

A Monthly Bulletin for the Villages, Gaothans and Koliwadās of Mumbai, Thane, Vasai and Raigad District



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Uplifting the Village Community

VOICE

गावठण वॉईस्

21 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

GAOTHAN VOICE JULY 2024

Vol:GV 07/24

For Private circulation only

One Vision !

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One Voice !

The East Indian Magazine

One Village !

Email: eastindianvoice@gmail.com

## THENGA BHUMIPUTRANA FAAYDA BENCHYAANA Time To Implement EISA Policy



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**MGP Annual Offsite @ Uttan on Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024**



**US Annual Picnic 2024 at New Jersey organised by East Indian Americas**



**San Jao Cha Sann organised at Marve Gaothan by MGP Marve Unit led by Sarpanch Corina Pereira and Gaothan Coordinator Anita Dsouza**





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## MGP TEAM MEETS THE CARDINAL

Date - Saturday 15th June 2024

Time - 12:30 pm to 1:00 pm

Venue - Archbishops House, Fort

Mobai Gaothan Panchayat team met to discuss the implementation of the East Indian Samaj Archdiocese - EISA Policy

### Some important points discussed -

1. East Indian Dialect and Marathi Language - Holy Mass, Hymns and masses on days of obligation.
2. East Indian Community Representation as leaders in the clergy, parish groups and associations.
3. Revival, Preservation and Promotion of East Indian Religious Traditions.
4. Promotion of Native Devotions to St Gonsalo Garcia and Mount Mary.

MGP team requested for a special meeting to discuss all the points of the EISA Policy in the coming months.

Special Thanks to the Cardinal for meeting us inspite of his busy schedule.



### Indigenous People have the First Right...

### Time to Implement East Indian Samaj Archdiocese - EISA Policy

**\*East Indian Gathering # 1\***  
**Aapla Gaav! Aaplaa Raaj!**

From Saturday, 15th June 2024  
at Holy Name Cathedral, Fort  
from 11am onwards

### Top 10 Reasons for Gathering

1. Housing benefits for East Indians on Church Lands and redevelopment projects.
2. East Indian dialect and Marathi Holy Masses and Hymns to be actively promoted.
3. Religious Traditions to be revived and supported.
4. Simplification of Documentation processes.
5. East Indian Community Representation on the parish and diocesan leadership level.
6. Premises to be offered at special rates to Indigenous People.
7. Importance to the community native Devotions of Mount Mary and St Gonsalo Garcia.
8. Uttan Dumping Ground - Closure as assured by Hierarchy around 14 years ago has not been actioned.
9. Education and Medical reservations for the natives of Mumbai Diocese.
10. Religious History and Heritage of Mumbai Diocese to be preserved and protected.

For more details contact - 9323195028/9820545302

## Prayers for Rain and the Significance of Holy Crosses- The East Indian Way

\*Centuries ago when Bombay was struck with plague, Holy Crosses were built at entrances and prominent locations across Bombay to protect the gaothans and its people from plague

\*This initiative of building Holy Crosses did work and from that time onwards people still venerate Holy Crosses.

\*Bombay now waits anxiously for good rains and even in this case the sons-of-soil would do what they believe helped bring rains to Bombay centuries ago

\*In some villages the East Indian community will soon begin the ritual performed by our ancestors as good rainfall is our a basic need.

\*Centuries and decades ago whenever the city wanted rains the East Indian community went through the village in procession with a piece of stone placed on their head invoking God to bless the city with rains

\*During the procession the prayers said were "Sant Anthon saargan.. pani partai dongran... Sant Anthon mafi kar... pani para shetavar"(Saint Anthony in Heaven... it is raining on the mountains... Saint Anthony forgive us.... Bless our fields with rains..)

\*While some other villagers pray "Jesus pani de, pani nay tar maran de" (Jesus Bless us with rains, if not give us death)

\*The procession goes through the village stopping at every Holy Cross and praying for good rains and in some places villagers also pray before the statue of St. Anthony.

If the City will be affected by disease or with no rains all the migrants will run away but our native East Indian Community will not move from our native villages. The Sons-of-soil community will continue to stay on our Native Land which has been our Home for generations.

May God bless our community and may our basic rights as sons-of-soil be granted.

Communication by - MGPs Reetin Reevaaz  
Project Team

To join the Reetin Reevaaz project call on  
9930229742





# MGP TEAM CONNECT

Together Taking Community To Greater Heights



## MGP Team Annual Offsite 2024 Special East Indian CabElnet Meeting

### MGP OutReach

**Stronger Network! Broader Reach! Greater Impact!**

**Date - Sunday 30th June**

**Time - 11am onwards**

**Venue - East Indian Heritage, Uttan**

**Connect** - creating a bigger network of MGP team members and meeting or communications with authorities to raise community issues

**Coordinate** - as a MGP representative in the village, team members need to support in local civic and social issues

**Collect** - generate funds to enable better financial planning for MGP activities and initiatives

**Cooperate** - participate in MGP projects as advisors, chiefs, active or basic coordinators

To join or support any of our functions and projects you can email us at [mgpmobai@gmail.com](mailto:mgpmobai@gmail.com) or WhatsApp 9820545302

### Participants

Alphi Dsouza - Vakola

Bosco Patel - Kharodi

Constantine D'mello - Kevni

Corina Pereira - Marve

Franco John Patil - Dharavi

Gleason Barretto - Kurla

James Thomas Fernandes - Vasai

Jason Misquitha - Bamanwada

Joel Kinny - Govandi

Melody Ferreira - Uttan

Ramsey Rebello - Poisar

Royston Jacinto - Vakola

Sybil Rodrigues - Kalina

Vicky Peter Misquitta - Mankhurd

Walter Murzello - Orlem

MGP Team gets all set to work on all points discussed at the Annual Offsite to take our community forward to greater heights.



The number of Holy Crosses in Mumbai remains a mystery.

But it doesn't have to be that way anymore!

Mumbai's crosses have seen war, plague, independence and have stayed with us as we ushered in the modern, globalised world.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that we continue to maintain their legacy and aid efforts to preserve them.

MGP plans to document each of Mumbai's crosses, which are at risk due to the ever-changing and developing cityscape.

We need your help! Do your bit in this Cross Census by filling out this Google Forms link <https://forms.gle/mF4g7kYaJGYb6jup9>



Mobai Gaothan  
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# MGP NOTICE BOARD

## The Announcement for the East Indian Community



### MGP in the NEWS - Mothi Ladin - Big Cross Feast One Day! One Time!

Joulyn Kenny, Worli

Free Press Journal  
Dated - Monday, 3rd June 2024

The press coverage covers..

- \*MGPs Mothi Ladin (Big Cross Feast) celebrated across Gaothans on Saturday 1st June (June's 1st Saturday)
- \*An effort to Preserve and Protect our Holy Crosses
- \*Awareness about the Heritage and History of Gaothan Holy Crosses
- \*The Tradition of Cross Feasts and its revival
- \*Promotion of prayers in the East Indian dialect
- \*Significance of the Holy Crosses in Gaothans
- \*Holy Cross Day on 31st May announced by MGP in 2013

MGP will continue to do its very best with the special MGP project for Holy Crosses - Kuruz. A Special Holy Cross Survey has been launched and we hope to get data on maximum Holy Crosses across Vasai, Thane, Raigad and Mumbai.

### Gaothans observe 'Cross Feasts' to commemorate village crucifixes

FPJ NEWS SERVICE / MUMBAI

Mumbai's Gaothans, settlements that predate the establishment of the city, celebrated the 'annual cross feast' on June 1 to commemorate crucifixes that dot the villages.

Holy crosses are a common feature in East Indian localities in Mumbai, Thane, Vasai and Raigad. East Indians trace their origins to religious conversions of local castes such as Agris, Kolis, Bhandaris, and other groups, to Roman Catholicism by Portuguese missionaries in the 16th and 17th centuries.

Community members gather to recite the rosary in October and May to commemorate the crosses, but May 31 is especially celebrated as it is designated as Cross Feast Day. Many of the crucifixes are centuries-old, but some were erected more than



a century ago to ward off the plague. The commemoration includes the rosary in the East Indian dialect of Marathi. Devotees are served boiled grams and soft drinks after the prayers as part of the celebration. The Mobai Gaothan Panchayat (MGP), the main representative organisation of East Indians,

had declared May 31 as Holy Cross Day in 2013.

Apart from praying for the local community, the participants observe rituals for a good rainy season. On Saturday the event was celebrated at 36 gaothans, including Pali and Chum in Bandra, Madh and Malwani in Malad. Many of the crucifixes

have been lost due to road-widening and other projects. Some were marked as 'illegal' by the BMC. Gleason Barretto of MGP said that the crosses needed to be protected as they are part of the cultural and historical heritage of the city.

"The tradition of community holy crosses was initiated even before the BMC existed. The authorities need to respect the religious sentiments and ancestral traditions of the sons-of-soil East Indian Community. Various initiatives are being set-up by like minded associations to protect and restore our traditional community holy crosses," said Barretto.

"The gaothan holy crosses are symbols of faith and have saved the indigenous people from disease and famine. We pray that the authorities realise the importance of these holy crosses."

### East Indian Community Asks Archbishop Of Bombay To Use Marathi Dialect In Church Services

MGP in the NEWS - Free Press Journal  
17th June 24 Page 6

On June 15, members of the Mobai Gaothan Panchayat (MGP) met with Cardinal Oswald Gracias at Archbishop's House, Colaba, to request the incorporation of the East Indian dialect of Marathi in church services. The MGP, representing Mumbai's original inhabitants, aims to preserve and promote their unique cultural and religious traditions..

#### \*Key points from the meeting:\*

- Use of East Indian Marathi dialect in Mass and hymns
- Representation of community members in church leadership roles
- Revival and preservation of East Indian religious and cultural traditions
- Promotion of devotions to St. Gonsalo Garcia
- Let's support the East Indian community in keeping their rich heritage alive!

### East Indians urge archbishop to use their dialect in services

FPJ News Service  
MUMBAI

Members of the East Indian community have asked the Archbishop of Bombay, Cardinal Oswald Gracias, to incorporate the use of the East Indian dialect of Marathi in religious services at churches.

Members of the Mobai Gaothan Panchayat, which represents the original inhabitants of the villages that have been incorporated into Mumbai city, met Gracias at his office in Archbishop's House, Colaba, on June 15.

The community traces its origins to religious conver-



Members of community with Cardinal Oswald Gracias

sions by Portuguese missionaries in the 16th and 17th centuries. The group speaks a dialect of Marathi that is influenced by Portuguese. The meeting was arranged to promote the community's

East Indian Samaj Archdiocese Policy that seeks to promote their culture and economic interests. Apart from the use of their dialect for mass and hymns, other issues were representation of their members

as leaders in the clergy, parish groups and associations, the revival, preservation and promotion of East Indian religious and cultural traditions, and promotion of devotions to St. Gonsalo Garcia, a Roman Catholic saint from the community. The community also asked for an 'East Indian Bhanu' at the seminary at Goregaon, simplified OBC certification process (the community has reservations in jobs and education), mention of community name in baptism certificates, housing schemes on vacant church land, preservation of crucifixes and gaothans or villages.

#### MGP Team thanks our team members for their presence -

Alphi D'Souza - Vakola | Franco Patil - Dharavi | Gleason Barretto - Kurla | Ramsey Rebello - Poisar  
Vicky Misquitta - Mankhurd

### GAOTHAN VOICE - ADVERTISEMENT RATES

Advertisement Type	Single Issue	3 Months (Adv. rate per issue)	6 Months (Adv. rate per issue)	12 Months (Adv. rate per issue)
	₹	₹	₹	₹
<b>Outside Cover</b>	<b>12000</b>	<b>34200 (11400)</b>	<b>64800 (10800)</b>	<b>115200 (9600)</b>
<b>Full Page</b>	<b>6000</b>	<b>17100 (5700)</b>	<b>32400 (5400)</b>	<b>57600 (4800)</b>
<b>Half Page</b>	<b>3500</b>	<b>9975 (3325)</b>	<b>18900 (3150)</b>	<b>33600 (2800)</b>
<b>Strip Ads</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>8700 (1900)</b>	<b>10800 (1800)</b>	<b>19200 (1600)</b>
<b>Inside Box</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>1710 (570)</b>	<b>3240 (540)</b>	<b>5760 (480)</b>
<b>Classifieds</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>570 (190)</b>	<b>1080 (180)</b>	<b>1920 (160)</b>

For bookings or more details contact 9820087771/9930229742





# EISA POLICY

Rights of the Indigenous People in the Archdiocese



## EAST INDIAN SAMAJ ARCHDIOCESE POLICY

### CULTURE PROMOTION

- \*East Indian Bhavan lands to be allotted at Goregaon Seminary site
- \*Churches to ensure full support to all East Indian Community religious traditions
- \*Agera, the East Indian Harvest Festival should be given support and to be termed as the official festival of the Archdiocese
- \*All East Indian groups should be given church premises for free to promote their culture and tradition

### CASTE CERTIFICATE

- \*Simplified OBC certificate process for East Indian Community by approvals at deanery level
- \*In Church records, new births to mention caste as East Indian in their Baptism certificate
- \*In School records, new admissions to mention caste as East Indian in their School records which will reflect in the Leaving certificate

### HOUSING

- \*Additional flats in Housing Reconstruction projects by Church on existing societies should be allotted only to East Indians
- \*A special Bhumi Putra Housing Scheme to be initiated for East Indian Samaj on Church vacant lands
- \*All beneficiaries of church owned flats now settled abroad to return the same for East Indian Community

### GAOTHANS AND PROTECTION

- \*Church should ensure the protection of the Gaothans as the Gaothan residents were the founders and donors for the local church
- \*Gaothan Holy Crosse should be recognised and supported for their restoration
- \*A Special Gaothan Emergency Fund to be initiated to assist needy families for their house repairs

### RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS

- \*East Indian Lenten Traditions like papiya, processions and Krist Pura should be supported in all parishes
- \*Special Marian Holidays to be given to schools for the Velankanni pilgrimage
- \*Church to maintain data of all Chapels and Holy Crosses and ensure their upkeep and protection

### LANDS AND PROPERTIES

- \*Properties donated should not be sold
- \*Church to return donated lands to original owners if they can't maintain

### MEDICAL SUPPORT

- \*A special medical fund to support needy families with simplified process
- \*Special discounts on hospitalisation bills to all East Indians in Catholic hospitals
- \*Special discounts on medical check-ups to all East Indians in Catholic hospitals
- \*Group Medisave policy to be initiated to cover all East Indians by the diocese

### COMPENSATION TOWARDS DONATED PROPERTY

- \*In lieu of Church donated lands sold or rented commercially, 10% proceeds to be transferred to East Indian Community Fund
- \*Party venues on Church property should be given at special discounts for the East Indian Community
- \*Special discounts on medical bills at all Catholic hospitals

### FUND GENERATION

- \*All income from hired property for sports and party venues should have 10% of the proceeds allocated towards East Indian Community welfare
- \*All collections should have 5% allotted towards the medical needs of the East Indian Community

### BUSINESS

- \*East Indian Food stalls to be approved for each parish
- \*The school and college canteens to be allotted to the East Indian Community
- \*All church projects should be allotted only to the East Indians
- \*Each Church festival should allot a section of prominent stalls to East Indians
- \*Space to be allotted in church premises for East Indian businesses
- \*East Indian Bazaar to be permitted at all Churches to promote East Indian Cuisine and handicrafts
- \*Monopoly or panel for Church venues to be given only to the East Indians

*Drafted by - Gleason Barretto*



### EAST INDIAN SAMAJ ARCHDIOCESE POLICY

#### **JOBS**

- \*Special job reservations for East Indian community in all catholic schools, colleges, Churches, hospitals and other facilities
- \*Skilling centres to be set up at all parishes to train and skill community members

#### **REPRESENTATION**

- \*East Indian Representatives to be appointed with Special representation in the Archdiocese of Bombay
- \*East Indian Representative must be appointed by the local East Indian group in the Parish council
- \*Church property and finance committee should only have representatives from the East Indian Community
- \*Bishops and Dean's should be appointed only from the East Indian community
- \*Local community association heads to be authorised to suggest Church projects and initiatives
- \*Venues and facilities on church owned property to be dedicated to Cardinal Simon Pimenta in every deanery of Bombay Diocese

#### **TOURISM**

- \*A special religious tour with guides from the East Indian Community to be initiated with visits to heritage churches and native devotions

#### **LANGUAGE AND DIALECT**

- \*To promote the East Indian Dialect, holy masses should be organised every week at East Indian founded or dominated parishes
- \*All special holy masses on days of obligation should only be in English, Marathi and East Indian
- \*Masses at prominent time slots should only be in English, Marathi and East Indian
- \*At all Church festivals the feast mass should be in East Indian Marathi

#### **COMMUNITY WELFARE**

- \*An East Indian Community welfare fund to be instituted through funds allocated from land income on East Indian donated lands
- \*Monthly Open Meetings by Bishops with the East Indian Community to discuss community welfare initiatives and issues faced

#### **HISTORY AND HERITAGE**

- \*East Indians Day to be observed and recognised by the Archdiocese
- \*All Churches should mention History of the Church with the East Indian connect and a signage mentioning that the Church land is donated by the East Indian Community
- \*All Churches should be restored and revived but not renovated or rebuilt to promote heritage
- \*Heritage Churches should be given special status and the one which were rebuilt should be given their original facade

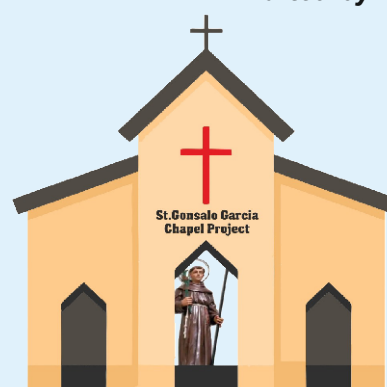
#### **NATIVE DEVOTIONS**

- \*St.Gonsalo Garcia Day to be officially recognised by the Archdiocese
- \*St.Gonsalo Garcia Church to be opened in Bombay Diocese
- \*St.Gonsalo Garcia should be considered as the Principal Patron saint of the Bombay Diocese
- \*Mount Mary Church devotion to be promoted across churches
- \*Mount Mary Church Octave feast should have representation and support only by the festival founders, East Indian Community
- \*The Bandra fair at the Mount should have specially allotted stalls for the Indigenous East Indian Community

#### **EDUCATION**

- \*Preference for East Indian teachers from the Village and it's vicinity
- \*Free Education in all our schools and colleges for East Indians
- \*All additional fees towards co-curricular, sports & stationery to be supported through a Special Education fund

*Drafted by - Gleason Barretto*



**St. Gonsalo Garcia Chapel Project**





## THENGA BHUMIPUTRANA FAAYDA BENCHYAANA Time To Implement EISA Policy

Gleason Barretto, Old Kurla

*At first they laughed at us but we remained silent,  
Then they pushed us and then we stood our ground,  
And now they try to trample upon us,  
It's time we Act The East Indian Way*

**E**AST Indian Community has been going through tough phase on the Diocesan and parish level. Our identity and existence is at stake as many parish zones are led by migrants thereby lacking East Indian Community representation as founders of the local church. Parish councils should have a special native community nominated member to safeguard the religious traditions. Parishes with East Indian majority, founded by the community or new parishes branched out of these should only have an East Indian Parish Priest. All major Diocesan cells, deans, Rectors Bishops should be from the Indigenous People of Mumbai, East Indians. Some community priests have been sidelined for various reasons and need to be reinstated with immediate effect. The Uttan Dumping Ground agitation which was recalled through church announcements decades ago is now a big menace to locals due to health and pollution issues.

**I**NDIAN culture and tradition is popular and East Indian religious traditions are unique. Culture promotion and support is needed through land allotment for Bhavan and indigenous people groups should be offered premises for cultural events for free. Agera should be officially announced as the diocesan harvest festival. East Indian religious traditions like Papiya, processions and Krist puran should be supported and revived in all parishes. The East Indian Marathi mass should get prominence and should be celebrated regularly. Parish Feast masses should only be in Marathi and special obligation masses should be in Marathi especially since Mumbai is part of the state of Maharashtra and Marathi is compulsory in Schools.

**S**AMAJ representing the Bhumi Putra or Indigenous People deserve the most importance. OBC process should be simplified at the diocesan level to ensure more community members take the benefit. Medical support should be provided by parishes and at Catholic hospitals. Halls and grounds should be offered to East Indians at a special discount for native parishioners. Commercialised sports venues should be offered to East Indians with special free slots and at special discounts. East Indian businesses should be given priority for church projects and food stalls to be allotted to only the community members in our schools and colleges. Bandra fair should have a designated place for East Indian food and art stalls. Churches should only be restored to maintain heritage status. Free education should be offered to children from the community and admission should be given with a special quota.

**A**RGHDIocese of Bombay majorly stands because of the great contribution and support of the East Indian Community. A special housing scheme for East Indians should be initiated for church housing societies going for redevelopment, vacant and encroached lands. Church should protect the Gaothans as they have a strong connect in the foundation of the local church. A data on all holy crosses and chapels should be maintained by the parishes. A special open meeting with the Bishops should be held at regular intervals to discuss issues faced by the Indigenous People.

**P**OLICY implementation is urgently needed and should be announced on priority. Job preferences should be given to Indigenous People in church functioning as well as institutions. With lesser community members going to our catholic schools, some of the classrooms can be converted to skilling centres. Native Devotions to St Gonsalo Garcia and Mount Mary should be given due importance. A church dedicated to St Gonsalo Garcia is urgently needed in Bombay Diocese as we don't have any and our native saint should be considered as the principle patron Saint. To appreciate and safeguard the interest of the East Indian Community a policy needs immediate implementation.

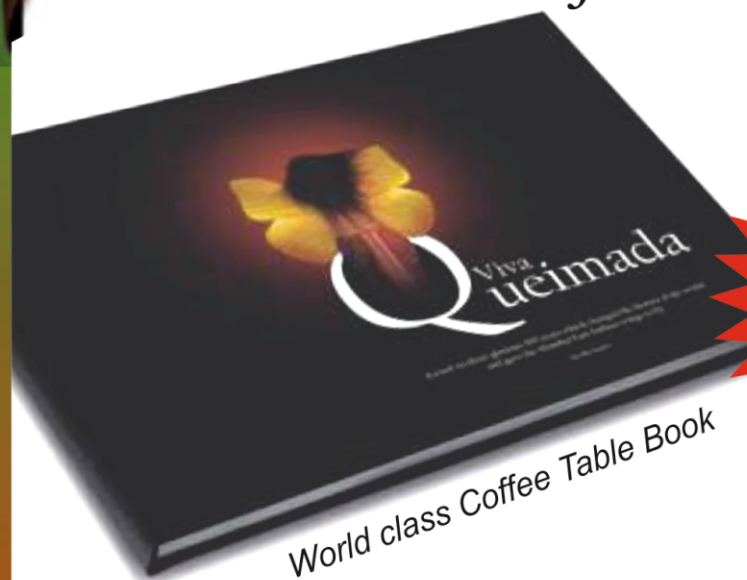
**MGP** has drafted the East Indian Samaj Archdiocese - EISA Policy as an East Indian reference to the Diocesan hierarchy. The draft policy has been prepared through an online survey across parishes and on the grassroot level. Each of the issues raised have been mentioned with ways to resolve them in the interests of the Indigenous People of the diocese. The policy has been drafted keeping the contribution of the Indigenous East Indian Community in mind as land donors, local church founders and natives of the diocese. We will continue to follow up till the EISA Policy is implemented. Looking forward to prayers and support from the Indigenous People of the diocese.





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## MOBAI GAOTHAN PANCHAYAT - MEMBERSHIP PLAN

MEMBER TYPE / BENEFITS	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD	DIAMOND	PLATINUM	STAR
Membership Fee	1,000	2,500	5,000	10,000	25,000	1,00,000
Membership Monthly Scheme	NA	NA	500	1,000	2,500	10,000
Vive Queimada	10% Discount	20% Discount	30% Discount	40% Discount	50% Discount	Complimentary
EI Books	NA	NA	10%	20%	30%	Complimentary
Gaothan Voice	Doorstep Delivery	Doorstep Delivery	Doorstep Delivery	Doorstep Delivery	Doorstep Delivery	Doorstep Delivery
MGP Events	NA	NA	NA	Free Entry	Free Entry	Free Entry
EI Day	NA	NA	Free Pass	Free Pass	Free Pass	Free Pass
EI Calendar	Free 1 Copy	Free 2 Copy	Free Upto 5 Copies	Free Upto 10 Copies	Free Upto 20 Copies	Copies as per Request
Per Year Total Benefits	500	1000	1500	2000	4000	10000

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The Village Advertisement Space



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**Joel Dsilva and Family**  
Dombivali

## AN APPEAL

Mobai Gaothan Panchayat (MGP) is happy to announce its initiative in building the first religious structure in the Diocese of Mumbai dedicated to our East Indian Native and Patron Saint..

### ST. GONSALO GARCIA CHAPEL

**Aaplaa GAAV! Aapla Devool!**

Proposed site Mumbai City, Mumbai Suburb, Dharavi Beth, Thane & Raigad.

#### Highlights

- \*The First Religious structure in Bombay Archdiocese to be dedicated to our Native Saint.
- \*The Chapel Fund generation will be actively initiated once the land is purchased or donated
- \*The Chapel is likely to be inaugurated in the year.
- \*We look forward for Support from Experts (Designers, architects, Sculptors, fabricators, etc) in building this Chapel.
- \*Contributions by Cheque or in kind are welcome.
- \*We plan to get relics from Japan and promote pilgrimage to Nagasaki.
- \*Well known Altar designers to be a part of the project interiors.
- \*The boat on which the Chapel will be built will be made by a well-known boat maker.

#### Bank details:

Account Name : ST GONSALO GARCIA CHAPEL

Bank Name : Bassein Catholic Coop Bank, Kalina Branch

Account type : Savings

A/C No : 032100100000792

IFSC Code : BACB0000032

Cheques favouring

**"ST GONSALO GARCIA CHAPEL"**

can be couriered at

Mobai Gaothan Panchayat,

C/o Alphi Dsouza,

A 601 Krishna Towers,

Vakola Village,

Santacruz East ,

Mumbai - 400 055.

For more details or to support contact

9820087771/9820545302

MGP - Promoting Native Devotions



**A MGP Project**

