



**FROM KONNUR HIGH ROAD TO EZHIL NAGAR**

**PART 1**

# REPORT OF THE FACT FINDING ON EVICTION & RESETTLEMENT FROM KONNUR HIGH ROAD TO EZHIL NAGAR: PART 1

## CONTENTS:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	1
ABOUT THIS STUDY .....	4
<i>Team</i> .....	4
<i>Objectives of Part 1 of the study</i> .....	4
<i>Methodology</i> .....	4
INTRODUCTORY REMARKS .....	5
CONDITION OF THE TENEMENTS: .....	5
COMPARATIVE FINDINGS ON INFRASTRUCTURE: .....	7
DETAILED FINDINGS .....	12
I. WATER: .....	12
II. SANITATION: .....	12
III. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT: .....	12
IV. ELECTRICITY: .....	12
V. SCHOOLS: .....	13
VI. ANGANWADI: .....	14
VII. CARE FOR PREGNANT WOMEN AND ELDERLY: .....	14
VIII. RATION SHOPS: .....	15
IX. LPG CONNECTION: .....	15
X. HEALTH: .....	15
XI. SAFETY: .....	16
XII. TRANSPORTATION: .....	16
XIII. LIVELIHOOD: .....	17

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the results of a fact-finding at Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar, relocation tenements built by the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) Chennai. The study was undertaken by a team from Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) as part of the Transparent Cities Network (TCN). TCN was requested by Pennurimai Iyakkam, a women's rights organization based in Chennai, to verify the statements made by the TNSCB regarding the existence and sufficiency of the facilities available at Ezhil Nagar in their counter-affidavit filed before the Madras High Court in a case challenging eviction notices given to residents of a settlement on Konnur High

Road. The residents of this settlement are being relocated to Ezhil Nagar from their current location.

The aim of Part 1 of this study was to verify the information on infrastructural facilities provided by the TNSCB in the counter-affidavit, examine the quality of the facilities, and assess whether they are sufficient for the present and expected population. Part 2 of the study focuses on the site of the threatened eviction: the possibility for in-situ development and the availability of relocation sites close to the present location, and the social and economic impact of relocation including on access to services, livelihoods, education and health services, and other basic needs.

The methodology followed was to interview the TNSCB site official, ward councillor, and residents over a period of four days, and to verify information received with regard to existence and quality of infrastructure by visiting each facility and interviewing the person in-charge and others who work there.

There are several variations between the figures reported by the TNSCB and what the fact-finding team found on the ground. Below is a summary of the findings:

- Although not explicitly stated by the TNSCB, the information provided by the TNSCB in the counter affidavit relates to both Kannagi Nagar (a relocation site adjacent to Ezhil Nagar) and Ezhil Nagar and not exclusively to Ezhil Nagar. Kannagi Nagar has 15,656 tenements with a population of approximately 78,280 residents. Ezhil Nagar has 8,048 tenements, approximately 2,650 of which are presently occupied. Therefore, the facilities are for the use of a population of 1,18,520 residents of 23,704 tenements.
- Ezhil Nagar tenements are designed as four storey buildings with 24 houses on each floor. The tenements have no lifts and a narrow staircase with no facilities for the disabled or elderly. Houses are on either side of a long and badly lit corridor.
- Water and sanitation: Overhead tanks are provided, with water supplied twice a day. Only one tap is provided in the toilet/bathroom. Ground floor houses are not connected to sewerage lines. Drainage leads to and floods the rear side of the tenements.
- Anganwadi: The team identified only 1 ICDS run anganwadi functioning in Ezhil Nagar, with 2 more proposed to open. There are 20 anganwadi centres run by the government in Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar together as opposed to TNSCB's claim of 23 in Ezhil Nagar alone. In addition, in Kannagi Nagar there are 15 anganwadis and 1 centre for special children run by NGOs. The government run centres have poor infrastructure and insufficient resources and facilities. The number is also insufficient for the population. As per ICDS project norms there should be at least 16 anganwadi centres in Ezhil Nagar for an

approximate existing population of 13,250, with additional requirements for the additional population that is planned to be relocated here.<sup>1</sup>

- Centre for pregnant and post-natal women: There are no separate centres for pregnant and post-natal women, and adolescent girls. The 19 ICDS anganwadis in Kannagi Nagar and 1 ICDS anganwadi in Ezhil Nagar provide nutrition mix to pregnant and post natal women. The anganwadis run by NGOs do not provide this service.
- Schools: There are no schools in Ezhil Nagar, and only 1 government higher secondary school and 3 primary schools in Kannagi Nagar. From the 2650 households who have already been relocated to Ezhil Nagar only 43 children are studying in the government higher secondary school in Kannagi Nagar. Some children go to the nearby private schools, while most travel to the school near the site from which they were evicted, a journey of up to two hours each way. The government school is already struggling to cope with the current number of students and has expressed their inability to admit more students from Ezhil Nagar in the coming academic year, another 400 of whom are expected to be relocated there shortly.
- Public Distribution System: There are presently no ration shops at Ezhil Nagar, though 1 shop is awaiting inauguration. The team identified 7 ration shops at Kannagi Nagar out of which only 2 serve the residents of Ezhil Nagar for the time being. This number is less than the less than the 10 identified by the TNSCB in their affidavit for Ezhil Nagar alone. Mostly the ration shops are found overcrowded and residents reported shortage of supplies.
- Health: There is no PHC either in Ezhil Nagar or in Kannagi Nagar. There is only 1 Corporation Dispensary in Kannagi Nagar with no in-patient facility serving the residents of both areas. The team members found that the closest PHC facility is at Thoraipakkam at a distance of 3 kms. Residents of both areas are forced to approach private health facilities at a much higher cost, or travel to Royapettah government hospital, which can take up to two hours by bus.
- Safety: There have been several incidents of theft in Ezhil Nagar, which go unaddressed by the local police. The unoccupied tenements and dark, long corridors are frequently used by anti-social elements.
- Transport: There is a bus depot at Kannagi Nagar but buses do not ply to several important areas such as CMBT, Tamabaram, etc. Residents complain

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<sup>1</sup> Assuming five persons per household. ICDS project norms require 1 anganwadi for a population ranging from 400-800, 2 for 800 to 1600, 3 for 1600 to 2400, and thereafter 1 for every 800. Refer to <http://wcd.nic.in/icds/icds.aspx> for more details.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with the Assistant Engineer of TNSCB at Kannagi Nagar on 10/04/2015. After providing this



about over-crowding and poor frequency. Journeys to the city take upwards of two hours and are extremely expensive.

- **Livelihood:** Many residents have had great difficulty in continuing their former means of livelihoods, owing to the great distance to reach their erstwhile place of work. (Ezhil Nagar is 25 km from Broadway for example) This has either resulted in them having to change their jobs or spend considerable amounts of money and time on transportation.

In summary, the study carried out by the fact-finding team reveals that the infrastructure facilities in Ezhil Nagar are inadequate not only for the population intended to be moved here, but also for the existing residents. While there are plans for some increments to existing facilities, it is essential that infrastructure for the intended population be installed prior to resettlement to reduce hardship for the new residents. This has been emphasized in the Report of the High Level Committee of the Government.

## **ABOUT THIS STUDY**

### **Team**

This report (including study design) is prepared by the Transparent Cities Network, Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG).

Field work by: Jacintha Chitra, Pradeepan Ravi, Vijay Senthil Kumar, Arun Prasath, Venkat (MIDS), and others.

Report prepared by: Jacintha Chitra, Pradeepan Ravi, and Vijay Senthil Kumar with inputs from Nithya Raman and Avni Rastogi (CAG), and Venkat (MIDS).

### **Objectives of Part 1 of the study**

The aim of the fact-finding study was to assess the availability, quality, and sufficiency of the basic amenities provided by the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB) at Ezhil Nagar, especially in comparison to statements submitted by the TNSCB to the court in WP.No.29811 of 2014. Ezhil Nagar is a resettlement tenement site constructed by the Tamil Nadu Slum Clearance Board (TNSCB). In particular, the objective of the study was to assess:

1. Whether existing facilities matched the numbers claimed by TNSCB;
2. Whether they were functioning satisfactorily;
3. Whether the claims for planned facilities showed adequate progress on the ground, and
4. Whether the existing and planned facilities are sufficient for resettled populations, including those expected to be resettled in the future

### **Methodology**

The fact-finding team visited the Ezhil Nagar site on the following dates: 10/04/2014, 16/04/2015, 17/04/2015 and 21/04/2015. Using a survey sheet, the team had detailed

conversations with 17 of the current residents of Ezhil Nagar, an Assistant Engineer of the TNSCB (see Footnote 1 below for more details), the ward councillor, 3 teachers at each of the government and privately run anganwadis, the In-Charge of the Higher Secondary and one of the primary schools, 2 employees of the ration shops and 1 doctor and 1 worker in the Primary Health Centre. The team also met the Deputy Director, ICDS at the ICDS headquarters in Taramani. The interviews were recorded in the field on survey sheets and collated in the office. Information gathered from the interviews was verified through visits to the infrastructure facilities. The team visited schools, anganwadis, ration shops, and health facilities existing in Kannagi Nagar as well as those proposed for Ezhil Nagar and recorded their observations.

## **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

Ezhil Nagar has 8,048 units, out of which 6,000 were built under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission and 2,048 were constructed under Emergency Tsunami Reconstruction project. 4,000 of these have been allotted and 2,650 units have been occupied since its inauguration in December 2013.<sup>2</sup> Tenements are arranged in 43 blocks, 96 to 176 units in each building (two buildings forming one block), spread over ground+3 floors. Kannagi Nagar, another resettlement tenement site located adjacent to Ezhil Nagar, has 15,656 tenements with an approximate population of 78,280. When we began our field research, we realized that there was a conflation of figures between the facilities available at Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar in the TNSCB's counter affidavit. In other words, the number of each type of facility provided by the TNSCB was the *total* number available for Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar combined. This means that the facilities mentioned in the counter affidavit filed by TNSCB are for 23,704 households in both Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar, and not for the 8,048 households planned for Ezhil Nagar alone.

## **Condition of the tenements:**

The Ezhil Nagar tenements are four storey buildings with 24 units in each floor. No lift facility has been provided in any building as mentioned by TNSCB in the counter-affidavit, and there is no provision for installation at a later stage. A staircase has been provided in the middle of the building dividing the building into two halves, 12 units on one side and 12 on the other. This results in a long corridor that lacks proper ventilation and lighting. Residents said that even during the day, electric lights are required in these corridors. The building has been provided with open to sky spaces covered with a grill (See Photograph 1) in front of every unit for ventilation but the lighting and ventilation continues to remain poor since these spaces are used by residents for storing their possessions. Residents that we spoke to have reported that the water

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<sup>2</sup> Interview with the Assistant Engineer of TNSCB at Kannagi Nagar on 10/04/2015. After providing this information, the Assistant Engineer refused to give the team further information till we got approval from the TNSCB to conduct the interview.





Photograph 1



overflowing from the overhead tanks enters the ground floor through the grills, leaving the corridors wet and causing problems for the residents.

People living on the tenements also face the peculiar problem of their toilet outlets not being connected to the sewerage network, but draining into the open. This situation is common in all tenements. The residents reported that miscreants cut / break the sewerage pipes in most of the tenements and the slum board do not attend to the complaints on time. As a result of this the sewerage water comes out and fills the rear side of the tenements. Almost all respondents reported a mosquito menace and the lack of proper maintenance of sewage lines is likely to be one of the reasons.

The size of each house is about 390 sq. ft. with a hall, bedroom, kitchen and attached bathroom with toilet. The attached bathroom with toilet facility has only one water pipe connection. Since sinks or water connections are not provided in the kitchens, residents use the bathroom for washing utensils (See Photograph 2). The person in-charge of a private clinic said that the chance of spreading TB is high in the area since the dwelling units are small and members of a family have to share a single room. (The clinic is currently treating 49 TB patients.) The residents reported that the long, dark corridors of the buildings allow miscreants to use the space as hiding places to escape from police and rival groups putting to risk the safety of the residents (See Photograph 3). The study team observed that the corridors were not clean and littered. The reason is the absence of door-to-door waste collection and the inadequacy of street dumpsters.



Photograph 2





Photograph 3

### COMPARATIVE FINDINGS ON INFRASTRUCTURE:

S No	Type of facility	As per TNSCB	Findings from Kannagi Nagar	Findings from Ezhil Nagar		Summary
				Existing	Proposed	
1	Anganwadi Centres run by ICDS	23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>19 ICDS centres</li> <li>There are also 15 anganwadis run by Asha Nivas in the tenements and 1 centre for special children run by Montfort Community Development Society (MCDS).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 ICDS centre</li> <li>1 centre run by Asha Nivas</li> </ul>	2 (They are yet to open but the space allotted for the facilities in the tenements were identified by the team)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 in Ezhil Nagar and 19 in Kannagi Nagar vs. 23 for Ezhil Nagar alone according to TNSCB.</li> <li>Anganwadis in Ezhil Nagar not allocated teacher or adequate materials.</li> <li>Insufficient in number for the population of the area (20 anganwadis for 5000 children in the target age group).</li> <li>Below ICDS norms of 1 anganwadi per 400-800 persons (including the proposed anganwadis, it is presently 1 per 2,650).</li> </ul>
2	Centres for pregnant women and post-natal women and adolescent girls (Private)	23	The government-run anganwadis' supply nutritional mix to pregnant and post-natal women. No separate centres available – public or private.			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government anganwadis have been re-counted as centres for pregnant women and post-natal women. No separate centres exist. No other service is</li> </ul>

	institutions)					<p>provided at the Anganwadis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no services or centres for adolescent girls.</li> </ul>
3	Primary School	4	3	0	1 (though there are no indications on the ground, not even a location for a building)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None in Ezhil Nagar and 3 in Kannagi Nagar vs. 4 as per TNSCB.</li> <li>Current student teacher ratio of 52:1 in one school vs. RTE norm of 40:1, indicating resources are already stretched with the existing population. No room for more students expected in Ezhil Nagar.</li> <li>Insufficient in number for the population of the area (3 schools for 10,000 children in the target age group)</li> </ul>
4	Government Higher Sec School	1	1	0	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No schools in Ezhil Nagar and 1 in Kannagi Nagar vs. 1 for Ezhil Nagar according to TNSCB.</li> <li>Only 40 students from Ezhil Nagar enrolled in the Govt. Hr. Sec. School</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No infrastructure or resources to accommodate more students.</li> </ul>
5	Fair Price Shops (PDS)	10	7	0	1 (proposed, infrastructure ready but yet to open)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 total in Ezhil Nagar, 7 in Kannagi Nagar vs. 10 according to TNSCB.</li> <li>All PDS shops are overcrowded, lacking in basic provisions, and visibly corrupt.</li> </ul>
6	Primary Health Centre	1	0 (The health facility identified as a PHC is actually a corporation dispensary, with limited out-patient treatment. Patients are largely referred to the PHC at Okkiyam Thoraipakkam or Royapettah GH)	0	1 (proposed at Kannagi Nagar for use of people in both areas, building ready but yet to open)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No facility comparable to a PHC at Kannagi Nagar or Ezhil Nagar.</li> <li>The nearest PHC is at Okkiyam Thoraipakkam, OMR with Emergency care. However, the PHC caters to people from all nearby areas as well, resulting in poor care and long wait times for patients from Kannagi Nagar. Thus forcing people to resort for private treatment during emergencies at a very high cost.</li> </ul>
	Private Hospitals	2	1	0	--	St. Isabel Health Care Centre is the only private



Fact Finding Report on the eviction and resettlement from Konnur High Road to Ezhil Nagar, May 2015  
Transparent Cities Network, Citizen civic & consumer Action Group, Chennai

7						centre in Kannagi Nagar; people are charged for medicines and only doctor consultation is free.
8	Private Clinics	3	2	0	--	These are private clinics running from within the tenements.
9	Government Hospitals adjacent to resettlement site (at a distance of 3 kms)	1	0	0	0	The nearest Government facility is only a PHC located at Thoraipakkam, OMR which is about 3 kms away. There is no Government Hospital within this radius.
10	Private hospitals adjacent to resettlement site	4	Our team identified 3 private hospitals in the vicinity of Kannagi and Ezhil Nagar within 3 kms.			
11	Gym for slums youth in relocation site	1	1	0		This is a functioning facility, run by MCDS.
12	Specialty Health Care	1	0	0		There is no such facility identified
13	Public transport	310 bus service and a bus terminus	209 services including 4 special services.	0	Transport department has requested added service for Ezhil Nagar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The figures provided are for Kannagi Nagar.</li> <li>No additional buses or services effected specifically for Ezhil Nagar.</li> </ul>

						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No provisions have been made to address costs of travel for residents who return to city centre daily.</li> </ul>
14	Police Station	1	1	Nil	--	Residents complained about the irregular patrol and unresponsiveness of the police station to the several law and order problems (frequent thefts and fights).

## **DETAILED FINDINGS**

### **I. Water:**

Water to the area is supplied from the Nemili desalination plant. Every two houses are provided one overhead tank which has a capacity of 250 litres. The residents reported that cleaning of the overhead tanks is not carried out by the TNSCB and only one respondent said that they cleaned the tank on their own.

The majority of the households that we interviewed in Ezhil Nagar said that they get regular supply of water. The supply of water is not 24x7, but the overhead tank is filled two times in a day, meaning that water is available in the morning and evening. According to the households interviewed, disruptions in the supply of water come about because of the breakage of pipes. If a complaint is registered, pipe breaks are attended to within three days. Some residents reported complaints about the quality of the water, including insects and worms, an odour, and murkiness. Almost all households reported having to purchase a separate “can” or packaged water for drinking because of the poor quality of water supply. Residents also complained about regular overflow from the water tanks causing water spillage in the corridors.

### **II. Sanitation:**

One toilet is provided in each house in the tenements and there is one water tap in the toilet/bath room for the entire house. The study team observed leakage of sewage in the rear of many tenements where the toilets of each house is connected to the sewage network. A number of residents also reported regular sewage leakage into the tenement’s common areas and toilet blockages. One resident reported that “the sewage connection was not given to the ground floor for this entire block and only houses in the upper floors are connected to the network. We have registered a complaint to the slum board but officials visit and see the condition but do nothing to fix the problem.” The residents in other floors also reported that miscreants cut / break the sewerage pipes in most of the tenements and the TNSCB does not attend to the complaints on time (See Photograph 4 & 5).

### **III. Solid Waste Management:**

According to the residents that we interviewed there is no door-to-door collection of garbage carried out in Ezhil Nagar as it is carried out in Kannagi Nagar. There are dumpsters kept in each street at one of the ends and people have to put their garbage in these. However, our study team observed that there are piles of trash in the corridors and in the areas behind the tenements (See Photograph 6). The need for immediate door-to-door collection is quite apparent. Most of the residents that we interviewed have said that collection of waste from the street dumpsters and street sweeping take place on a daily basis, but this has been inadequate to deal with the quantity of waste produced in the community.



Photograph 4



Photograph 5



#### **IV. Electricity:**

Every resident that our team interviewed had an electricity connection. One resident reported that they got the connection only after paying an advance of Rs. 2400. Residents also reported that they get regular supply of power with only intermittent power cuts, which end within a short period. The study team observed that streetlights are provided in all the streets but a few residents said that they only function for a few days after being serviced. As a result of their poor functioning, one of the residents sarcastically quipped during our field visit: “The streetlight today burns even before the sun set. Could it be because of the presence of your research team here?” The study team also observed that the staircases in the tenements were not provided with lights, and lights in the corridors are connected to individual houses, meaning that it is at the discretion of each household whether to switch the lights on or not. In practice, this results in dark corridors that have very little natural light, even during the daytime. This raises many questions on the extent of safety for women, children, and the elderly, especially after dark, an issue that many residents addressed in their interviews. One of the residents said, “often miscreants who try to escape from police and rival groups take shelter in the corridors in the unoccupied floors”.

#### **V. Schools:**

Through our direct observation and field interviews we found that there are three primary schools and one higher secondary school run by the government in Kannagi Nagar and there are no schools at all in Ezhil Nagar. Our team spoke to the headmaster of the Government higher secondary school and the person in-charge of one primary school, and both of them told us that the schools in Kannagi Nagar have already accommodated students beyond their capacities. The headmaster of the higher secondary school reported that approximately 40 children from Ezhil Nagar have already been enrolled in the school, and the TNSCB has requested them to make available 400 more seats in the coming academic year for the children of people that are going to be resettled in Ezhil Nagar. The headmaster told us that it would not be possible for them to accommodate such large numbers. The higher secondary school currently has approximately 1,150 students in grades between 6<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>. Furthermore, the headmaster reported that their request to the Public Works Department to construct another block in the school had been turned down, leaving him with no room to accommodate new students.

2011 census demographic data estimates 10,000 children between the ages of 5-14 years at the site. The number of primary schools (3 existing at Kannagi Nagar) is not enough to provide for even the existing population of the area. As per the Right to Education Act (RTE) norms the pupil-teacher ratio in a primary school with students above 200 in number should be 40:1 and in the primary school that our team visited there are only 7 teachers excluding the headmaster for 366 students, a ratio of 52:1, which is well below the RTE norms. The teacher in-charge of the school also said that there are only 6 classrooms available in the school and added that the school is not in a position to accommodate more students.

Because of the difficulties in accommodating students in Kannagi Nagar, most residents that we interviewed told us that they are still sending their children to the schools in the

areas from where they were evicted. This means that most of the children currently residing in Ezhil Nagar go to schools in Broadway, Santhome, and Teynampet, necessitating daily commutes of 2 to 3 hours each way for students on their own placing increased burdens on students. An extremely worrying and common impact of resettlement on children is that many students, especially young women, who are forced to commute long distances to school eventually end up stopping their education early. One of the girls that the team spoke to said that she and 4 of her friends had been enrolled in the government higher secondary school as soon as they were relocated to Ezhil Nagar but 3 of them stopped going to school because of harsh treatment by a teacher in their new school. This illustrates the plight of students and the pressure on them to adjust to the new settings, a common reason for their dropping out of schools. As per the Housing and Land Right Network study on Kannagi Nagar published in June 2014 (hereafter HRLN study), over 13% of children between ages 6-14 years and over 35% of children between ages 15-18 years are school dropouts<sup>3</sup> suggesting that similar outcomes may result in Ezhil Nagar as well.

## **VI. Anganwadi:**

Our field team met with the Deputy Director of Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and interviewed the anganwadi workers in 3 of the government run anganwadis. There are 19 anganwadis run by the ICDS in Kannagi Nagar, and there is currently 1 ICDS anganwadi that recently started functioning in Ezhil Nagar. There is also a proposal to open 2 more anganwadis. Out of the 19 anganwadis in Kannagi Nagar, only 3 are functioning out of their own buildings. All other anganwadis including the one in Ezhil Nagar are functioning from within the tenements itself. Two tenements have apparently been prepared for the proposed anganwadis in Ezhil Nagar, but as these remained locked during our visits, this could not be confirmed. There are also NGO-run anganwadis in Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar. One of the anganwadi workers that we interviewed told us that the NGO-run anganwadis have good financial support, and that they are able to run the centres efficiently. However, she reported that in the ICDS centres, workers have had to spend from their pockets to get basic needs for the children like plates and mats, an issue that some residents also brought up. She also cited the recent state-wide strike by anganwadi workers to highlight the problems that they face. The Deputy Director, ICDS also admitted that many of their centres had several infrastructural problems (See Photograph 7).

As per the 2014 HRLN study cited above, the 19 anganwadis in Kannagi Nagar catered to 410 children between the ages of 0-6. This is grossly insufficient to an estimated 5000 children between 0-4 years (census 2011 demographic data).

## **VII. Care for pregnant women and elderly:**

As per our observation in the field and as reported to us by officials in the ICDS, there are no separate centres for pregnant women in Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar. The

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<sup>3</sup>Forced to the Fringes: Disaster of "Resettlement" in India (Report 2), June 2014, available at [http://www.hic-sarp.org/documents/Kannagi\\_Nagar\\_Report\\_2.pdf](http://www.hic-sarp.org/documents/Kannagi_Nagar_Report_2.pdf)





Photograph 6



Photograph 7

pregnant women are linked only to the local anganwadis from where they receive nutritional mix powders. No other service or assistance is provided. There is no midday meal provided to pregnant women and elderly in the anganwadis, and no nutritional or health assessment. There is no facility or centre for adolescent girls.

#### **VIII. Ration shops:**

Through our interviews with the ward councillor and the PDS shop in-charges and through direct field visits, our team found only 7 PDS shops in Kannagi Nagar, as compared to a reported 10 in the affidavit by the TNSCB. Out of these, Ezhil Nagar residents told us that they purchase from only 2 shops nearest to their buildings. According to the residents in Ezhil Nagar, the ward councillor and the employees of the ration shops there would be one ration shop opened soon for the residents of Ezhil Nagar. Our study team visited the proposed building located within Ezhil Nagar where the residents said the ration shop would start functioning. The team found that the building is white washed and being prepared for inauguration.

The shops are always overcrowded due to the large population reliant on just a few shops. For each item, residents reported being asked to come on various days because of the inadequate supply in the shops. Almost all residents reported that stocks were inadequate at the shops and that no special provisions had been made to accommodate an influx of new residents in Ezhil Nagar. Residents also reported visible corruption in the shops, in which stocks were sold to private dealers.

Many residents also reported long delays (as much as 4 months) in receiving new PDS cards, meaning that their access to subsidized food was limited during this period.

#### **IX. LPG connection:**

Almost all of the residents we interviewed said that there is no office of the Gas Agency in Kannagi Nagar and they are booking cylinders in Adyar and Sholinganallur. One of the residents told us that he still maintains their gas connection from their original area of residence (where they were evicted from) and is transporting the cylinders from there. He added that he feared that there would be a delay in getting cylinders if he transferred the connection to Adyar or Sholinganallur because of the large numbers these agencies cater to. Some respondents have applied for a new connection and have been waiting for over a month. Others reported that they have no idea where to apply for a new connection.

#### **X. Health:**

The team found that there is only 1 health centre run by the government catering to people from both Kannagi Nagar and Ezhil Nagar. Our interview with the resident and the workers at the centre revealed that the facility is not a full-fledged Public Health Centre (PHC). There are no beds available and only outpatient treatment is provided, that too only for a few health issues. Most of the health problems are referred to Government Hospital in Royapettah. The centre is also not well staffed and has only 1



doctor who is on deputation from a private hospital. There is no nurse or other para-medical staff in the facility. The pharmacist comes only for 3 days in a week. The lab is also not functioning in a full-fledged manner. The local councillor and the doctor in the health centre said that there is a full-fledged PHC with beds that has been constructed in Kannagi Nagar and will be opened in a few months. The team identified the newly constructed building that will house the PHC but could not verify the facilities that would be available. More than a third of residents reported a preference for government hospitals for non-emergency situations, but is prevented from utilizing these because of a lack of local access.

#### **XI. Safety:**

Safety is an extremely significant problem faced by residents of Ezhil Nagar. 75% of our interviewees reported that crime was a major problem in the resettlement colony, especially theft. Other residents also reported drug-abuse, regular fighting, pick pocketing, and people with weapons, and the presence of threatening strangers in the area. While there is a regular police patrol (although one resident reported that the patrol had become less frequent), more than half of our interviewees reported feeling unsafe in the locality. One resident also reported that members of her family had faced police harassment during investigations of thefts and robberies. One resident reported calling the emergency 100 number in response to local issues, but that criminal activities are not addressed by the police even when reported. Other residents also reported frequent gang fights in the locality. Lack of functional streetlights and light in the stairwells and hallways contribute to the lack of safety which is of a particular concern for the women and children.

#### **XII. Transportation:**

Many residents daily or regularly travel back to the central city for work, school, medical care, and social reasons. Most residents, especially women and children, are reliant on public transport for this travel, and almost all residents expressed displeasure with the current travel situation in Ezhil Nagar. Transportation has a number of affiliated problems.

*Connectivity:* The time-keeper at the bus-depot reported to us that most buses ply to Broadway or Santhome, but not to other important central connection areas like CMBT, Tambaram, and Ayanavaram. Residents also complained about the infrequency of buses.

*Distances and safety:* The distance to the bus stop at the gate of Ezhil Nagar and the bus depot in Kannagi Nagar are 0.5 km and 1 km respectively. This prevents women from traveling after dark, especially since the area is known to be unsafe. Residents also complained about eve-teasing and harassment of women and children on buses, a change from earlier bus travel.

*Overcrowding:* All residents complained that buses were extremely crowded, especially in the mornings and evenings. All but one resident reported that they could not get seats on buses, except on rare occasions.

*Commute times:* Many of the residents who travelled mentioned excruciatingly long daily commute times, including 1.5 hours to 4 hours, with many residents reporting daily commutes of 2 hours. Residents also reported reaching home very late, including times of 8 pm, 10 pm, and 11pm.

*Expense:* Residents also reported significant increases in expenses from commutes, especially on Express Buses and the numerous transfers required to reach their old places of work. As recorded below, this cost resulted in them changing their work, or stopping entirely, or it significantly reduced incomes.

### **XIII. Livelihood:**

Many of the residents of Ezhil Nagar worked before and after their relocation, but their move caused them a number of problems in accessing their livelihoods. Occupations for residents included domestic work, housekeeping in an office building, painting, operating petty shops, vending, and operating vehicles for hire (See Photographs 8 & 9). The problems they mentioned with livelihoods since resettlement are detailed below.

*Extreme travel times:* Numerous residents identified the long commute times and the cost of travel as a reason for stopping or changing their work, or as a problem they are facing in pursuing their previous line of work.

*Changes or stopping of jobs:* Approximately a third of our interviewees reported that they were forced to stop or change their work as a result of their move, primarily due to the pressures of travel, and the remaining are continuing in their old occupations.

*Reduced income:* Almost all residents reported that they were earning significantly less than earlier because of significant increases in transportation costs.

*TNSCB's response inadequate:* Many residents that we spoke to confirmed that there were training programmes conducted by TNSCB and they got information through word of mouth from neighbours. Very few of the residents that we interviewed have told us that they participated in the training programmes organized TNSCB in trades like tailoring, embroidery, jewel making and electrical works. Residents also reported that job fairs for housekeeping take place in Kannagi Nagar, but that the minimum qualification of 10<sup>th</sup> standard education prevents most residents from availing this opportunity. Residents who have attended training programs report that no job opportunities were provided to them after the trainings were completed, and they did not utilize the trainings to find new professions or positions. Out of the six respondents who said that they attended training programmes organized by the slum board only one respondent had said that she continues doing tailoring work after the training.

In other studies that have taken place on resettlement in Kannagi Nagar, interviews revealed similar patterns, in which residents continued to work, but faced significant costs to continued work or faced the increasing informalization and casualization of their occupations. The HRLN study found that 79.3% of the respondents lost their

employment immediately after the relocation because of the increased distance of Kannagi Nagar from their places of work. They were unable to commute to their work place on time and hence had to look for employment closer to their homes. A study by Madras Institute of Development Studies (published in Economic and Political Weekly) found that the impact of resettlement on women's livelihoods is even higher, with the added problem of the lack of adequate care for children.



Photograph 8



Photograph 9