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Chickpet: Bengaluru's original business district is congested, dirty

BY DIVYA SHEKHAR, ET BUREAU | APR 22, 2018, 11.57 PM IST

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BENGALURU: The World Health Organisation recommends at least 32 trees per person to offset respiratory carbon dioxide. Chickpet, with 25 trees for a population upwards of 52,688 has zero trees per person, the worst in all of Bengaluru (as per a 2014 report by the Indian Institute of Science). Dismal tree cover apart, this south Bengaluru constituency also grapples with congestion, sanitation issues and traffic problems.

Carved out of parts of Basavanagudi, Chamrajpet and Jayanagar during the delimitation, Bengaluru's oldest commercial area, whose popular sarees once found takers among the Mysuru royal family, continues to be among the highest contributors to the state exchequer. Chickpet, however, faces civic issues that are as a result of the locality's commercial activities exploding out of proportion. Footpaths in Avenue Road, BVK Iyengar Road, Aschar Road and surrounding localities have been claimed by vendors.

Chickpet suffers from blocked drainage systems, leaking sewerage lines and lack of public toilets.

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WINNERS & LOSERS IN PAST BATTLES

Year	Winner	Votes
2013	RV Devraj (INC)	44,714 41.09%
2008	Hemachandra Sagar (BJP)	40,252 40.23%
2004	PC Mohan (BJP)	21,404
1999	PC Mohan (BJP)	20,636

Open, unsanitary drains and indiscriminate dumping of garbage add to all the troubles, said Sajjan Raj Mehta, who has been trading in Chickpet for the last six decades. "With upwards of 5,000 shops, the area is becoming congested by the day. There are no provisions for parking, which dissuades people from shopping here. All this leads to a drop in revenue," he said, hoping that Metro services would eventually ease traffic and get more people to the shops.

Chickpet suffers from blocked drainage systems, leaking sewerage lines and lack of public toilets. Senior citizen G Nagaraj, who volunteers to help authorities clear traffic bottlenecks near Avenue Road, said that rash driving and street vendors result in accidents. "Authorities must find solutions to the traffic issues here," he said.