

India's capital is marked by different settlement types, defined by diverse degrees of formality, legality, and tenure. As part of a larger project on urban transformation in India, Cities of Delhi seeks to carefully document the degree to which access to basic services varies across these different types of settlement, and to better understand the nature of that variation. Undertaken by a team of researchers at the Centre for Policy Research (CPR), New Delhi, the project aims to examine how the residents of the city interact with their elected representatives, state agencies, and other agents in securing public services.

Through three sets of reports, the project provides a comprehensive picture of how the city is governed, and especially how this impacts the poor. The first, of which this is one, is a set of carefully selected case studies of slums, known as jhuggi jhopri clusters (JJC) in Delhi, unauthorised colonies, and resettlement colonies. The second set of studies explores a range of different processes through which the governing institutions of Delhi engage with residents. The third focuses on selected agencies of governance in Delhi. All reports are made public as they are completed.

Cities of Delhi is directed by Patrick Heller and Partha Mukhopadhyay and coordinated by Shahana Sheikh and Subhadra Banda. The project has received funding from Brown University and the Indian Council for Social Science Research.

Clients and their Patron

Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti JJC

Bijendra Jha, Ram Pravesh Shahi, Shahana Sheikh, and Ben Mandelkern
October 2014

Introduction

This report presents the case of a jhuggi jhopri cluster (JJC) in Delhi, a squatter settlement located on public land. The JJC is one of seven government-designated categories of unplanned settlements¹ in Delhi; it is a category estimated to include nearly 420,000 households,² about 15 percent of Delhi's population.³

Although 'JJC' is used interchangeably with 'slum' in many contexts, the two terms refer to separate types of settlements in the categorical hierarchy set out by the Delhi government. In this official lexicon, slum refers to a 'slum designated area' (SDA), a settlement identified in a piece of 1956 legislation. These 'notified' slums—part of a list that has not been updated since 1994⁴—are granted administrative recognition and assured some level of basic services, as well as due process in case of eviction or demolition. JJC, on the other hand, while officially recognised, are not granted the same legal protections; in the spectrum of Delhi's unplanned settlements JJC remain the most vulnerable. And although there is tremendous variation across Delhi's JJC, much of what occurs in these settlements is a function of a vulnerable community's insecure claim to the space on which it lives, a fact manifest in the repeated evictions and demolitions in the city's jhuggi jhopri clusters.⁵ These are, in general, spaces of compromised citizenship where residents have neither reliable access to public services nor secure land tenure.

Suggested Citation:

Bijendra Jha, Ram Pravesh Shahi, Shahana Sheikh, and Ben Mandelkern.
'Clients and their Patron: Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti JJC'. A report of the
Cities of Delhi project. Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi (October 2014).

Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti is a JJC in South Delhi, located in the section of the city administered by the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), an area known to have some of the best public services, not only in Delhi, but in all of India. The NDMC area is dominated by planned housing for members of India's parliament and officers of the executive and the judiciary, including the prime minister, president, chief justice, and officers of the civil services.

The NDMC area, which represents about three percent of the city in terms of population and area, is governed by an administrative structure that is distinct in three ways, which directly impact representation and service delivery for residents. First, the NDMC area does not have dedicated elected representatives at the municipal level. Instead, the MLAs—state-level elected representatives—of the two legislative assembly constituencies that make up the area sit *ex officio* on the NDMC.⁶ Second, unlike the three municipal corporations of Delhi, the NDMC answers directly to the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of India. Third, while in other parts of the city different levels of government converge to deliver each service, here the NDMC is the single agency responsible for service provision. The impact of this structure will be examined in detail in the 'Negotiated Citizenship' section of this report.

Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti began emerging in the mid-1980s on the grounds of what had been the Anantram Dairy, which was demolished and relocated in the late-1970s. While the JJC's service provisioning is markedly poor in comparison to that of its neighbours, it stands out as one of the best-served JJCs in the city.

This paper is the result of extensive field visits to the Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti in the second half of 2013 by a team of six researchers, one of whom has been a resident of the settlement since 2009. A research protocol was framed in the form of an open-ended questionnaire with specific themes for collecting qualitative primary data from different actors; respondents were identified using 'snowballing' and included residents, the *pradhan*,⁷ deputy *pradhan*, elected representatives, and staff of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC). Respondents were balanced across gender, and information provided by individuals was corroborated with other residents. In

a number of cases, information provided by respondents was inconsistent and is reported as such. All the other findings we present are based on multiple responses that were consistent across respondents and that we judged, following the standards of qualitative research, to be robust enough to be reported as such.

The Place

Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti is surrounded by some of the most elite planned residential areas of Delhi: Sector 13 of Ramkrishna Puram (R K Puram) to the south and west, Moti Bagh to the north, and Netaji Nagar to the east. These neighbourhoods house government employees of all levels, from administrative heads of ministries to lower-ranking staff. The *basti* is accessible by three routes leading from R K Puram and Moti Bagh.

According to the 2011 list of 685 JJCs released by the Delhi Urban Shelter Board (DUSIB), this settlement consists of an estimated 350 *jhuggis* on 5,246 square metres of land owned by the Land and Development Organization (L&DO). The L&DO is a central government agency under the Ministry of Urban Development, which manages land belonging to the Government of India.⁸ The *basti's* population is regionally diverse, with residents from across northern India and Nepal, although the majority come from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Residents describe the population as 60 percent Dalit, which explains why the settlement's name includes *Harijan*, Mahatma Gandhi's term for former untouchables.

Although Dalits are in the majority, respondents describe the relatively small number of Gujjar⁹ residents as socially and politically dominant.¹⁰ This and other hierarchies reach across daily life in the settlement, affecting even the most minor tasks. Residents, for example, report that access to water in the JJC is controlled by a complicated structure of priority based on community, caste, and social standing.¹¹ This is explained further in the water section of this report.

Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti has better physical infrastructure than most JJCs in Delhi. Its *jhuggis* are largely permanent structures, built from concrete and brick. They are mostly one storey, though a few have

two floors, and although many *jhuggis* were originally built with temporary roofs, the vast majority now have stone slab roofing. The inner lanes of the *basti* are relatively neat and clean, paved, and five or six feet wide, broader than those in other JJs. There is a single high mast street light in the middle of the settlement.

The area's recent history stretches back to 1972, when a businessman named Mr Anantram established a dairy on the land. A residential settlement housing the dairy's workers developed alongside the business. During the Emergency in the late 1970s, both the settlement and the business were razed, its residents resettled in what were then Delhi's outskirts. In the years after the 1984 assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, people began to move back to the area, eventually differentiating into two settlements, which have developed in tandem over more than three decades. The poorer part, the area under study, is known as Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti. By 1990, the *basti* housed 435 *jhuggis*, although by 1994, according to the DUSIB, that number had decreased to 250.¹² The latest DUSIB estimate places the count at 311.¹³



 = Area of Detail



Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti JJC is shown outlined on the right. To the left is the more affluent Anantram Dairy Complex unauthorised colony. An interactive map of this and other research sites is available at citiesofdelhi.cprindia.org/map.

The more upscale settlement came to be known as Anantram Dairy Complex (often referred to as ARD Complex). Today, the Delhi state government (GNCTD) categorises the Anantram Dairy Complex as an ‘unauthorized colony’, another of the seven categories of unplanned colony.¹⁴ This settlement is dominated by three and four storey housing constructed from brick and concrete. The inner lanes of the complex are wide, lined with residents’ cars. Mr Anantram’s eighty-year-old son and family still live in this colony. In a brief conversation, the original dairy owner’s grandson explained that the land on which the ARD Complex sits is privately owned by his family, rejecting the government’s claim that it belongs to the Central Public Works Department (CPWD) and contesting its categorisation as an illegal ‘unauthorized colony’.

The exact boundary between the ARD Complex and the *basti* is not entirely defined, and the origin of the division is unclear. Some residents speculate that it may have been based on caste affiliations. One respondent told us that, “caste was one of the important factors in deciding the emergence of the complex at one side and *jhuggis* on the other”. It is important to note that despite the prevalence of this narrative the residents living in the JJC today are not homogenous in terms of caste. Indeed, many of the *basti*’s contemporary dynamics derive from the diversity of caste groups living in it. At some point a low wall appeared between the two settlements; it is not clear who built it or determined the boundary it marks.

Residents recalled that V P Singh Tokens and identity cards were distributed to all those who had *jhuggis* in the *basti* in 1989. These tokens were issued to JJC residents across Delhi during V P Singh’s tenure as prime minister as formal proof of residence. The tokens were the result of a four-month long survey by the Delhi Administration—the governing body that preceded the GNCTD in Delhi—that aimed to enumerate every slum household in the city.¹⁵ The tokens were nailed to the walls of *jhuggis*, but no documentary proof of ‘ownership’ was given to their residents. About 150 households in the *basti* still hold the silver-coloured tokens.

Residents estimate that today about 40 percent of the *basti*’s population live in rented accommodation, paying between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 4,000 per

month. There is buying and selling of *jhuggis* in the settlement, transactions which usually happen in secret and without any documentation—the cost of one *jhuggi* ranges between Rs. 800,000 and Rs. 1,000,000. Once the *jhuggi* changes hands, it is the new ‘owner’s’ responsibility to have the name changed on the electricity bill and the address changed on his or her various identity cards.

In describing the *basti* residents’ livelihoods, respondents point to a clear caste divide. They claim that while most Gujjar men work as drivers, the majority of Dalit men are employed as cleaning staff. No such divide was reported among women; the majority of women from both groups are domestic workers in neighbouring planned colonies.

Unlike in many JJs, where the rumours of demolition and eviction are frequent, residents of Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti told us that they do not feel that they live under the threat of demolition. They feel secure in the guarantees offered by elected officials that their *jhuggis* will not be demolished.

The community is led by a *pradhan* and deputy *pradhan* who are widely recognised as representatives. The *pradhan* calls meetings of the community every 20 or 30 days, which are mostly attended by men. The *pradhan* and deputy *pradhan* also run an organisation called Harijan Mazdoor Sudhar Sabha (Dalit Labour Improvement Organisation) that serves as a vehicle for bringing *basti*-related issues to the attention of government officials, especially members of the NDMC. During the bulk of our fieldwork—prior to the December 2013 Delhi state elections—the settlement’s MLA (state-level representative) was also a leader of this organisation. This reflects the unusually close relationship between the community and its representative that we observed in the *basti*. It is a remarkable dynamic that we explore in depth in the ‘Negotiated Citizenship’ section of this report.

Service Provisioning

For JJs located in its area of jurisdiction, the NDMC is the single governing agency for delivery of basic services.

Water

Water distribution varies across Delhi's JJs in terms of source, frequency, cost, quantity, and quality. Residents access water from a variety of sources, including Delhi Jal Board (DJB) water tankers, piped water shared by groups of households, private or public bore wells¹⁶ in the JJ (known as 'borings'), taps at community toilet complexes, public taps in neighbouring areas, water tankers from private companies, bore wells in neighbouring areas, and households in neighbouring planned colonies. The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) is responsible for bulk supply of water to the NDMC area, but its mandate does not extend to distribution, which is overseen by the Civil Engineering Department of the NDMC.

According to the NDMC website, DJB-supplied water does not meet the area's demand. To fill the gap, the NDMC has developed 100 tube wells and 700 "deep well hand pumps".¹⁷ Although Anantram residents do remember functional NDMC-provided hand pumps in the settlement, these no longer exist. At present, people living in the Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti access water from three relatively stable sources: an NDMC pipeline, taps at the toilet complex, and a recently installed NDMC water tank. No payment is made for water from any of these sources.

Residents access drinking water from the NDMC pipeline at six taps installed around the *basti*, an increase over the two taps available until two years ago. Respondents report that water flows for two hours each in the morning and evening, although the exact timing is sporadic. As in unplanned settlements across the city, we observed that mostly women collect water. JJ residents generally perceive this water supply as reliable and had few complaints during the summer months.

Access to the six taps is dictated by a system of priority that leaves some residents with scant supply. It is a phenomenon that offers unusual insight into the internal dynamics of the settlement. In the area surrounding each tap, there is a commonly accepted

social hierarchy in which one household, belonging to a certain community, is dominant. At each tap, this dominant household gets water first. These residents take as much water as they need, even bathing their pets at the taps. Once they have finished, the remaining households in the area gather water, following a set order of precedence. These secondary households are limited to four buckets or cans each. By the time the last households get access to the taps, the water supply is often nearly depleted. It is a structure based in large part on caste and regional identities, and is not, as far as we have observed, imposed or enforced externally. Rather, it is a generally accepted structure that maintains privileges for certain groups—usually upper caste—and guarantees that other groups—largely Dalit—remain at the margins of service delivery.

The *basti* uses water from a tap at the JJ's toilet complex for household chores. This water can be accessed at any time except when the toilet complex is being cleaned. Unlike the NDMC water supply, which is direct, this tap draws on a bore well managed by the toilet caretaker.

The third source of water is a water tank, installed by NDMC in November 2013 at one corner of the *basti*. While residents do report that this water tank contains drinking water, most of them use this water for non-drinking purposes. The water tank is filled to its capacity of 10,000 litres every other day. If the tank empties sooner, residents can call the NDMC office and request a water tanker to refill the tank. Once they have contacted the office, they connect with the tanker driver directly to confirm that he has been assigned to deliver water. If the NDMC or driver does not respond, the residents call their MLA who ensures that the tank is refilled.

Sanitation: Toilets, Drains, and Solid Waste Management

Sanitation in Delhi's JJs is managed by three government agencies: construction and maintenance of sewer lines across Delhi is the responsibility of the DJB; construction and maintenance of toilets for residents of JJs is managed by the DUSIB; drains are constructed by the DUSIB and maintained by the municipal corporations; and solid waste management is the mandate of the respective Municipal Corporation

of Delhi (North, South, or East). In JJs under the jurisdiction of the NDMC, the Civil Engineering department is responsible for sewerage and drainage systems and the Public Health department is responsible for solid waste management.

Residents of Anantram Dairy do not have toilets in their homes. There is one public toilet complex in the middle of the *basti*, housing both toilets and rooms for bathing. The complex was built in 1989 by Sulabh International, which continues to maintain it. There are 20 toilet seats each for men and women and five seats for children. The men's side of the toilet complex is open from 4 a.m. until 11 p.m. each day. During the hours that it is closed, men often jump over the wall of the complex to use the toilet. The women's side, though open around the clock, often runs out of water during late night hours, when the bore well pump is shut off; women carry water from their homes to the complex during these hours. Late at night, the elderly often defecate behind the toilet complex and on the main road 500 metres from the *basti*.

There are ten bathing rooms each for men and women, and two platforms for washing clothes, equipped with three taps and four wash basins. The facilities are very crowded in the morning between six and nine, with waits of 15 or 20 minutes. Three men often bathe together to save time. The situation in the women's bathrooms is slightly different. When a woman enters a bathroom she does not leave until all the female members of her family have taken a bath and washed their clothes. Sometimes this leads to conflict between women in the queue.

The toilet complex is cleaned twice a day, first between 9:30 and 11 a.m. and again between 3:30 and 5 p.m. During the time that the women's side is being cleaned, women are not allowed to use the toilet complex. Men, however, are allowed to use the complex during the morning cleaning hours, although they are barred from it during the evening cleaning. Every 15 days an employee from Sulabh International visits the toilet complex for an inspection. Before his visit the toilet complex is cleaned with bleaching powder and acid. The complex is maintained by a caretaker and two maintenance workers, each of whom is paid Rs. 4,000 per month.

While women and children access the complex for free, men pay Rs. 2 per day to use the toilet and Rs. 5 per set of clothing for washing. The caretaker is required to pass on Rs. 400 per day to Sulabh International—he keeps the remainder of the receipts, part of which covers maintenance expenses. If he is unable to meet the 400 rupee daily payment, the balance is deducted from his monthly salary.

There are no open drains in the *basti*. Unlike in many other JJs, Anantram Dairy has an underground drainage system maintained by the Civil Engineering Department of the NDMC. Sanitation workers from the Council clean the system each month, removing organic and inorganic material that has clogged the drain to the nearby *dhalao* (dumping point). The system functions well and is much appreciated during the rainy season.

Residents of both the Anantram Dairy Complex and the Harijan Basti dump their garbage at a *dhalao* about 50 metres from the *basti*. This dumping point is equipped with two dumpsters provided by the NDMC, which sends a vehicle to pick up garbage from the area every two or three days. Although there is no set schedule, the garbage is usually picked up, and the NDMC is quite responsive to complaints. Until recently, the ground of this dumping point was *kacha*, made of soil and bricks. In November 2013, just before the Delhi elections, the *dhalao* was made *pakka* with a concrete floor.

Electricity

Since 2002, electricity distribution in all of Delhi, with the exception of the NDMC and cantonment areas, has been managed by joint ventures between the GNCTD and private firms. Distribution rights were awarded in an auction to three companies (often referred to as 'discoms'). In the NDMC area, however, electricity is still a public provision, distributed by the Council's Electricity Department. The Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti has only had a consistent, legitimate electricity supply since 2012. Before then, residents pirated electricity from nearby lines, a practice called 'hooking'. A young electrician who lived in the *basti* started this hooking practice, collecting Rs. 50 per month from each household he supplied. Residents believe that he had some 'understanding' with the NDMC.

Although the NDMC has been supplying electricity to the *basti* since 2012, residents receive *kacha* (temporary) bills. These contain the following disclaimer in English: “Purely temporary arrangement without confirming any legal right”. This caveat is an important element of the state’s maintenance of the settlement’s insecurity: even as it delivers services, it denies households the right to prove their residence or to claim any tenure over their *jhuggi* or the land on which it stands.

Every house is charged a flat Rs. 175 per month for electricity, regardless of usage; bills are paid at Palika Bhawan, located in the same sector of R K Puram. One resident told us that “continuous electricity supply at a flat rate of Rs. 175 has made this settlement a special one, and many residents use freezers, TVs, fans, coolers, washing machines, and even air conditioners in the summer and heaters in the winter”. Although the settlement has much more regular and stable electricity provision than many JJs in Delhi, this should not be misunderstood as a situation approaching planned, formal distribution. A visitor to the *basti* is confronted by a very visual reminder of this informality: tangled wires hang slack from a collection of wood and plastic poles.

Identity Cards

Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti has an unusually high density of residents with Aadhaar cards. Most also have voter ID and ration cards. Like people across the country, residents pay an ‘agent’ between Rs. 400 and Rs. 500 for a voter ID card. Although most residents in the area have BPL (below poverty line) ration cards, they report that rations are available only after the tenth day of the month and that the ration shop often overcharges.

Public facilities

Residents have relatively good access to public transport. The closest bus stop (Araadhna Enclave, Sector 13, R K Puram) is a five-minute walk from the *basti*. Other public transit is also easily accessible.

In case of minor illness, residents go to the NDMC dispensaries in the neighbouring areas. Residents identified three dispensaries each in Sarojini Nagar and Netaji Nagar. For medical emergencies and major

An array of identity cards are an essential tool for anyone living in India, necessary for daily processes from getting a gas connection or mobile phone to accessing government benefits. Cards are needed to satisfy both proof of identity and proof of address requirements. In settlements with uncertain tenure, such as JJs, it is this latter proof that is most difficult and important to obtain, a challenge that directly impedes access to basic services.

Three main forms of identity are accepted as proof of residence:

Voter ID Card

Any resident or non-resident Indian Citizen above 18 years of age is eligible to vote and receive a voter ID card.

Aadhaar Cards

In 2007 the Indian government began issuing multi-purpose national identity cards with a unique 16-digit identification number (UID). In theory, an Aadhaar card can be used to establish a bearer’s identity and to provide him or her secure access to benefits and services. A 2013 Supreme Court ruling, however, held that the UID card could not be a mandatory requirement for any service.

Ration Cards

These are cards for accessing food grains and other essential commodities from the Public Distribution System through a network of Fair Price Shops at subsidised prices. Different ration cards are distributed to people according to income.

illnesses, residents go to one of three hospitals within five kilometres of the settlement: the Charak Palika Hospital at Moti Bagh, the Safdarjung Hospital, or the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) near Yusuf Sarai.

Children have access to three primary schools run by the NDMC, all within walking distance. There is also a Sarvodaya secondary school.

Negotiated Citizenship

The Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti stands out among Delhi's unplanned settlements as extraordinarily well serviced. This can be attributed in part to the fact that it is under NDMC's jurisdiction, but this does not entirely explain its reliable supply of electricity, water, and sanitation services. Other JJs in the NDMC area do show better than average servicing, but not nearly the levels evident in this *basti*. We attribute this gap to the strong and stable patron-client relationships between residents and their elected representative, a structure reinforced by caste and class associations. In marked contrast to other settlements that we have studied, residents overwhelmingly perceive their representative to be both accessible and responsive.

The structure of the settlement's electoral representation differs from other areas of the city in that there is no representative at the municipal level. In 2008 the *basti* was designated as part of the Delhi Cantonment assembly constituency, which is one of two assembly constituencies in the city—of 70 overall—that have no elected representation at the local level. This means that the constituency's MLA,¹⁸ who is also an ex-officio member of the NDMC,¹⁹ is the only elected representative responsible for delivery of basic services to the area. In other settlements that we have studied, the overlapping responsibilities, conflicting priorities, and ambiguous mandates of state and local governments are often cited as impediments to effective service delivery. In Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti, that excuse—genuine or otherwise—does not enter into delivering services. This political structure provides a key part of the foundation for the robust patron-client relationship we observe in the settlement.

The following analysis is based on interactions with the MLA in office during our fieldwork, a member of the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) who had held the office for a decade. He was first elected in 1993 as the MLA of the Delhi Cantonment Assembly Constituency, ousted in 1998, then re-elected in 2003. In December 2013, after the bulk of our fieldwork was completed, he was voted out of office.

During his tenure, the MLA had three offices in the constituency, one of which was located in Moti Bagh, about a kilometre from the *basti*; he was available

there to meet people from 9 to 11 a.m. on weekdays. His second office was in Naraina, where he met with people from 6 to 9 a.m., and his third office was at the main NDMC office (Palika Kendra) in Connaught Place, where he met people from 4 to 7 p.m. We estimate that the MLA met more than a hundred constituents each day at these offices.

We observed the MLA's meetings with the public at his Moti Bagh and Palika Kendra offices on several occasions between April and December 2013. At the Moti Bagh office, the MLA had six assistants to deal with people coming to this office with diverse concerns. Most visitors to this office were women from areas in the constituency including four JJs (Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti, Sanjay Camp, Vivekanand Camp, and Shankar Camp), two urban villages (Mochi Gaon and Jharera Gaon), Kirwi Place, Babu Dham, and Naangal.

What follows describes the office on a typical weekday, drawn from several days of observation.

Constituents begin arriving at the office by 9 a.m. Someone entering the office is first asked about the purpose of his or her visit, then offered a seat, tea, and water by an assistant. The MLA usually arrives by 10 a.m. If he is delayed, assistants assure the constituents that the MLA is en route from his Naraina office. "When he comes, he himself will listen to your problems", an assistant assured one nervous petitioner. We saw constituents at the office with a range of concerns and requests, including assistance with allocation of water tankers, laying water pipelines, voter ID cards and driving licenses, bank accounts, school admissions, and caste, handicapped, and death certificates.

One assistant in his office is tasked with writing letters to government departments and banks. These letters, written on a letterhead with the seal of India (the Ashok Chakra) despite the fact that the MLA is not attached to the central government, state in Hindi, '[the petitioner] is known to me and I request that you ...'. Once a letter is written, another assistant takes it to be signed by the MLA, and then hands it to the constituent to mail. A third assistant handles issues related to identity cards. Two assistants are focused on controlling the rush of people in the office and a sixth assists any staff member who needs help.

In pressing cases, the MLA makes phone calls, making the same introduction and request that he puts in letters.

During a visit to the office in September 2013, we encountered the *pradhan* and deputy *pradhan* of Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti. They had come to meet the MLA to request improved service provisioning including additional water taps. When we asked the MLA about residents of the *basti*, he said, “I go to the Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti every 10 or 15 days”. Further, he explained, “Ek ek ke ghar jaata hoon aur unse gale lagta hoon, unke haal poochta hoon ... mann mein koi bhed bhaav nahin ... Bahut badiya sambhadh hai *pradhan* ke saath.” (“I go to each and everyone’s house and hug them and ask them how they are doing ... there is no discrimination in my mind ... I have very good relations with the *pradhan*.”) “If there is a death in a poor household and the family cannot afford wood for cremation, I arrange it. I go for the marriages of people in my constituency and give whatever money I can”, he continued.

Most residents confirmed the MLA’s claims. The deputy *pradhan* explained, “hum log jab bulaatein hain woh hamesha aatein hain, janamho, shaadiho, yaa koi mar jaye...Jab bhi humein unki madad ki zaroorat hoti hai toh hum unke paas jaatein hain aur woh humaari samasya suntein hain.” (“Whenever we call him he always comes, be it birth, marriage, or when someone dies ... whenever we need his support we go to the MLA and he listens us.”) The *pradhan* told us that 80 to 90 percent of the *basti*’s residents support the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), and described the community’s relationship with the MLA as “like family”.

Residents identified the MLA as the person they contact when their settlement faces any problem with service provisioning. He, in turn, is able to exert the necessary pressure on the government to improve conditions. The MLA explained his approach to this task: “[NDMC mein] koi pyaar se nahin maantaa, woh sirf dande se dartein hain.” (“[In the NDMC], no one listens when we speak to them with love, they are only scared of the whip.”)

The MLA also gave a settlement-level assurance to the residents that he would not allow a demolition or an eviction at the *basti* without providing resettlement. Residents are aware that they do not have legal tenure, and understand that according to the

GNCTD’s policy they can be resettled anywhere in Delhi. The MLA assured us that, “There is no threat of eviction to residents of the Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti. I cannot allow anyone to evict them without providing resettlement. I do have such power.”

Apart from settlement-level service provision and assurances against demolitions, the residents reported that the MLA had also been instrumental in getting NDMC jobs for residents of the *basti*. He claimed that, “Overall, I have gotten about 500 or 600 people jobs in the NDMC. It is easy to get employment for people in the NDMC because NDMC is corrupt.” Indeed, residents reported that half of the working population of the *basti* is employed by the NDMC as electricians, construction workers, and drivers.

In contrast to residents’ relationship with the MLA, their relationship with the police is more complicated. Respondents reported that although the police do not bother them on a daily basis, when a household adds a floor to its *jhuggi*, they have to pay between Rs. 4,000 and Rs. 5,000 to the police so that it is not demolished. Residents also told us that whenever theft is reported in the neighbouring areas, police comes to the *basti*, inform the *pradhan* of the incident, and remove a few residents for questioning.

The relatively coherent organisation and unified political allegiance of the JJC exist against a backdrop of consolidated, caste-based power. In addition to the dynamics described in the water section of this report, the dominant Gujjar community exercises control over construction in the *basti*, dictating when and where non-Gujjar residents can build. Residents also suggest that Gujjar residents work together with local police to exert their primacy.

Gujjar dominance extends to representative structures, and is another key component of the clientalism in the settlement: the *pradhan* is a prominent member of this community, and has been for at least the last 25 years; the MLA at the time of our fieldwork was also Gujjar, understood to be accessible mainly to the Gujjar community. This dynamic, while it marginalises many and quashes what may be valid disputes, does mean that a unified voice is heard in the *basti*, and quickly amplified and transmitted to state actors.

Elections

The lead up to the Delhi Assembly elections in 2013 provided us with an opportunity to understand what the residents of Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti consider to be important election issues, to observe their electoral loyalties, and document the strategies of various political parties and candidates to campaign among residents of the colony. The following reporting is based on four field visits to the *basti* by seven researchers between 10 October and 29 December 2013, as well as meetings with party workers at the offices of the AAP, BJP, and Congress in the Delhi Cantonment Assembly Constituency.

About two months prior to the elections, the *basti* experienced tangible and substantial changes in delivery of certain basic services. The *dhalao* (garbage dump) began to be cleaned daily; the road between the *basti* and the dump was repaired; in the inner lanes of the *basti*, the temporary wooden electric poles were replaced with more permanent plastic poles; and the toilet complex was repaired and freshly painted. In addition, a water tanker was stationed at one corner of the *basti* and residents were free to take water from it at anytime. A portable toilet was installed next to it, but it remained locked.

It is interesting to note that while all residents acknowledged these changes in the *basti*, explanations for the improvements varied. A group of women saw the provisions as clearly transactional. One told us: “All this has been done because of the upcoming elections ... otherwise no work has been done in this *basti* for the last four years. ...There is real water shortage in the summers, yet then we never get a water tanker. Now they have provided one and we expect that it will be standing here every day until the elections.” The *pradhan* presented a less crass view. “We had been complaining to the MLA for a while,” he explained. “So finally he brought the NDMC chairman to this area about a month ago. It was the first time that the NDMC chairman came to this *basti*. After his visit, the chairman has been getting work done in this area.” The reality is likely a combination of these two views. The improvements are probably the result of the constant petitions from the *basti*—routed through the MLA—pushed along by the impending election.

The *pradhan* maintained that the *basti* was overwhelmingly supportive of the sitting MLA. Even before the MLA took office, the *pradhan* told us, the *basti* had had long experience with BJP members who effectively represented the settlement’s interests. In exchange, residents had supported the party. Nonetheless, we did meet some residents who supported the Aam Aadmi Party or the Congress.

AAP was the first political party to campaign in the *basti*, beginning in the first half of October 2013. Their efforts included door-to-door campaigning as well as screening a film in the settlement. The film told the story of AAP’s candidate for the Delhi Cantonment Assembly Constituency, who had been a commando with the Indian Army and had lost his hearing in combat during the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai.

About two weeks prior to the election, the BJP organised a *jansabha* (public meeting) with residents in Netaji Nagar, an area neighbouring the *basti*. During this meeting, one of the party workers explained that people should vote for the sitting MLA—and BJP candidate—because he had done work for the constituency. This party worker asserted, “MLA sahab ne aap logo ki 1,725 din taksevakihai, abunheunkimazdoori dene kasamayaagayahai. Aurunkiitne din sevakarnekimazdoorihaihar log se ek vote isschunavmein...” (“The MLA has done 1,725 days of service for you, and the time has come for you to give him wage for his labour ... and the wage for his labour is each person’s vote in this coming election.”) He further explained, “Look at the condition of your streets, parks, houses, roads, footpaths, and services—they are better than the New Delhi constituency ... Give him wage for his labour, which is each person’s vote.”

The Aam Aadmi Party’s candidate, most often referred to as “commando” by the residents, won the Delhi Cantonment constituency, of which Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti is a part, with 39.7 percent of the vote. The incumbent MLA and BJP candidate—‘MLA’ throughout the preceding section of this report—was a very close second, with 39.1 percent of the vote. It is crucial to note that AAP’s winning margin was 355 votes, whereas the total number votes polled for the constituency were 65,861. The Indian National Congress was third and received 18.2 percent of the vote.

Voting in the *basti* did not mirror these larger, constituency-level results. An analysis of the election data for the polling booth where the residents of the Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti voted suggests that nearly 60 percent voted for the BJP, whose candidate was the incumbent MLA, while a little over 23 percent voted for the AAP. Just over 14 percent voted for the Indian National Congress.

Conclusion

The organisation and efficiency that explains many of the dynamics we observed in Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti derive from a hierarchy that is certainly an expression of traditional caste structures. But it is a phenomenon reinforced by political and community authority and the exchange of patronage goods, facilitated by a particular history and governance structure.

This report presents a case in which the caste hierarchy frequently believed to reside primarily in rural India is reproduced in the centre of the capital city. Here, however, a system of inequality, paired with political reality, delivers tangible goods for all. In Anantram Dairy, we witness a kind of nested patron-client relationship, in which benefits accrue not only to specific ‘clients’—the Gujjar leaders who deliver the community’s votes—but also to those residents who are subjugated by the very caste hierarchy that facilitates the dominance of these primary ‘clients’.

Provided with reliable water, electricity, and sanitation services and relatively safe from demolition, Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti stands out among Delhi’s JJs. But, like all unplanned settlements, its future remains uncertain. The latest master plan demarcates the land on which the *basti* is situated for “residential” use and the records of the land-owning agency suggest that it should be used to construct housing for government employees.²⁰ This implies two possibilities of departure from the settlement’s status quo: one, the state might evict the *basti*’s residents, demolish their *jhuggis*, and construct formal housing for its formal employees. Two, the government could respect the residential designation of the master plan but change its specific implementation, allowing the current residents to remain under some form of upgraded settlement status. This would not, indeed, be a material deviation from the intention to

house government employees: many of the *basti*’s residents work for the government, in the homes of senior civil servants and for the NDMC.

Postscript In September the MLA who was in office during our fieldwork—and who lost the 2013 election—was appointed vice chairperson of the NDMC.²¹ This is remarkable evidence of the durability of patronage: with this appointment, the state has managed to maintain the pre-election structure of authority, even after electoral defeat. The NDMC Act, while it includes elected representatives ex-officio, establishes flexible parameters for selecting the vice chairperson. The Act mandates that he or she can be either an MLA, or

nominated by the Central Government in consultation with the Chief Minister of Delhi to represent from amongst lawyers, doctors, chartered accountants, engineers, business and financial consultants, intellectuals, traders, labourers, social workers including social scientists, artists, medial persons, sports persons and *any other class of persons as may be specified by the Central Government in this behalf.*²² (emphasis added)

What is remarkable is the way in which the community and government ecosystem was able to maintain the arrangement that had been functioning relatively well for all. After the ex-MLA’s appointment to the Council, the *pradhan* of the *basti*, together with residents from the more affluent Anantram Dairy Complex, held a *badhai samaaroh* (function to convey congratulations) for the new vice chairperson. He was presented with garlands, and then requests. The *pradhan*’s brother gave voice to the *basti*’s needs. He called for:

- in-situ rehabilitation of the JJC, which would involve demolition of *jhuggis* and construction of two-storey housing for residents on the same site
- improved storm drains
- alternative toilet facility during night hours when the toilet complex is shut
- three tube wells and four additional water taps for the residents of the *basti*

The new vice chairperson of the NDMC assured the residents that he would work towards delivering on these demands. An election had been held, but the clients and their patron remain.

Notes

1. Categories of settlements in Delhi presented in Economic Survey of Delhi, 2008-2009, page 169, citing Delhi Urban Environment and Infrastructure Improvement Project (DUEIIP)-2021.
2. DUSIB's 2011 List of 685 JJs in Delhi
3. Calculated based on an average household size of five and the population of Delhi's Urban Agglomeration from the 2011 census data.
4. Gautam Bhan, 'Planned Illegalities: Housing and the 'Failure' of Planning in Delhi: 1947-2010', *Economic and Political Weekly*, (15 June 2013).
5. See 'Kathputli Colony: Delhi's First In-Situ Slum Rehabilitation', and 'Negotiating Citizenship in F Block: A Jhuggi Jhopri Cluster in Delhi', reports of the Cities of Delhi project.
6. NDMC Amendment Bill 2010, passed by both houses of the Indian Parliament in December 2011.
7. The *pradhan* is an unelected, widely recognised, informal representative of a significant number of residents in a community. In this case, he also headed a recently registered NGO and was well known among other residents.
8. According to its website, the L&DO "is responsible for the administration of landed estates of Government of India in Delhi including lease, sale, mortgage, substitution, mutation etc." There are 50,500 leases of the Government of India in Delhi and, "in addition, the L&DO handles the following works: maintenance of leased records; allotment of land to various government/ semi-government departments and institutions under the direction of the Ministry; auction of vacant land and built up properties under its charge under the direction of the Ministry; recovery of lease charges, ground rent, damages etc. on such property; conversion of leasehold into freehold of residential properties; and *removal of encroachment on such land*." (Source: <http://ldo.nic.in/majoractivity.htm>, emphasis added).
9. The Gujjars are a 'dominant caste' (see following note), and have a significant population in Delhi proper as well as in the city's surrounding rural areas.
10. Dominant caste is a term coined by Indian sociologist M. N. Srinivas to refer to a caste community with influence over the social and political affairs of a society resulting from both their number and their strong economic position in the society.
11. Because one of the researchers on the Cities of Delhi team lives in this settlement, we have access to an exceptionally textured understanding of these dynamics. This is not to say, however, that these do not exist in settlements across the city.
12. Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board, no year, "Detail of number of clusters constituency wise". Downloaded from: <http://www.readbag.com/delhishelter-nic-in-jjc-list>; document last modified on 11 November 2011.
13. DUSIB's 2014 list (dated 25 March 2014), still under verification.
14. Five 'affluent unauthorized colonies' have been identified by the GNCTD. These include: Anant Ram Dairy, Sec.-13 R.K. Puram, New Delhi; Mahendru Enclave C & D Block G.T. Karnal Road Delhi-33; Mahendru Enclave Model Town Delhi-9; Sainik Farms Western Avenue New Delhi; and Sainik Enclave New Delhi - 43.
15. D. Asher Ghertner, 'Calculating without numbers: aesthetic governmentality in Delhi's slums', *Economy and Society*, 39/2 (2010).
16. Same as tube wells.
17. https://www.ndmc.gov.in/Departments/Civil/Dept_CivilEng_Water.aspx (accessed on 5 June 2014).
18. Although the MLA in office during our field work represented a constituency of more than 200,000, he provided an extraordinary level of service to Anantram Dairy Harijan Basti, service he surely could not provide to his entire constituency.
19. Section 4 titled, "Composition of the Council" of the NDMC Act, 1991. Available at: <https://www.ndmc.gov.in/NDMCAct/section4.htm> (Accessed on 30th July 2014).
20. According to a May 2013 list of land parcels with LOA as L&DO, the land on which the Anantram Dairy Harijan basti is situated is demarcated for "residential" land use by the Master Plan. However, this list also states this land is now envisaged for a "General Pool Residential Accommodation" project implying a housing project for government employees. (Reference: List titled "List of Land Parcels" for the land owning agency of L&DO, dated 10 May 2013)
21. This appointment occurred after the May 2014 parliamentary elections that resulted in the creation of a BJP-led government at the Centre.
22. Clauses (b) and (d) of Sub-Section (1), Section 4, NDMC Act 1994.