said the main reason for migration was that of employment prospects¹⁶. The developmental balance in India is heavily shifted in some cities which causes the population to saturate in some places and makes the rest of India empty. Out of the cities, Mumbai is at the forefront. Mumbai, as it is, is one of the most densely populated cities on Earth and even today around 200 people are migrating daily¹⁷. Due to its very coastal nature, the space for Mumbai to expand is strictly limited and hence has to be done vertically. This leads to a heavy shortage of housing capabilities which makes the people entering Mumbai have to go through a nightmare of living in slums. Many people already have a less- fortunate background so to even have a roof above their heads becomes a fight for survival. This leads to them taking up unregulated jobs just to make ends meet and give up on education which further leads to the increasing poverty and backwardness. Multiplying this with the ever-increasing rise in property prices in the city leads to a more serious chain of problems.

CORRUPTION AT SOME LEVELS

India as it is, has a long history associated with corruption. Mumbai, however, has been home to some real-life heroes, be it in the judiciary, police – force, etc. Great personalities like Mr. Y. C. Pawar, and Justice M. C. Chagla, among many to name, whose ballads are sung even today, were once in charge of handling Mumbai. Although the scenario has seen a sort of a rollercoaster ride, in recent years the scenario has degraded. There are still some of the best

¹⁶ D. P. Singh, 'Migration and Occupation in Mumbai: Issues and Implications' < <https://www.shram.org/uploadFiles/20131106035214.pdf> > accessed 9th February 2024

¹⁷ Sweety Adimulam, 'Every day, 200 people migrate to Mumbai, says CEO of Dharavi redevelopment', (Indian Express, 27th October, 2022) < <https://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/dharavi-redevelopment-srinivas-people-migrate-8211605/> > accessed 9th February 2024

cops and judges in the city, but there are some weak lines in the chain that cause a lot of illegal activities to go unnoticed. Such instances lead to scenarios like "drops of water make an ocean" where frequent "one-off" instances lead to a blocked and rusted chain of command of law and order in the city. Illegal vendors are allowed to carry on their businesses as usual on account of bribery that reaches multiple numbers of people in the Municipality Council. The said corruption has time and again, even been questioned by authorities at various levels and in various positions of power. One such instance occurred when Mr. Aaditya Thackeray had asked the BMC for the itemized market costs of some order.¹⁸

IMBALANCED DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA

As mentioned above, India's developmental balance is heavily concentrated in just some cities. People in the rural – sub-urban areas have next to no opportunities for personal growth in their hometowns. The economic disparity between states like Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu has a significantly higher GDSP (Gross Domestic State Product) than states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh¹⁹ further leads to migration as mentioned in the 'Unrealistic expectations' body.

SOME AMATEUR SUGGESTIONS

1. Exponentially promote the prospects of staying in sister cities like Navi Mumbai, Thane, etc.
2. Make law and order more vigilant and unforgiving in terms of breaking rules.
3. Make people in charge be held accountable for their actions.
4. Promote investments and provide better facilities for those opting to work hard day in and day out to earn their place in society.
5. Reduce and mend as many hurdles as possible to expeditiously complete projects that are pending.

¹⁸ Yogesh Naik, 'Aaditya writes to Chahal about corruption in BMC', (Hindustan Times, 16th July, 2023), < <https://www.hindustantimes.com/cities/mumbai-news/shiv-sena-leader-aaditya-thackeray-writes-to-mumbai-municipal-commissioner-over-alleged-corruption-in-bmc-elections-101689447889266.html> > accessed 9th February 2024

¹⁹ 'An In-depth Analysis of Regional Imbalance: Causes, Implications, and Solutions', (TestBook, 10th August, 2023) < <https://testbook.com/ias-preparation/regional-imbalance#:~:text=In%20India%2C%20regional%20imbalance%20is,like%20Bihar%20and%20Uttar%20Pradesh.>> accessed 9th February 2024

6. Make it widely known that migration to Mumbai will, more often than not, lead to more problems than solving them.

7. Some long-term fixes will be –

a) to heavily focus on developing other parts of India.

b) to provide better transport facilities for people coming to work from outstation – far-off cities.

c) to remap the existing local train system to match the needs and trends of the current times.

d) make AC local trains widely available on all tracks i. e. Western, Central, Harbour, Trans-Harbour.

PART IV: CONCLUSION

All the above results in a cacophony of all things wrong which makes for a daily –life-or-death situation for every person living in Mumbai. It is obvious that the laws are established and in force, but why did it take 75 years for them to be implemented at least in the case of the Chembur Station Road, which, only recently saw a marginal decrease in its illegal vendors? Even today many from Chembur refuse to believe that it is a permanent fix and state that it is only temporary as such trends were witnessed even in the past. Beneath all of its problems, though, is a beautiful city. A city that reaches out and is forever engraved into the hearts of millions. A city which many living in it dread, but find it the hardest to leave. In recent years, Mumbai has seen a lot of developments. Today, some of the most practical–driven masterminds occupy the seats of the Hon'ble Bombay High Court, Mumbai has one of the most effective and overtly capable police forces which once was matched with the likes of Scotland Yard²⁰ and is also home to some of the best ministers having a problem – solving mentality. The only thing where the flow of progress is stuck is the full realization of such powerhouses. Innumerable infrastructure projects have been started and many completed in Mumbai which has eased out some of the problems mentioned in this article. But keep in mind, it has only eased out, the problems do exist and, some might even say, it is increasing. Take this heavily

²⁰ Swati Desphande, 'HC Declares Mumbai Police best force after Scotland Yard', (The Times of India, 31st October, 2020) < <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/mumbai/hc-declares-mumbai-police-best-force-after-scotland-yard/articleshow/78962366.cms> > accessed 10th February 2024

researched – proof supported article or as some may perceive it to be, a collection of blogs, not as a complaint paper or a paper that tries to poke into every nook and corner of a problematic city but as a call for everyone concerned to take some steps. If reversed now, and dealt with appropriately, we can restore Mumbai to its full-blown glory. Projects like the Development of Thane and Navi Mumbai have already put us on the right path. They have resulted in a lot of people now opting to stay in these beautiful growing cities which has given the Mumbai administration some room to breathe with the heavy influx of population it was made to deal with. Recent developments like the Atal Setu, Eastern Freeway, Mumbai Monorail, Mumbai Metro, and the visionary extended project of the Coastal road connecting Mumbai to its neighboring cities are perhaps projects that are a beacon of light beckoning toward a brighter future. The future of Mumbai, if handled correctly, is very much akin to the type of buildings being built in it right now, higher and better!

