

At Anna Nagar, road laying proves bane



A view of a house at Anna Nagar, where the road level has been increased.

Chennai: While most localities in Chennai face problems with bad roads because of Greater Chennai Corporation's inability to re-lay and mend broken roads on time, Anna Nagar faces a unique problem. The constant re-laying without removing the bitumen laid earlier has proven to be a bane as the road height has increased considerably over the years.

Anna Nagar, a locality which is home to many IAS officers, politicians and businessman usually has butter smooth roads. Due to the constant pressure exerted by these high-profile individuals, the roads in the locality are relaid as soon as it gets damaged.

But re-laying without milling and maintaining the same height, has left even the houses built relatively as early as two decades ago a few inches below street level. The recent rain has also rubbed salt in their wounds, as it has left many old houses water-logged with no way for the water to be drained out.

Govindarajulu, a resident of Anna Nagar said, "The last time they laid roads, I rushed to the workers and spoke to the person in-charge of the work to remove the previous layer. But, both the official and contractor said that milling was not part of their contract. Nobody is sure of the Indian Road Congress guidelines under which these roads need to be relaid. There is no mention of it online too and calls to the Corporation office also fell on deaf ears."

Anna Nagar Western Extension secretary P Vadivel said that a letter seeking action on the issue has been sent to the Commissioner/Special Officer, Corporation of Chennai and to The Secretary to Government, Municipal Administration and Water Supply Department and they are awaiting reply.

Vadivel said, "At our Anna Nagar Western Extension area, during early 1980s, the ground-floor level of the houses was two to three feet more than the level of the road. Today, due to the indiscriminate raising of the level of the roads, such buildings are below the road level by 2-2.5 feet," and alleged, "There has been no effective supervision over the work carried out by the contractors; the concerned officials have been mute spectators to the above developments."

Assn suggestion to civic body

To prevent further increase in road height, Anna Nagar Western Extension association has placed five suggestions to the Chennai Corporation. Here are they.

1. Under no circumstance, the present level / height of the roads / streets should be increased.
2. In each street, the present height of the road should be prominently highlighted either by fixing of deeply enabled stones with proper noting/ marking thereon (or) by marking the height in the compound walls of the corner houses.
3. The present system of laying / re-laying the pavements with cuddapah slabs / marble stones / tiles or any other slabs should be stopped. Instead, the pavement be laid with cement mortar concrete of high quality.
4. The international/national standard of ensuring that the height of the fully laid pavement not exceed nine inches from the road

level should be observed.

5. The level/height of the pavement should be marked in the compound walls, to ensure that it is not tampered with to suit the convenience of the contractors.