

CRAWFORD MARKET

An Opportunity



The current Lok Sabha elections and the subsequent Assembly elections during the latter part of 2009 offer a unique opportunity to Mumbaikars in their journey of converting our elective democracy into a participative democracy. They have cursed the elected representatives, and blamed the Bureaucrats; but primarily they are seeking to get some control over our governance; some way to curb corruption and get the Government to work for the general good. It may be worthwhile to look at a few issues which have drawn their attention and see if these elections can be used to get the political parties to commit to act in our interests. If Citizens succeed, it could herald a change in the power balance between the Citizens and the political parties.

(Shailesh Gandhi)

One such issue on which Citizens could seek a commitment from the political parties is the Municipal Market Redevelopment Policy. The Municipal Corporation of Mumbai and the State Government together evolved a Market redevelopment policy some yaers back. The ostensible reason for this policy was that Citizens need markets and the State wants to revamp the Municipal markets which are in bad shape. The method of redeveloping these Markets is very ingenious. The ownership of the markets and the land belong to the Citizens. Hawking licences valid for a year are given to hawkers to sell their goods in these markets. The redevelopment policy seeks to ensure that the Citizens lose effective control and ownership of the markets and the profits go to the hawkers, developers and the political parties. There are 101 Municipal markets in Mumbai and most of them are to go this way.

Area of Plot	22472	Sq.mts.
Area with hawkers	6206	Sq.mts.
Proposed Building	65690	Sq.mts.
MCGM gets	26495	Sq.mts.
Developer and hawkers get	39195	Sq.mts.
Construction Cost	16000	Per Sq.mt
Sale Price of Property	350000	Per Sq. m
Construction Cost to of building	105	Crores
MCGM gets free of Construction	42.4	Crores.
Developer and hawkers get extra	32989	Sq.mts.
& Profit at Public cost by	1049.6	Crores.
Note: 10.7 sq. ft. = 1 Sq. mt.		

Assumptions: Construction cost Rs. 16000 per sq. mtr.
is equal to Rs. 1495 per sq.ft.
Sale price of Rs.350000 per sq.mtr. is equal to Rs. 32710 per sq.ft.

Using information obtained by Right to Information, an analysis was done of the details of the proposal for Crawford Market and it showed that whereas Citizens who own the market will get free construction of Rs. 42 crores, the profit to the developers and hawkers would be over 1000 crores! The detailed working is as seen above.

A building of 65690 Sq.mts. would be about 10 storey high and result in a complete traffic nightmare. Besides it would also destroy the Heritage value of the entire grade I precinct. Citizens had met over 90 Corporators from various parties including Shubha Raul, Ravindra Waikar, Yogi Sagar, Bhalchandra Shirsat, Upendra Doshi, Amin Patel (from Shiv Sena, BJP and the Congress) amongst others, to explain the issue and ask if they could explain any Public interest in passing this proposal. All of them agreed that the proposal was not in Public interest. Yet, they shamelessly passed this proposal in the Corporation in September 2007 and

heritage grade 1



then again endorsed it in March 2008. The same modus operandi is to be implemented in all the other Markets- and the grapevine is that the 101 municipal markets have been divided amongst the political parties, since the total loot is likely to be upwards of 10000 crores.

Citizens have given an alternate proposal for this redevelopment to the political parties and the Municipal Commissioner which they are not considering. The proposal is that Crawford Market be redeveloped by a tender with a FSI of 1.5 instead of the proposed FSI of 4. The city would gain tremendously, the Heritage precinct would retain its majesty and the traffic in the area would remain manageable. The details of this proposal are as follows:

Area of Plot	22471.75	Sq.mts.
Area with hawkers	6205.98	Sq.mts.
Heritage Building	5515	Sq.mts.
Proposed Building FSI 1.5	25435	Sq.mts.
Area to give to hawkers (10% extra)	6827	Sq.mts.
MCGM gets	18609	Sq.mts.
Assumptions		
Construction Cost	16000	Per Sq.mtr.
Sale Price of Property	350000	Per Sq. mtr.
Construction Cost of building	41	Crores
MCGM sells to recover cost of Construction	1163	Sq.mtr.
And Makes Profit	611	Crores
Or, houses PAPs in extra area	17446	Sq.mts.

Alternate Proposal to preserve the Sanctity of Jyotiba Phule's name in the Market

This same principle could be followed for the rest of the Municipal Markets.

If Citizens persuade political parties to address this issue in these six months, they have a unique opportunity to bully them into taking actions which would help them get the benefits of their property. The politicians will discuss and justify their actions presently since they need votes. Citizens can challenge political corruption and use this opportunity to get benefits for the common good. A few other such demands could also be gainfully made to extract their due from the candidates who are begging the Citizens for their votes. Citizens could ask all candidates and the political parties to declare their position on this, and force them to collectively withdraw this corrupt deal.

