

Bhumi Pujan at Sangliwadi and Tasgaon Ves

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The Municipal Commissioner Mr. Ashwanikmar addressing the

March 15th saw a flurry of activities in Sangliwadi as the slum was getting ready to perform Bhumipujan for their first toilet block in the slum. The colourful shamiana was up and was matched by colourful sarees of the women as they bustled around getting ready for the ground breaking ceremony. The Commissioner- **Mr. Ashwani Kumar** was the chief guest and all the members of the forum along with senior administrative officers were present. The Pune Baandhani members had come in Sumo loads and soon the entire pandal was overflowing.

Mr. Ashwani Kumar made the inaugural speech which was followed by speeches by the press, the local councillor and the standing committee members. Finally the Baandhani Sanghatana leaders of both settlements made a valiant effort for the first time to share their experiences in front of such a large crowd. They emphasised the need for a sanghatana to tackle issues pertaining to the development of their settlement. They recounted their experiences over the past months and it was clear to all present that they were well on the road to empowerment.



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This is the actual ground breaking ceremony! A pooja is performed traditionally by a young couple under the guidance of a priest. Later when the dignitaries turned up, they were given flowers and vermilion powder which is considered auspicious. This they had to offer and sprinkle on the pick-axe with which they strike the ground. A coconut is broken and prasad distributed to all who are present. All members of the forum, administrative officers, the local corporator and baandhani members took turns to do this.