

Citizens' Report on Chennai's preparedness for Upcoming Monsoon (2016)



**Outcomes of Public Hearing 'Kelu Chennai Kelu'
held on 28th August 2016**

September 2016

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Acknowledgement

Arappor Iyakkam would like to thank:

- Eminent Panelists who accepted our invitation, and compiled the results of the Public Hearing in this report
- Members of Resident Welfare Associations from various parts of Chennai who presented the issues and actions needed in their areas.
- Partner Organisations and NGOs who attended the event and expressed their support.
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- Chennai Metropolitan Police for according permission for conducting the event, and providing security
- Corporation of Chennai for perusing our earlier social audit report in detail and starting necessary work, and also for deputing two engineers to participate in the Public Hearing, and respond to the public's concerns.
- Chepauk MLA, J Anbazhagan for attending the Public Hearing and responding to the issues raised
- Representatives of the Media (print, TV and digital) for covering the event and spreading awareness.

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Executive Summary

“Kelu Chennai Kelu”, a Public Hearing on the state of Chennai's waterways, and its preparedness for the upcoming North-East monsoon was conducted by Arappor Iyakkam on 28th August 2016, at Valluvar Kottam. Members of the public from all areas of the city presented the current issues in their areas, and outlined the steps needed to be taken urgently by Government Agencies in the next 45 days. An Expert Panel heard the public representations and has prepared this report.

The most worrying aspect is that it is clear that Chennai is still significantly ill prepared. Far from being “Flood-Safe”, we are not even “Monsoon-Safe”, i.e. even if the city receives average rainfall, the state of our water carriers is such, that it will lead to waterlogging, traffic snarls and disruption of daily life. The city is ill-equipped to deal with heavy rainfall, and if the rainfall is close to the levels received last year, there is a high risk of flooding.

Overall Observations:

Most resident associations have expressed key concerns about lakes and major drains near their place being encroached, blocked with garbage and construction debris and waterways accumulated with silt. Many residents expressed concern about the insufficient capacity and condition of storm water drains and concern on the level of the road being raised even after the huge devastation due to flood. The issues and recommendations in detail can be found later in the report

The panel came out with a list of overall recommendations for the Government both in the long term and short term.

Recommendations by the Panel:

- The Government must take serious note of all the issues mentioned by the residents of Chennai and take immediate action on it within the next 45 days.

- The Government of Tamil Nadu must submit a report on the actions taken since the Chennai Flood, 2015 on clearing encroachments on waterbodies and flood plains of rivers. As the major encroachments are carried out by Large Institutions (Government Buildings, Educational Institutions, Large Commercial and Residential Complexes and Shopping Malls), the Government should report on the actions taken against these in particular.
- Public Works Department, Chennai Corporation and Municipal Administrations must make the following information public: List of all schemes (ward-wise) undertaken in the last 9 months in (a) Desilting of major and minor drains (b) Repair, Maintenance or new construction of Storm Water Drains (c) Rainwater Harvesting
- The 2008 Chennai Master Plan which contains Development Control Rules by which construction on Flood Plains, Wet Lands, and Coastal Areas is prohibited should be implemented. Secretive land use changes and violations of plan approval, leading to increase in encroachments must be prevented.
- The Greater Chennai Metropolitan Area has too many institutions / agencies and lacks an umbrella Governance set-up. There is an urgent need for Urban Development Governance. For e.g. four discrete roles in the Government are being handled by the same person. An Institutional Governance Agenda has already been drawn up and submitted to the Government – this must be implemented.
- There must be a framework for Inter-Departmental Coordination between various Government Agencies (PWD, Corporation of Chennai, CMWSSB, TNEB, Municipal Corporations, Panchayats, etc).

The details provided should include nature of the contract, name of the contractor, value of the contract, work order copies, start date, and actual / planned completion date and current status.

- Chennai Corporation should publish a detailed map (ward-wise) of all Storm Water Drains in the city, along with their Elevation and Alignment. Original width and depth of each drain must be specified.
- Chennai Corporation must immediately stop raising the height of the roads. No tenders should be issued without condition of removing the existing road and without the condition of maintaining the road height. It should be strictly followed in practice.
- The plan for de-silting all the storm water drains prior to the monsoon as well as the current status so far should be made public. According to the Chennai Corporation, 81% of all planned de-silting work has been completed. The details of this work should be published so that it can be verified whether the work has been carried out to satisfactory quality. In case work done is not of good quality, re-work should be immediately taken up. The plan for completion of 19% work should also be published.
- To the best of our knowledge. PWD has not even allocated budget for the de-silting and maintenance of large drains except for a few. Except for de-silting work being undertaken at the mouths of the Adyar and Cooum rivers (where they flow into the sea), no other details are available on the works to be undertaken on large drains. Despite our best efforts, we were not able to meet the PWD officials, nor have they responded to our social audit report or invitation to the Public Hearing. The PWD should publish in the public domain all works planned relating to major drains prior to the monsoon, and the current status. The Government should realize that non maintenance of the major drains are the major cause of flooding and

hence must act swiftly on desilting the upstream tanks so that water that flows downstream and the flooding can be significantly reduced.

- A complete map of “Flood-Prone Areas” for the Greater Chennai Metropolitan Area is to be published. This is to be based on a vulnerability and preparedness assessment.
- The Disaster Management Framework must be made transparent to the public in Chennai, and must be issued and placed in the public domain for Thiruvallur and Kancheepuram districts. Preparedness Meetings should be held in all wards and members of public are to be invited to participate in these meetings. The Disaster Management Authority should be lead by a senior officer with sufficient budget and resources.
- The Metro Water Department must come up with a clear plan, budget and timeline to achieve sewage treatment of all sewage generated in Chennai. Metro water and Sewage Board must first stop discharging untreated sewage into waterways. It must come with clear mechanisms for violations and must take strict action against anyone discharging their sewage into the waterbodies.
- Chennai Corporation and Municipalities must find a lasting solution to city's Garbage and Construction Debris. Chennai Corporation's lack of political will to implement solutions for solid waste management like source segregation is taking a heavy toll on the city's waterbodies and contributes significantly to the constrained flow of the waterways as well as its quality. Chennai Corporation must come with a clear plan and action on how it will dispose the Construction debris of the city.
- It became obvious during the Public Hearing that many of the issues being raised by the residents were not new, and had been raised by them with the respective Government departments and officials many times in the past, sometimes for years. If the authorities had

responded to these petitions, complaints and representations and taken necessary action, the worst of the Chennai Flood last year could have been prevented. This attitude of the Government needs to change – issues raised by the Public need to be treated with utmost respect and seriousness. There should be a mechanism of periodic Government reporting on action taken on all grievances raised by the Public, and consequences (penal action, fines etc) in case complaints are not resolved on time.

Introduction

Although lakhs of residents were affected, hundreds of lives lost, and thousands of crores worth of property destroyed during the Chennai Flood, 2015, the TN Government or the Public Works Department has not come out with a white paper or report on the causes of flooding, and action that needs to be taken to ensure that such a tragedy does not recur. Also the Government has not invited the members of the Public to share their experiences and suggestions on what actions need to be taken to make each area flood-safe. There is an apparent distance and estrangement between the Government, its various agencies, the elected representatives and the people that they are meant to serve.

The social audit conducted by Arappor of four areas severely impacted by flood revealed that even now, more than 8 months after the flood, sufficient steps such as desilting, clearing of encroachments and removal of garbage and construction debris have not been taken.

It is to create a platform for the Government and Elected Representatives to hear directly from the public, and for them to answer the public's questions and concerns that Arappor Iyakkam decided to conduct a Public Hearing on Chennai's flood preparedness. An eminent panel comprising legal, judicial, urban planning and water management experts was constituted to moderate the Hearing and submit its report.

The response to the Public Hearing, both in terms of the interest shown by the Public, as well as the participation of Officials from the Corporation of Chennai and one MLA, is proof that democratic principles and processes can be re-energised and re-established in our country.

However, it is unfortunate that inspite of our best efforts, we have had no response from the PWD, Metro Water or the Office of the Chief Secretary. Also, out of all the elected representatives who were invited, only one MLA turned up for the event. This shows the level of apathy that we, as a populace, have allowed to develop.

Citizens need to take ownership of their natural resources and public infrastructure and only such a strong socially vigilant community can turn around the state we are in today.

Arappor Iyakkam will continue to maintain sustained social vigilance, and work towards building a strong and impactful citizens' movement.

Composition of Panel

MG Devasahayam: Economist cum Administrator with a distinguished career spanning 40 years, with direct and first-hand experience in the working and ethos of Indian Army, Civil Services, Government, Public & Private Sector, Political system as well as NGOs. The thrust in his recent work has been Reforms, Resource Efficiency and Good Governance as well as topics like Freedom, Democracy and Corruption. He was part of the Committee charged with developing the 2008 Chennai Master Plan.

Dr V Suresh: Practicing lawyer, Madras High Court. General Secretary of the People's Union for Civil Liberties. Recently appointed as Amicus Curiae by the Madras High Court to look into the issue of illegal encroachments and plan violations in Chennai city.

Dr. Sudarshan Padmanaban: Associate Professor, Dept of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT-Madras. Nominated as Trustee, Association for Democratic Reforms and Coordinator of TamilNadu Election Watch. His

interests include Social and Political Systems, Civil Society, Governance and Reforms

Mr S Thirunavukkarasu: Retd Engineer, Public Works Department. 35 years of experience in management of water resources. Supported a number of research projects on state of waterbodies in Greater Chennai area, most notably documentation of technical data and cost of restoration of more than 1100 waterbodies in Chennai, Kancheepuram and Thiruvallur districts.

Format of Public Hearing

Representations by Residents' Welfare Associations and members of the Public: RWAs were asked to summarise and present the problems and issues in their respective areas, along with solutions and actions needed in the next 45 days.

Moderation and Clarifications by Panel: The Panel heard the public representations, and asked questions to clarify specific points e.g. whether these issues had already been brought to the notice of local authorities. The Panel also gave their input on over-arching issues that affected all areas such as the mingling of storm water and sewage drains.

Response from Elected Representatives: Mr J Anbazhagan, MLA, Chepauk, responded to the issues raised, and promised to take up the subject in the State Assembly if given an opportunity.

Response from Corporation of Chennai: Mr. Thirumurugan, Executive Engineer, Corporation of Chennai, responded to the representatives, and gave specific assurances that the needed work would be taken up. He also promised that Corporation of Chennai would call for meetings with other Public Authorities and ensure coordinated action.

Closing Remarks by Panelists: Each of the Panelists then made closing remarks, summarizing the key actions needed from the Government. These have been captured as key recommendations in this report.

Presentation of Social Audit Report

Convener of Arappor Iyakkam presented the findings of the citizens audit of Chennai waterways in key highly flooded areas of Chennai. The key issues and recommendations of the report can be accessed in the following link. Most of the recommendations of the report have not been addressed yet and we urge the Government to address the short term measures before monsoon.

http://www.arappor.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Pressrelease_waterbody_4_Aug_2016.pdf

Public Hearing – Detailed Representations

<p>Citizens Rights for the Disabled</p> <p>Represented by: Smitha Sathasivan</p>	
<p>Issues and Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Disaster management team need to be oriented on disability accommodations and to handle persons with disabilities safely during crisis situations. • Any city planing / infrastructure building / procurement of safety aids shall ensure accessibility for persons with disabilities. (For example, all storm water slits and pavements over them shall be designed in such a way that it does not create barriers for pedestrians with disabilities while moving). • State Disaster management committee headed by the Chief Secretary shall include persons with disabilities representing the sector and shall be consulted a every stage of planning and action. 	

- The Districts & local authorities such as Councilors of Wards or Panchayats should have a map of locations where persons with disabilities reside / work and be well aware of the same.
- Data on persons with disabilities at village/block/ward level shall be generated for the purpose of point 4 through an immediate survey which shall be conducted by the local authorities.
- Indepth medical interventions at closer intervals and supply of nutritional diet along with medicines shall be made available for people with disabling & progressive medical conditions.
- Along with drinking water, water for day to day use should be provided at institutions / locations where people with disabilities live as persons with disabilities may not be able to fetch water for themselves in such situations.

Contact Info: Smitha Sadasivan
smitha.citizenrights@gmail.com

Korattur Welfare Association

Zone: 7

Represented by: Syed Hassan

Ward: 83, 84

Issues Raised:

- Progress on construction of Korattur Lake surplus canal (from west end of North avenue in TNHB) at snail's pace
- No notice to defaulters who have illegally entrenched the canal space to extend their houses. Width of canal reduced to a meager 3 mts
- North Avenue road laid on top of the current road, thereby preventing water from entering the outlet
- Canal obstructed by construction of massive pillars (2.2 m long) across the canal width by Metro Water to convey drinking water from Red Hills Lake to Kilpauk (North East corner of TVS Wheels India Ltd)

Recommendations:

- Canal: Concrete work to be started simultaneously; rods to be tied for side walls; centering work for side walls to be expedited
- All encroachments on the canal to be removed
- All 4 bridges on the canal to be replaced by new bridges as the silt level is 32' to 3' above the canal bed level
- Silt removal in canal between TVS Estate and Railway Line (1.5 KM stretch)
- Widening the canal from the North-East corner of TVS Wheels India Ltd to compensate the obstruction caused the construction of massive pillars by Metro Water
- Capacity of waterway in bridge across Inner Ring Road and waterway under Villvakkam-Anna Nagar railway line to be augmented to 2000 c/s by adding additional vents
- Storm water drain width (upto Villivakkam tank) to be suitably increased and deepened

Contact Info: Syed Hassan
Ph: 8939669794

Murugappa Reddy Street, Ambattur

Zone:7

Represented by:

Ward:81

Issues Raised:

- The storm water and sewage drains on Murugappa Reddy street are at a lower level than the road. Also, rain water and sewage from Oragadam Road, Vadivel Mudali St, Ganapathi Mudali St and Anna Main Road flow into the drains at Murugappa Reddy St. The width and depth of the SWD and Sewage drain on this street is insufficient to carry the flow from all streets. This leads to rain water and sewage entering the homes.
- The street was inspected by the Corporation Officials and Local Councillor in November 2015, and action was promised after the rains. But no action has been taken till date.

Recommendations:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm Water Drain and Sewage Drains on Murugappa Reddy St to be widened and deepened to ensure adequate carrying capacity of all inflow. 	
Contact Info: D Selvaraj, 57G, Murugappa Reddy St, Venkatapuram, Ambattur, Chennai -53 ; Phone: 9092250644	Ref: Letter dated 22.06.2016

Villivakkam SIDCO Nagar Welfare Association (A to F)	Zone:8
Represented by:	Ward:94
Issues Raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Villivakkam lake has been filled up with debris from Metro Rail construction over the past 3 years. Untreated sewage and industrial waste is let into the Villivakkam lake and Otteri Nallah SIDCO Nagar has 7 wells dug by Chennai Metro Water. All 7 are abandoned now. 6 of the 7 wells remain as garbage dumping areas. Waterlogging on 4th Main Road (Interim solution found by temporary drain dug near Kamatchi Amman Temple) SIDCO Nagar is a low-lying area, and is surrounded by higher-level areas without adequate storm water drainage facilities. Therefore water from these areas overflows to SIDCO Nagar (e.g. South Jagannatha Nagar water overflows to SIDCO Nagar 74th Street) 3rd Main Road and 4th Main Road used to be 40 Ft wide roads. Now, on account of encroachments, the road width has halved to 20 ft. Storm Water Drain on 3rd Main Road is not linked to the drain on 4th Main Road. Civic authorities are refusing to accept that there is Konnur lake. 	
Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro rail debris has to be removed from Villivakkam lake and lake need to be restored on a very high priority. Strict action must be taken on the officials who allowed dumping of metro sand into the lake. Directly discharging of sewage flow into the Villivakkam lake and Otteri Nallah must be stopped immediately. The sewage discharge in the canal coming from TVS side into the canal must be stopped immediately. Sewage Treatment Plant to be restored. Otteri Nallah has to be desilted completely. 	

- All the storm water drains in SIDCO Nagar and South Jagannatha Nagar need to be desilted, cleared of debris and garbage immediately before monsoon.
- Encroachments on storm water drains to be completely removed. All the open storm water drains need to be covered.
- SWD to be built on 5th street. Permanent Storm Water Drain facility to be built to drain water from 4th Main Road through 1st Main Road.
- The abandoned wells of Metro Water Department should be cleaned and maintained properly. These can be a good source for recharging water in the area as well as prevent floods. The local community is ready to participate in the maintenance of the well and they must be involved in the process.
- Metro Water Pumping Station capacity to be increased by replacing motor engines.
- Periodical maintenance is required for all sewage drains also. Mixing of SWDs with sewage drains to be avoided (e.g. TVS canal).
- Encroachments on 3rd and 4th Main Road to be removed, and original road width of 40 ft to be restored.
- Storm Water Drain on 3rd Main Road to be linked to the drain on 4th Main Road for smooth flow of water.

Contact Info: P. Harirangan (President), P.K. Chitti Babu (Gen Secy) ; C-3/298, 30th St, SIDCO Nagar, Chennai -49; Phone: 044-26171465

Ref: API's Social Audit Report; 4 letters from Association dated 26.08.2016 and 28.08.2016

Ayyavu Colony Resident's Welfare Association (ANCORWA)

Zone: 8

Represented by:

Ward:106

Issues Raised:

- Ayyavu Colony adjoins PH Road and Nelson Manickam Road. Its boundaries are Razzak Garden Road, Azad Nagar and MMDA Colony.
- The canal connecting Virugambakkam Lake through MMDA colony, to Mehta Nagar in Choolaimedu and reaching Cooum River is encroached on both sides leading to shrinking of its width. This is why the streets were flooded in December 2015.

- The streets surrounding Lakshmi Amman St, Krishnaveni Ammal St, Raghavan St and Sridharan St are at higher elevation and have been laid with concrete. Therefore the connection to SWDs is lost, and there is waterlogging even for small rains. Water enters low-lying, older houses and roads become damaged within a year of being laid.
- Speed breakers on the corners of Rangarajulu St and Ayyavu St are very high and have been constructed connecting both ends of the street, thereby preventing flow of rain water outside the street, leading to stagnation.
- Storm Water Drains on Jayammal St, Vijayeswari St, Ananthavalli St, Ayyavu St, Ammayi Ammal St and Navaneethammal St have not been de-silted and cleaned.

Recommendations:

- Encroachments on both sides of the canal connecting Virugambakkam Lake to Cooum river to be cleared; Canal to be restored to original width
- Storm Water Drain facility needed for Lakshmi Amman St, Krishnaveni Ammal St, Raghavan St and Sridharan St.
- Space to be left on both sides of the street near the speed breakers on the corners of Rangarajulu St and Ayyavu St to enable uninterrupted flow of rain water.
- Storm Water Drains on Jayammal St, Vijayeswari St, Ananthavalli St, Ayyavu St, Ammayi Ammal St and Navaneethammal St to be de-silted and cleaned immediately.

Contact Info: G. Lakshmi pathy (President), V. Balamurali (Secretary); 19, Govindan St, Ayyavu Colony, Aminjikarai, Chennai - 29; Phone: 044-23744788; Email: ancorwaa@gmail.com

Ref: Letter from Association dated 28.08.2016

<p>Kosemani Street, Western Choolaimedu</p> <p>Represented by: Jaya Krishnamurthy</p>	<p>Zone: 9</p> <p>Ward:109</p>
<p>Issues Raised:</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area has been flooded thrice since 2005. • Virugambakkam Canal (1360 m long) flowing from Nelson Manickam road to Cooum River has not been de-silted since 1998. • Also, this rain water canal has become a sewage canal over time. This could be because sewage from Koyambedu Market is routed through this canal to the Cooum River. 	
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canal Width from Nelson Manickam Road to Cooum River to be restored to its original dimensions. • Mixing of storm water and sewage to be stopped immediately. Appropriate sewage treatment plants to be set up at source. 	
<p>Contact Info: Mrs. Jaya Krishnamurthy, Flat 1, Krupa Apartments, 36, Koseemani St, Choolaimedu, Chennai -94; Phone: 9176249678</p>	<p>Ref: Letter dated 28.08.2016</p>

<p>Shastri Nagar, Vadapalani</p>	<p>Zone: 9</p>
<p>Represented by:</p>	<p>Ward: 117</p>
<p>Issues Raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shastri Nagar is close to Vadapalani 100 ft road, near Ambika Empire Hotel. • The road is higher and the houses are at a lower elevation. • No storm water drain system. The sewage drains are more than 30 years old. Neither SWD nor sewage drains meets the requirements of the crowded area filled with commercial establishments and restaurants. During rain, storm water and drain water gets mixed and flows into houses through the toilets. This is a public health hazard. • It was announced that a bigger sewage drain system would be built. But even now, only the road is being re-laid. 	
<p>Recommendations:</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As announced, new drainage system should be urgently implemented. • Until then, daily survey of septic tanks and sewage drains to be carried out to ensure that there is no block in any of them. 	
Contact Info: G. Kamaraj Ph: 9677037605	Ref: Letter dated 28.08.2016

Mylapore: RAPRA & Arappor Represented by: Dr Chandrasekhar, Ms Girija and Mr Narayanan	Zone: 9 Ward: 173
Issues Raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckingham canal from Mylapore MRTS station to Greenways Road should be cleared of Garbages, Vegetation and Construction Debris. • There was 4 feet flood in RA Puram. The water hit the median near Tholkaappiyam Park and reversed. • Storm water drains are filled up with silt in RA Puram and has not been desilted for close to 10 years • Between CV Raman Road and TTK Road, there is a road called Labdi Colony. Since CV Raman Road and TTK Road has been laid again and again, the height of these roads have become higher and all the flood water entered Labdi colony houses. The Storm water drain stands completely blocked and incapable of carrying the flood water. • When the Corporation AE came to lay the road, he was requested to mill the road before laying but the AE said that tenders for internal roads are given without milling. Hence we stopped him from laying the road as it would have increased the road height above the house level. 	
Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckingham canal needs to be desilted, cleared of vegetations and Garbage immediately. All Blockages needs to be removed. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The storm water drains in entire RA puram and Labdi colony needs to be desilted immediately • The medians should have proper holes and gaps for flood water to flow across the road . The medians should not be blocking the gradient of waterflow. • Raising of road height must be immediately stopped
Contact: Ms Girija @ 9444754107

Muniyappa Nagar, Chinmaya Nagar - Virugambakkam	Zone: 10
Represented by: Ophilia	Ward: 129
Issues Raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canal near Chinmaya Nagar has not been desilted in many years. • Drinking water and sewage lines have not yet been laid for the area, although tax is being paid since 2008. The question arises as to how bills can be raised without service being rendered. Also, what is the basis of the tax? 	
Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canal near Chinmaya Nagar to be urgently de-silted and cleaned. • Government and concerned authorities should respond on the basis of raising bills and charging taxes when relevant services are not being rendered to the Public 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate steps should be taken for ensuring that drinking water and sewage lines are available and usable. 	
Contact Info: Ophilia Ph: 9940486106	

Lambert Nagar Resident's Welfare Association, Alwarthirunagar Represented by: A. Thomas (Secretary)	Zone: 11 Ward:151
Issues Raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lambert Nagar is behind CSI Church, Arcot Road, near Virugambakkam. It is a low-lying area. • There is no proper storm water drainage system for this area at all. 	
Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storm Water Drain facility needs to be planned and constructed for this area. 	
Contact Info: A. Thomas (Secretary), 56, Lambert Nagar Main Road, Alwar Thiru Nagar, Virugambakkam, Chennai – 87; Phone: 9841458310	Ref: Letter from Association dated 28.08.2016

Federation of Residents' Association of Mugalivakkam & Manapakkam (FORAMM) Represented by: Federation Members	Zone: 12 Ward: 156
Issues Raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Porur Lake flood discharge canal is not properly routed to Adyar River canal. The canal width is not adequate. Only temporary bunds are protecting the lake. • Currently, construction on Maduravoyal Bypass is underway (blocking the outflow from Porur Lake), but permission of Highways Dept has not been obtained. • Bell Nagar Canal and Mugalivakkam Canal have not been de-silted. 	

- Normal rain itself affects Manapakkan and Mugalivakkam – Thiruvalluvar Nagar, CRR Puram, Gowri Nagar. Proper outlets not available. The available canals do not meet the needs of the population.
- Airport Authority of India Canal (15ft) in Mugalivakkam is blocked. It has now been reduced to just 4ft by 4 ft.
- There is no Storm Water Drain network for Moulivakkam at all.

Recommendations:

- Chembarambakkam Lake discharge versus canal discharge to be studied. Restoration of canals to original width and enlargement of canal carrying capacity to be carried out wherever needed.
- Porur Lake: Proper exit canal is needed
- A project has been sanctioned for cleaning of canals. The details of this project should be made public and work should be taken up.
- De-silting of Storm Water Drains and removal of encroachments on the canals and drains to be done in an urgent basis. Just regular maintenance of the drains and canals is sufficient – no “out-of-the-box” thinking is needed.
- Waterways should be identified and marked. Construction should not be permitted on waterbodies.
- Rainwater harvesting to be taken up in all buildings.
- Moulivakkam - City and Panchayat to plan and construct strong storm water drain network.
- Maangaadu Bai Kadai road to be refurbished.

Contact Info: V. Govindasamy (President); Plot 10, East St, Krishnaveni Nagar, Chennai -125; Phone: 98403 46158, 99620 90808; Email: forammugalivakkam@gmail.com

Ref: Letter from Association dated 28.08.2016

Federation of Velachery Welfare Associations (Regd)

Represented by: Kumararaja

Zone: 13

Ward:

177,178,179

Issues Raised:

- The existing canals and storm water drains are not adequate to deal with rainwaters in Velachery.
- The entire area of Velachery has got flooded and the drainages available got completely choked.

Recommendations:

- Provide culverts of width 20' each at 4 points on Taramani road connecting them to the canal under construction. This will prevent flooding of TANSI nagar, Dhandeeswaram, Anna Nagar, Anna nagar Extn, Venus Colony, Selva Nagar Extn I & II, Annai Indira Nagar and Baby Nagar.
- Need to construct a drain from IIT Gate near Anna Garden to Velachery busstand connecting into the Taramani canal. This will avoid flood waters entering from IIT into Ghandi road, Dhandeeswaram nagar, LIC colony on eastern side of Velachery main road.
- Storm water drains needs to be constructed to lead all water from the streets into the lake water carrying canals.
- Increase the water holding capacity of the canal carrying waters from Velachery, Taramani, Kallukuttai and Adambakkam lakes and make these water flow into the marsh by providing adequate number of culverts under the Velachery MRTS to Perungudi MRTS. The existing culverts in Pallavaram radial road needs to be replaced with larger size culverts.
- The Garbage dumping in the Pallikaranai Marsh needs to be cleared immediately and there should be no further dumping.

Contact Info: 9841234946

Ayyappanthangal Residents Welfare Association, EVP Park Avenue**Ayyappanthangal Panchayat****Kanchipuram Dt.****Issues Raised:**

- The Builder, Prestige Group, is dumping water into residential areas (250 homes) since 2010. Without permission, 210 borewells have also been dug, and ground water is being drained.
- Multiple Panchayat, Police complaints have been filed to stop the dumping, but no action has been taken so far.
- Also, a petition has been submitted that the Builder should build pumping facilities to flush water out. Builder has flatly refused to do so

<p>and has issued open challenge to residents that they will not respond or take any measures as they have bribed various Govt authorities, upto the CM level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Builder is also threatening the residents.
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The residents request the support of the Panel in taking action against the Builder and ensuring the dumping of water, and excessive draining of Ground Water is stopped.

<p>Chitlapakkam Rising</p> <p>Represented by: Sunil Jayaram</p>	<p>Pallavaram Municipality</p> <p>Kanchipuram Dt.</p>
<p>Issues Raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chitlapakkam and Sembakkam lakes have not been desilted for years • Both the lakes have been piled up with Garbage, sewage and hospital wastes. • The Chitlapakkam lake reduced from 80 acres to 40 acres over the years. It is being encroached from all corners. • The corporation has been continuously increasing the height of the road in the Chitlapakkam area. This has led to the house levels in the area going lower than the road leading to flooding of the houses • Many petitions and RTIs to Pallavaram Municipality have gone in vain. Municipality continues to increase road height 	
<p>Recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Municipality must immediately restore the 2 lakes of Chitlapakkam and Sembakkam and free it of encroachments and piled up Garbage. • The Municipality should not lay any road without milling. They should maintain the road height strictly. 	
<p>Contact Info: Sunil Jayaram @ 9500122151</p>	

<p>Federation of Civic and Welfare Associations of Pallavaram Municipality</p> <p>Represented by: V Santhanam</p>	<p>Pallavaram Municipality</p> <p>Kanchipuram Dt.</p>
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Issues Raised:

- The Pallavaram Periya Eri is split into 2 by the radial road. The Northern side of the Eri is filled with encroachments and the southern part has been converted into a Garbage dump
- After the National Green Tribunal's order that no more Garbage has to be dumped, the dumping of Garbage has stopped to a large extent. Still there is some Garbage being dumped
- The National Green Tribunal has ordered the Pallavaram Municipality to clear the Garbage and reinstate the lake. However the work is yet to be started
- For both the Pallavaram lake and the Kilkattalai lake, the Government as per GO No 1 of 2/1/2015 allocated Rs. 22 crores for rejuvenating them. But work has not started with the confusion prevailing on whether PWD will do it or Pallavaram Municipality will do it.
- The Asthinapuram and Nemilichery lakes have been encroached upto 75%. The Municipality has laid a road across the lake leading to more accessibility and encroachment. The surrounding areas of these lakes were worst affected during last floods.
- Veeraraghavan lake which is in the west of GST Road, Chrompet joins the Thiruneermalai lake. This lake has been encroached over the years and has reduced to less than 20 acres. The rain on the GST road and other surrounding areas join into this lake and lack of maintenance of this lake has led to flooding of GST Road, areas surrounding GH etc. The lake has not been desilted for years.

Recommendations:

- All the 4 lakes Pallavaram Periya Eri, Kilkattalai, Asthinapuram and Nemilichery must be desilted, cleared of garbages and encroachments and must be rejuvenated
- Senior officials should ensure that the problems between the PWD and Municipality is immediately sorted out and the work on the lake restoration must begin immediately
- Veeraraghavan lake must be immediately desilted and restored to save GST road from flooding.

Contact Info: V. Santhanam @ 9444254850

Ref:**Chrompet Federation****Represented by: Kondhandaraman****Pallavaram****Municipality****Kanchipuram Dt.**

Issues Raised:

- In Chromepet, there are two major water channels that connect the west side of Chromepet to the east side at Pallavaram Periya Eri. The natural gradient is from the west to east of GST road and any blockage in these canals connecting the west and east results in flooding of the area.
- The entire canal length is 1976 feet in length and 37 feet wide
- Kattabomman St Canal Length was 33 ft. Now the width of the canal is not even 7 ft. The Durgai Amman canal has been completely encroached
- Many complaints have been made to the Municipality to widen the canal and clear the encroachments. But there is no response.

Recommendations:

- The PWD/ Municipality must immediately widen and clear encroachments on the canals connecting the GST roads to the Pallavaram Periya Eri. This is critical for flood prevention of Chromepet residential areas.

**Contact Info: 9283103179, 9444661536,
9444949348**

**Pammal Taxpayers Association
Represented by: Mr Narayanasamy**

**Pammal
Municipality
Kanchipuram Dt.**

Issues Raised:

- Thirupananthal lake has been heavily encroached and the size is less than 9 acres now.
- Tender for open drainage has been floated by the Municipality inspite of the association getting an high court order that there should not be any open drainage built through the lake. Only after alerting the Municipality that they have to face legally, the tender was withdrawn.
- The association has got a list of 22 people who have encroached the lake through RTI and submitted petitions to Government. But no action has been taken yet.
- The entire Channel connecting Thirupananthal and Adyar River has been heavily encroached by builders and private houses beyond their approved plot sizes shrinking the channel to anywhere between 4 to 6 feet at the first 50 metres of the outlet.

- The entire community in Krishna Nagar has no drainage system through the Chennai Metro Water and Sewage Board. As a result of it, all the sewage from households are discharged directly into the channel at different points.
- The Channel is completely choked with silt, plastic waste and garbage affecting the flow of water significantly.
- Further down the stream, the encroachments are so rampant that the constructions are right on the Channel at the intersection of Krishna Nagar and Pammal main road.
- After crossing the Pammal main road, the Channel expands to around 40 feet. This is completely filled with silt, sewage and garbage at different places. The drinking water pipe runs across the channel.
- This channel reaches a small pond at Anandan Street, Pammal. However, the pond is being filled up currently with construction debris to close down the channel and the pond.
- The channel ends here and the overflow from here is diverted into 2 very small channels of 2 to 3 feet wide and 4 to 5 feet depth. The condition of these two channels is extremely poor choked with sewage and garbage with no maintenance.
- These two channels proceed further and join the Adyar river near the airport at the Cowl bazar main road.
- In spite of the court orders on Thirupanthal, it continues to be violated.

Recommendations:

- The Garbage in the lake must be cleared and the sewage being let into the lake must be stopped immediately.
- Government must take note of the court orders and strictly follow it
- Widening of channel connecting the lake and adyar river by clearing encroachments needs to be carried out immediately.
- Garbage dumping to be stopped and existing garbage to be cleared.
- Desilting of channels needs to be carried out immediately.

Contact Info: Mr Narayanasamy Ph: 9500600310	
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Kilkattalai Engineers Residents Association Represented by: Association Members	Pallavaram Municipality, Kanchipuram Dt.
Issues Raised:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the Channel connecting Kilkattalai and Narayanapuram lake, except for the initial 100m stretch the water way has been heavily encroached on the side by private residential houses reducing the original width of 60 feet of the channel to anywhere between 15 to 40 feet at most places • A buried sewage outfall pipeline was detected immediately after the overflow weir. Some of the locals indicated that sewage was being pumped from the Pallavaram Municipality's sewage pumping station located bang adjacent to the lake. This pumping station pumps the sewage through a pressure main, along the 200 ft radial road, directly to the STP at Perungudi. It is understood that the residents of Engineers Avenue Residents Welfare Association (EAWRA) in 2014 had complained to the commissioner municipality, PWD and the CM cell on this issue. The authorities had admitted 'in writing' to the design faults and had carried out modifications in the pipeline. They had also agreed to stop any discharge of sewage into the surplus channel and removal of this hidden sewage outfall. However, the presence of the pipeline and information gathered from the locals shows this is being flouted. • The entire stretch is clogged with garbage, construction debris and heavy encroachment 	
Recommendations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The desilting, garbage removal, hyacinth removal and construction debris removal in the channel connecting Kilkattalai and Narayanapuram needs to be done over the entire stretch immediately 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sewage that is being discharged into the channel by private residential complex and the Metro Water Department must be stopped immediately. • After ensuring that there is no sewage in the channel, the channel must be connected into the Narayanapuram lake. Else, there needs to be a channel constructed that connects LIC Nagar into the Pallikaranai Marsh along the natural gradient. • The water hyacinths in the Narayanapuram lake need to be removed to increase water holding capacity of the lake balancing it with an eye of maintaining the water purifying abilities of the plant. • The Temple and the Badminton court that is built in the channel near the entrance of Narayanapuram lake needs to be removed. All the encroachments along this channel that have decreased the channel from 60 feet to 20 or 30 feet must be cleared
Contact Info: Jagadeesh @ 9176625256

Periyar Samathuvapuram, Mudichur	Tamabaram Municipality, Kanchipuram Dt.
Represented by: Dharma	
Issues Raised:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their area was the most affected in Chennai. No infrastructure has been provided by the Government even after this huge deluge • Initially after flooding happened, the Collector came and demolished the houses built upon the Adyar river. But after that, there has been no action on widening or desilting of the Adyar river. The entire stretch between the Adyar river source and the joining point of Thiruneermalai has not been desilted • The Pappan Channel also has not been desilted. • Seekanam Yeri (Chennai outer ring road) – Canal and road are at same level. If it rains again, the area will flood again. The 2 KM stretch to be deepened and canal to be desilted immediately. • Only 200 m stretch on Adyar river near Periyar Samathuvapuram was worked upon for widening. The entire stretch remains as such. 	
Recommendations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Adyar river and the Pappan Channel has to be deepened and desilted immediately. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Seekanam Eri Canal has to be deepened and desilted immediately before the rains. 	
Contact Info: Basith @ 8122000228	
Perumbakkam Represented by: Residents	Thiruporur Kanchipuram Dt.
Issues Raised: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government constructed buildings which were given to people from different parts of the city was completely under water. There are supposedly 2 lakes – Perumbakkam periya eri and siriya eri. But they have been heavily encroached. No action has been taken till date and we will end up under water if it rains again 	
Recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government should immediately take steps to clear the encroachments in the Perumbakkam Eri. Proper drainage from the Perumbakkam Government constructed buildings must be done before monsoon to save from flood. 	
Contact: 9444118965	

Voice of the People:

During the Public Hearing, a survey was conducted amongst the participants. It sought their feedback and views on who was responsible for the Chennai Flood 2015, what measures the Govt should take as a priority etc. The key results and inferences from the survey are highlighted below:

We hope the concerned authorities take note of the anger and concerns expressed by the people and work diligently towards fulfilling their expectations.

Who Is responsible for the Chennai Flooding in December 2015	Percentage
Government	74%
People	26%

74% of the people hold the Government responsible for the Chennai flooding. Also, with respect to their priorities on what the Government should focus, desilting waterbodies, clearing encroachments on waterbodies and Government stopping to dump Garbages in waterbodies must be the top priorities according to citizens.

Issue	Percentage of people
Government should desilt waterbodies immediately	26%
Government should remove Encroachments on waterbodies immediately	25%
Government should restore width of 3 Rivers immediately	9%
Government should stop dumping Garbage into Waterbodies immediately	25%
Government should Repair and Desilt Storm Water Drain	3%
Government should not to Raise the Road Height	12%

Conclusion

A number of the issues pointed out by the residents and suggested solutions are common across all areas of the city:

- Regular maintenance and de-silting of Storm Water Drains, always restoring original depth and completely cleaning all garbage and blockages.
- Prevention of encroachments on water carriers.
- Ensuring that the network of drains and inter-connectedness is maintained (proper inlet and outlet for each water carrier).
- Ensuring that roads are milled before re-laying to maintain the houses at similar or higher levels than the road.
- Ensuring that the area's storm water and sewage drainage systems are of sufficient carrying capacity to meet the ever-growing population's requirements

It is therefore apparent that a great deal of creativity or cutting-edge technology is not needed to get the basics right and make the city Flood-Safe. The thread-bare analysis of the sorry state of the city's infrastructure also clearly proves that while the city did receive very heavy rainfall last year, much of the tragedy could have been prevented had the authorities taken some basic measures. To blame the quantum of rainfall is just an excuse.

It was disappointing to hear from the citizens that they have made numerous representations in writing and through personal visits to various Govt Agencies on the very same matters much before the floods last year, but there was no response. This attitude of Government Officials needs to undergo a sea change. We hope that going forward, the Government will respect the voices of its citizens and follow-up on the issues they raise.

The Public Hearing was a unique format, providing a platform for ordinary citizens to come together and offer constructive solutions for resolving the city's civic infrastructure problems. The city's residents have responded enthusiastically, and have assured their full support to Government Agencies

and Elected Representatives to take up the projects and work needed to make the city Flood-Safe.

The onus is now on the Tamil Nadu Government, and its various departments and agencies, and on each and every Elected Representative, to review each recommendation, and ensure that actions are undertaken to resolve these issues.

Arappor Iyakkam will redouble its efforts to work closely with Civil Society and with all Government agencies to ensure that Chennai's capacity to cope with monsoons and flooding is strengthened.