

Railing for Safety: A Jaibhim Nagar Case Study

Jaibhim Nagar, Powai is a fairly large community of people living in poverty, spread on the banks of the Mithi River. On the 12th July, the community got together to write letters to their MLA Ramesh Latke for the construction/addition of railings to the river wall. They cited their reasons for writing the letters as the wall being dangerously low and accident-prone.

In the past, children have fallen into the river because there was no wall to protect them; some escaped with injuries; but some weren't that lucky. In the letters, they put forth the idea of the railings as a pollution tracker – the idea being that the higher the railing, the less people would throw their garbage into the river. In all 50 letters we sent to the Mr. Latke from children, parents, grandparents – all living in and around Jaibhim Nagar, Powai.

Little more than a month later, we see the letters having reached the intended person, and we could tell by the presence of officials taking measurements of the river sides and the pathways.



Sachin, one of our child leaders from Jaibhim Nagar, asked them what the measurements were for, he couldn't believe them when they said that it was for the railing. He'd never seen such quick action before.

“In the past, we've asked about cleaning the river and all that piled up garbage near the toilet, and we've never heard back from anyone. We've tried so many times but still no one came. But to see these men preparing for the railing and to know that at least one of our concerns has reached them, it gives us hope.”

If all goes according to plan, without any delay, Jaibhim Nagar, should be a safer neighborhood to live in, without the fear of children falling over walls.