

Resource Mapping For Worli

(A Project for Karmayog)

by

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Fig 1: Map of Mumbai

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Fig 2: Worli Map

A. Prologue

The Worli Resource Mapping Project was taken up by me in the summer of 2010. It is a project to highlight the main resources and institutions in Worli, Mumbai. Worli is a vibrant suburban community in southern Mumbai.

I have lived in Worli since 2004. I attended the Greenlawns School in Worli and most of my close school friends live in Worli or nearby.

The information obtained can be used in harmonizing the locations of key geographical as well as monumental features in the region for business as well as environmental mapping purposes.

The project creates an identity profile for each location. It projects the overview and semantics of Worli as a community.

The resource mapping project shows the key features of Worli that can be built upon and the problems that need to be solved from an environmental point of view.

B. Introduction

Resources are an important part of a city life. They are the bonds that hold the social, cultural as well as institutional bodies together. It is important for citizens of the concerned locality to have information about the resources in their region. Mapping the resources also provides information to various NGO's and municipal bodies, aiding the planning process.

The knowledge of the local resources may be useful in linking the venues and the doers. The most important aspect is that it creates awareness in the residents, both from anthropological and economic point of view. For instance before taking up the project, I wasn't aware that in early 1900s there existed a palace of the Scindias of Gwalior, which was later demolished and converted into commercial as well residential buildings. The cultural and historical significance of a palace was lost to the commercialization of the neighborhood.

It is important that we as a community make the right decisions in changing and affecting the area in which we live. This resource mapping project can be an important tool in ensuring good policy decisions be made by the various municipal as well as private organizations responsible for development of Worli.

The following list contains the places I visited and tried to capture in words.

1. Bandra-Worli Sea link
2. Greenlawns School, Worli
3. Nehru Science Center
4. Worli Walkers Association
5. Aarey Diary (Mafco Farm Fair)
6. Discovery Of India
7. The Reading Tree Library
8. Happy Home and School For The Blind
9. Nehru Planetarium
10. Cyber Lab (Worli Police Station)

C.1. The Bandra-Worli Sea Link

Worli Sea face is now a major landmark bridge, connecting Worli to Bandra, officially known as the Rajiv Gandhi Sea Link. The sea link is the first of its kind in the country. It is the first eight lane freeway built in India over an open sea. The purpose of the sea link was to reduce the traffic load on the internal roads of Mumbai. This bridge has been constructed by Hindustan Construction Company.

It is a 4.7 km long bridge built on the Arabian Sea. The bridge has 424 cables for the main roadway, which can support 900 tons each. The main tower of this spectacular bridge is as high as a 43 storey building. The sea link was completed on 31 March, 2009 with the help of 4,000 workers and 150 engineers. The man who designed the bridge is a very well known architect, Mr. Seshadri Srinivasan. Mr. Srinivasan has not only designed the Bandra Worli Sea Link but also other bridges such as the JJ Flyover, the Jamarat bridge in Mecca and the famous bridge of Wadi Abdoun in Lebanon. The beauty of this bridge is reflected in its magnificent structure and architectural marvel.

To showcase the uniqueness of this bridge, there is a small exhibition centre near the Bandra end of the bridge, where there is information explaining all the facts and effort in making the bridge. There is also a company office located near the Bandra end of the bridge.

The Maharashtra State Road Development Cooperation (MSRDC) engineers say that the movement of the traffic on the bridge is monitored by a 360-degree turning camera which can capture images within 1.5 km. There are two cameras fitted under the bridge, which help keep watch on the movements of boats and ships. An automatic system has been activated to identify the vehicles going over 50 km/h speed limit. In addition to these safety measures, there are two policemen on motorcycles patrolling the bridge at all times.

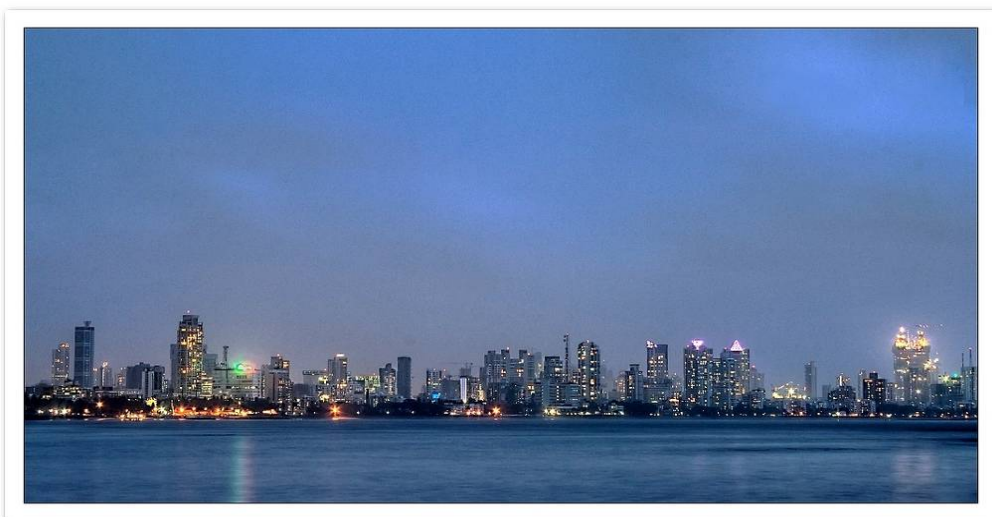


Fig 3: Worli Skyline

With the bridge being completed, the MSRDC workers and officials have now shifted their energies to beautifying the roads and sea face of both Worli and Bandra. There is massive construction taking place on Worli Sea Face. The pavements and roads are being

renovated. There is plantation of new trees to make the area greener. Worli is now becoming a crossroad for not only traffic but also many tourists and visitors.

A recent survey revealed that during peak hours around 7,000 to 8,000 cars use the sea link hourly. The estimated time taken to cross the link is 8 minutes. The toll is a reasonable fifty rupees for cars, seventy- five rupees for mini bus/ truck and hundred rupees for a regular size bus or truck. Vehicles can also get a monthly pass (which charges 50 times the basic toll).

The Sea Link is not only an integral part of the lives of the people living in Worli, but also of many Mumbaikars who travel to and fro to work everyday from the town part of the city to the suburbs of Bandra and Andheri. Not only does this bridge connects the city but it also saves Rs. 100 crore everyday in the form of time and fuel.



Fig 4: Panoramic View of Sea Link

C.2 Greenlawns School Worli

Greenlawns School, Worli is an ICSE school situated on the Worli Sea face. It was started by Mrs. Daphne Clare Fraser Thompson in 1959. It is a well known institution where most residents of the area send their children for primary and secondary education.

This school boasts of not only good quality teaching, but also a unique location. It is situated right opposite the Worli sea face. Although many would say that the school is hardly a building and does not have a playground, it gets its charm from the old styled architecture of the building and the magnificent view that it plays host to.

This school is where a child develops values, learn from their mistakes, create long lasting friendships and get enriched by more than just mere facts learnt from the textbooks. The children who have graduated from here are the ones that use the knowledge learnt and experienced, in the real world.

It builds strong foundations for the students. The teacher student ratio is almost 1:6 and the attention and care given to each child is remarkable. With the student population being limited and the students per class being about 27-28, a nurturing atmosphere is created.

Education is the most important gift given to a person. The school has not only realized the importance of such an education but has successfully produced many vibrant and morally aware citizens. The importance given to education is exhibited in the ICSE results every year. The batches passed put have excellent results and more than 70 percentile of the class has an 80+ percentage in the board examination.

Although academic achievements are celebrated, the school also gives importance to extra-curricular activities. In spite of its size, the school has always provided a palette of opportunities to students right from standard one. There are many inter-school competitions that the students can take part in. Due to the small batch size, every student is given equal opportunity in participation.

Since its establishment in 1959, Greenlawns has come a long way. The journey over the last fifty one years has lead to continuous change and developed all the lives it has touched. It has become a home away from home.

The principal Mrs Aparajita Rana, leads this small yet vibrant school. The latest technology such as interactive videos and projectors have been installed. This makes the learning here fun and easy. The school has a science lab, a library and 10 class rooms.

The school recently published its annual magazine 'The Chronicle'. For more information visit the website <http://worli.greenlawns.org/>



Fig 5: Greenlawns School Logo

C.3. Nehru Science Center

The Nehru Science Center (NSC) is the largest science museum in India. It started out as a semi-permanent exhibition called as Light and Sound in 1977. Two year later the small exhibition included a Science Park, and in no time the center was publicly inaugurated by Late Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, on 11 November, 1985.

Since then the center has been flourishing and has housed many new creative and interactive expositions on various scientific themes. The center is divided into twelve major facilities. The Children Science Park is full of exhibits explaining principles in physics and old artifacts of the past such as trams, trains and air craft. It spreads across eight acres and holds a green park with 200 species of plants and a shaded picnic area for student groups and the general public. The park also has a dome shaped metal structure that houses a number of pet animals like rabbits, ducks and tortoises.

While the animals are there to attract the children, the center is a place for fun and learning. It has a number of expositions on sound, hearing, human body, light, sight, pre-historic life, aerodynamics (which include space exploration, rocket science and airplanes) and many other interactive models. Don't be surprised if you happen to walk into a room and see a giant size model of the human heart beating in all its vigor! The Nehru Science Center is all about explaining the science behind things. There is even a vintage airplane from World War Two at the center.

Due to its wonderful expositions, people are motivated to visit it often. Around 600,000 people visit this center every year. And close to 1,20,000 school children participate in the activities of the center! It promotes and formulates special programs for children. A few well known programs are 'Western India Science Fair' (for students up to Std 12), Students Science Seminar, exciting science demonstration lectures, Quizzes, Science Drama Contest, Art Competitions on environmental and scientific topics, Science Film Festival, National Astronomy Olympiad (as a part of the International Astronomy Olympiad, held annually in Russia) and a well known forum called 'Meet The Scientist' to clear doubts or project ideas in science.

The programs offered by NSC not only concerns students but also includes the common people. The NSC has specially developed workshops for teachers, housewives and senior citizens. It has a mobile science exhibition for rural students too! For more information go to <http://www.nehrusciencecentre.org/>

C.4. Worli Walkers Association Garden

The Gautam Buddha Garden is built by the Worli Walkers Association(WWA). The WWA is a non-profit organization headed by Mr.V.M Kapoor, who is a resident of Worli. This organization consists of residents of Worli who want to help in contributing to the growth of their neighborhood. It is due to these contributions made by the members of this association that a beautiful park like the Gautam Buddha garden has been built.

When you walk through the arch like gates of the garden, you are overcome by the expanse of green that surrounds you. It makes this garden one of those few green places in this 'grey' city! The garden is also a host to a jovial crowd of excited children that come here to play every evening. This garden is open all days of the week. The timings are from 6 am to 12 pm and 4 pm and 8 pm.

Scattered around the garden are benches donated by people in loving memory of their late relatives. This park has a sea facing view of the Arabian Sea! There is a viewing gallery at the other end of the garden. The viewing gallery faces the open sea and the entire garden can be seen from here. It is situated at a height and has to be accessed by steps. It is a place where you can sit and see a spectacular sunset or sunrise! The gallery was donated by Hasmukh Kikabhai in the memory of the Kargil Jawans.

Almost every part of the garden was made possible because of contributions from the residents and the members of WWA. It is a garden built on the effort and money contributed by the people of Worli. The Buddha gardens have a play park where children below the age of ten are allowed to play. As you enter the garden you can see an old clock at the top of the built-in PCO booth situated at its entrance. Next to it is a water outlet where walkers can quench their thirst. So the Buddha garden is much more than just a park. It is a place where residents of Worli - whether they are aged or young - come to spend an evening of serenity.



Fig 6: Gautam Buddha Garden

C.5. Aarey Dairy (Mafco Farm Fair)

Amidst the well known and popular landmarks of Worli, is one of the most unusual yet famous dairy known as the Aarey Dairy, right on the sea face. Mafco is a well known brand in Mumbai. An outlet of Mafco is located right outside the Aarey Dairy. The dairy has been around since many years. It is the headquarters of the Mumbai branch of Aarey. Dairy industry runs in the co-operative sector, starting with such an initiative started by the women folk of Gujarat. It ensures that there is a source of income other than agriculture for a rural household.

Since then the dairy industry has become a nationwide economic activity that markets dairy products such as milk, cheese and butter. The Aarey Dairy in Worli is well known and a tourist attraction. Hundreds of tourists come to view it everyday.

Next to the dairy, there is a food chain outlet, called Mafco Farm Fair. Mafco is well known for its fast food and milkshakes. The milk products such as ice-cream and milkshakes are supplied by Aarey Dairy. Since it is on the doorstep of the dairy, it has its milk supply right in its backyard!

The Energy drink is a well marketed and popular drink among many of the dairy's customers. It is sweetened milk. It has many flavors to offer including strawberry and pineapple. The 'Lassi' from the dairy is another of its top selling products.

Right next to Mafco, there are smaller food stalls. Mafco happens to be a drive-in food joint. The kind of crowd that comes here is very varied. People generally come here in groups. Whether it is with family or friends; they all come to Mafco to enjoy good food and the spectacular view!

Mafco Farm Fair is one place that has everything from delicious food to lively ambience. The backdrop being the Aarey Dairy, Mafco Farm fair is a wonderful place to visit in Worli.



Fig 7: Mafco Farm Fair with Aarey Dairy in background

C.6. Discovery Of India

The Discovery of India is a part of the Nehru Centre. It is a permanent exposition situated on the ground and first floor of the Nehru Centre building. It has a unique collection of 14 galleries. It focuses on covering historic, cultural, artistic and philosophical achievements of India. It talks about the struggle and fight that our forefathers had to go through to attain freedom for our country. The main theme of the exhibition is based on the book *The Discovery Of India* by our first prime minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru. The book was written during Nehru's imprisonment in 1942-1946 in the Ahmednagar Fort.

The collection contains a set of beautifully written and well made replicas of architectural and culturally important monuments and scenes in Indian history. The moment you climb the steps to the first floor, you will enter a place that intrigues you and captures your fascination by life-like pictures and images of people who had a helping hand in India's independence.

There are varied yet fascinating expositions such as black and white photos of Gandhiji leading the masses to Dandi or of Jawaharlal Nehru giving his famous speech 'Tryst with Destiny' on the eve of 15th August 1947 or fiberglass models of our earliest ancestors - the apes! It will not only fascinate you but also make you travel back in time. The speeches given by our freedom fighters can be heard and seen on television screens that are situated at every alternate turn of such expositions. To explore the exhibition one has to travel through a maze of various black and white information boards. There are a few specimens of the ancient gold and silver coins and primitive tools used by our ancestors kept on show too! And one feels like an archeologist as one peers through the high power magnifying glass to examine the tiny engravings on these small yet invaluable coins belonging to the Ashoka period.

The floor above the Discovery of India hosts an exhibition of rare photographs of Jawaharlal Nehru. The photographs were from the archives of photojournalist, Kulwant Roy. They were rare black and white photos of Jawaharlal Nehru, which were seldom seen before. The aim of the exhibition is same as the purpose of the Discovery of India exposition--to bring the present generation in contact with the times that have passed. Many schools bring their students for field trips to this exposition.

The ground floor is an open gallery that is a temporary home to paintings by many artists. Artists can reserve a place for their paintings. The Centre also rents out halls on the ground and third floor for exhibition purposes. It has an auditorium too.

The cultural wing of Nehru centre is a host to many plays. There are programs in music and dance too! Nehru Centre hosted the 'Art Fusion 2010'. It was a program that promoted artists from all over Maharashtra, Gujarat and Karnataka to display their talents. The show provided an opportunity for the less known artists from the interiors of the state to showcase their work alongside well known city artists.



Fig 8: Discovery of India Building

C.7. The Reading Tree Library

In today's world kids are lucky enough to have bookstores and libraries set-up at almost every corner of the street. Only a few years back, it was considered a great privilege to have membership to a library! Parents nowadays want the habit of reading instilled into their children from a tender age. That's why Mrs. Jayshree Bhalla, the co-founder and architect of SEARCH (Studio for Environment and Architecture) also a resident of Worli, started the Reading Tree Library in 1999. The aim was to make her children as well as the children living in an around Worli, avid readers.

The Reading Tree Library is a place built to combine fun with reading. It's a place where your child will not only come to love books but also participate in activities that will keep him/her interested. The library has art and craft sessions held frequently. Children who come here are between 3-13 years. The younger ones participate in such art and craft sessions to produce creative paintings and explore their imagination.

The library wants the kids to enhance their creativity. That's why in the vacations the kids are taught to decorate 'diyas' and make clay '*ganesha*'. The library also conducts story telling sessions. It hosts several theme parties during Diwali, Halloween and Christmas.

This library houses more than 4000 books in its shelves. It has everything from classics to pulp fiction from reference books to non-fiction.

The membership fees are Rs 1600 per year. The membership can be renewed annually. The children can take 3 to 5 books home per session. The library provides and accepts books through donations.

Many other libraries have stereotypically serious and archaic atmosphere, but this library sure doesn't! The ambience created here is of happiness. That is why children of various ages come together and end up having a great time reading and interacting with each other.



Fig 9: The Reading Tree

C.8. Happy Home And School For The Blind

The Happy Home and School for the Blind (HHSB) is a school that brings happiness and color in the lives of blind children. The school was set up in 1925 in Worli. It started out as a small rented room housing five blind boys. Through the years, it has emerged as a big spacious building nurturing 200 happy boys. It is a special place that “breaks the barriers of language, religion and creed”. This is an institution that houses children with not only visual disability but also multiple impairments.

The manners and conduct of each child is molded to achieve perfection in etiquette. The school believes that academics and curricular achievements stand at par with personal behavior. Each child is given personal attention since the student-teacher ratio never exceeds ten students per teacher. Not only do the teachers act as friends and role models, the parents too are encouraged in being involved in the activities conducted by the school. The parents come for regular weekend visits.

The classrooms are big, spacious and decorated with various photos and certificates. The classrooms have public address systems too. The students love music and through their school choir, they have won many competitions. They have also sung for imminent personalities such as Dr. Abdul Kalam, Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Nobel Peace Prize winner Mr Mohd. Yunus. The students have truly proved the motto of this school “mobility is the walking stick of independence”, by being confident in their surroundings. The school emphasizes on making a child feel comfortable in the environment around. This insures his safe passage into adulthood.

The children love to play sports. One of their favorite sports is cricket. There are many pictures on the wallboard of young boys clad in smart red sportswear playing cricket at Brabourne Stadium on Marine Drive.

There is a popular belief that being blind heightens the other four senses, thus enabling the person to be more creative and productive than normal. If it happens to be a myth, then the students of HHSB definitely prove it otherwise. The students are taught skills of pottery, ceramics, mosaic, hand loom, weaving, mime, drama, yoga and judo. Their talents are nurtured to produce exceptional results, which are exhibited annually. The exhibition consists of beautiful and exquisite mosaics, embroidery, pots and many other things.

In today's world being a literate person is more of a need than desire and the school ensures that academics is given sufficient importance. There are classes from grade one to ten. The curriculum is informal and structured in such a way that each child's unique abilities are nurtured in the pre-school phase. Behind every empowered student is a dedicated mentor. The teachers and staff at the school are such mentors who help and guide the students to achieve independence. They have such an impact on their students that many students return to join HHSB as faculty members. The volunteers too are an important part of the HHSB.



Coomi Sohrab Bharoocha
Founder

Fig 10: The HHSB Students with the Founder's Statue

C.9. Nehru Planetarium

The Nehru Planetarium was commissioned on 3rd March, 1977. It was inaugurated by the late Mrs. Indira Gandhi. Since then, it has blossomed into the core of astronomy study and knowledge. It acts as the meeting place of various scientists and scholars for discussions and lectures concerning varied cosmological phenomenon. The planetarium also plays a host to science-quizzes, astronomical painting and poetry, scientific debates and discussion held for the students.

Since 1977, it has produced thirty one astronomical shows and presentations, which have been watched by more than ten million people. One of the shows in demand are the one shown on the Mini Planetarium. These shows are projected in the rural and remote areas to educate the rural population. As one enters the building, one sees the interplanetary weighing scales. It is truly interesting to weigh oneself in one of the cubicles designed to estimate your weight on all the nine planets of the solar system.

The Nehru Planetarium also happens to be the only planetarium that has a combination of a movie theatre and a concert auditorium. Many important programmes are conducted in the auditorium as there is enough space for a large audience. It is fully air-conditioned, which is a relief on a summer day! It is open all days of the week except Monday and major holidays. The regular shows start from noon. The secrets of universe are explained in Hindi, Marathi and English. The tickets can be booked between 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. and a week in advance too, the admission fee being fifty rupees for adults and twenty-five rupees for children. There is a special fee for a student groups.

One of the main attractions of the place is that the planetarium provides free live sky observation programs using a telescope. The shows are only on Sundays from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. provided the sky is clear. However, the shows are from November to May only. The planetarium has been so thoughtful that it has installed telescopes on the outside that enable eager visitors to watch the rare but wonderful phenomenon that occur once in a blue moon. On the days of Solar, Lunar, Annual and Partial eclipse, the planetarium serves as a platform for visitors to view such amazing phenomenon.

C.10. Mumbai Cyber Lab (Worli Police Station)

The easiest way to fight crime is by preventing it. Unfortunately in today's world, not everything can be controlled or prevented. That's why it is important for us to take some necessary steps after the crime is committed. It is important that we share our grievances with the right people. One such organization to fight internet or cyber crime is the Cyber Crime Investigation Cell of Mumbai Police. The world is rampant with evils such as hacking, child pornography, credit card frauds, cyber stalking and software piracy. The Mumbai Cyber Crime Cell helps victims of such crime and brings the offenders to justice. Their motto is "The Invisible criminal is more dangerous than the visible one. He uses technology as his weapon; we use the same to nab him."

They have a special training facility in Worli police station known as Mumbai Cyber Lab. It is a joint initiative of NASSCOM and the Mumbai Police. Mumbai Cyber Lab was started on 8 March, 2004. It runs a one-week training programme for investigating officers. The police officers are trained in the art of catching cyber criminals. They train 450 officers on an average, annually. They not only have a basic course but also impart advanced and practical knowledge. In their regular session, case studies are covered.

The officers that complete the training pick up knowledge of e-mail tracing, mobile technology and the technical know-how needed to nab a criminal. The advanced training is completed in six days.

The Lab not only trains officers but also occasionally organizes a basic training for the children of police officers living in Worli. They are given tips and rules to remain safe online. The Lab organizes sessions with schools and colleges on request. It is also a great aid for the victims of cyber crime especially when they come to register cases at the Worli Police Station.

Netizens (Citizens of the Net) should not be under the impression that cyber world is safe and must realize that cyber space is a dangerous place where criminals are free to carry out their evil intentions encouraged by the so-called anonymity that the web provides. They should therefore take precautions and steps to prevent this from happening.

For further information visit www.cybercellmumbai.com



D. Conclusion

Mapping of resources is important to understand the strengths of an area, which has implications for planning their optimum utilisation. Many-a-times, residents of an area are not aware of the facilities and services available around them and do not work for improvement of their area due to lack of knowledge and pride in the local community. Comprehensive documentation is essential to create such a focal point for channelling people's energies.

The Worli Resource mapping project gave me an opportunity go around and visit some of the most vibrant and productive institutions and places of the locality and understand what makes them tick. Due to shortage of time, I could not cover some other institutions like the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute Laboratory and the Television station, as well as some police offices like Traffic Police Headquarters, FICCI Headquarters and the Anti Corruption Bureau. The next round of the resource mapping project should cover these.

I am grateful to Karmayog, for encouraging me to take up the project and guide me through the process. I am especially thankful to Mr Vinay Somani for his encouragement and inspirational guidance. I will value the experience of having worked on this project and build on the learning in my future education and career.