



**Bruhat Bengaluru  
Mahanagara Palike**

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE,  
BANGALORE**

**ENGLISH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS  
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# THE HINDU

## Payment only for garbage vehicles with trackers

BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has earned the ignominy in the past for clearing bills for works not executed, for paying garbage contractors despite there being fewer vehicles on ground, etc. This is despite its large spend on civic works and solid waste management in the city.

P1

## NEARBY

### Symptomatic positivity rates see wide variation

In the past seven days, the asymptomatic positivity rate in all districts across State has remained below 2.3%. While the decline is a huge relief, a closer look at the data shows that when it comes to the positivity rate among symptomatic COVID-19 patients, there is a huge variation across districts during the same period.



P1

# Health Ministry issues norms to curb virus spread in markets

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
NEW DELHI

Cautioning that shopkeepers, employees and visitors living in containment zones shall not be allowed entry into marketplaces, the Union Health Ministry on Monday released standard operating procedures on "preventive measures in markets to contain spread of COVID-19".

These include levying of fines/penalties on defaulters for not wearing mask/face cover, or for not following physical distancing norms,

exploring option of allowing markets/shops to open on alternate days and possible incentive/discounts for those who shop during non-peak hours.

## Closure after spikes

The Ministry has advised closure of markets if a large number of cases are reported with epidemiological links to the market by the administration.

It added that there has to be effective crowd management in specific cases of lo-

## All-party meet on Friday

The government has called an all-party meeting on December 4 to discuss the COVID-19 situation. Sources confirmed that floor leaders

of all political parties in Parliament have been invited by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi. PAGE 10

cal Metro rail stoppages at stations directly feeding into markets and that provision for online booking of groceries/items and delivery at doorstep must be encouraged, where the staff should

be screened thermally by the vendors prior to allowing home deliveries.

The SOP added that vehicles may only be allowed to be parked in assigned parking lots and that proper

crowd management in the parking lots and outside the premises – duly following physical distancing norms – should be ensured. "CCTV monitoring may be considered to detect overcrowding and staggered time of opening shops/utilities should be explored to allow them to remain open for longer duration," it noted.

"Amid the COVID pandemic, with gradual opening of economic activities, markets are witnessing high footfalls. Such large gatherings,

without observance of COVID-19 appropriate behaviour have the potential to spread the disease," the Ministry warned.

It noted that there should be separate entry and exit, if feasible, with unidirectional flow of visitors.

"Roads within marketplaces may be made vehicle-free (including cycle/e-rickshaws)."

The Ministry added that strict penal action should be taken against illegal parking on market roads.

P1

# Payment only for garbage transport vehicles with trackers from December 1

The devices and data have to be integrated with the central vehicle tracking portal of the civic body

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has earned the ignominy in the past for clearing bills for works not executed, for paying garbage contractors despite there being fewer vehicles on ground, etc. This is despite its large spend on civic works and solid waste management in the city.

To put an end to this, the civic body, from December 1, will clear collection and transportation bills of garbage contractors only based on radio-frequency identification and GPS data.

When the civic body proposed installation of GPS trackers and RFID chips on all vehicles engaged in door-to-door collection and transportation of municipal solid waste, there was much resistance from the garbage contractors. Consequently, several deadlines have been missed.

Now, the civic body has



The garbage dumping yard at Mittaganahalli quarry pit. •SUDHAKARA JAIN

decided to clear the collection and transportation bills of the contractors only based on RFID and GPS data, and integration of the same with the BBMP's central vehicle tracking portal.

As per the new deadline set by civic chief N. Manjunath Prasad, the RFID chips

have to be installed on all primary and secondary collection and transportation vehicles, apart from GPS trackers on all operational vehicles in wards with new tenders, by the end of this month. In wards where the new tenders are still not in place, garbage vehicles will

have till December to install the trackers.

Mr. Prasad has directed assistant executive engineers and superintending engineers to ensure the new deadlines are adhered to, while making it clear that no further extension would be permitted.

BBMP's Special Commissioner (Solid Waste Management) D. Randeep said, "In cases where the RFID attendance is not available, junior health inspectors should take geo-stamped photos, or ward marshals can record the attendance manually," he said.

**Status of garbage tenders**  
Tenders have been cleared and work orders have been issued for 79 of the 198 wards in the city.

Work has already been taken up by the new contractors in 38 wards while demonstration has been completed in 12 wards.

In the remaining 29 wards, demonstration has not been completed by the contractors who have been given work orders.

"We will issue notices to them. If they don't respond to the notices, the work order will be cancelled and the contractor will be blacklisted," Mr. Randeep said.

P2

# 'Come out with action plan for public toilets'

Karnataka High Court tells civic body to assess how many are required in the city

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to come out with an action plan or scheme to assess how many public toilets are required for the city.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka and Justice S. Vishwajith Shetty issued the direction while hearing a PIL petition filed by city-based Letzkit Foundation.



FROM THE COURT

The bench said that the action plan should contain how cleanliness and hygiene in the public toilets would be

maintained while stating that once the BBMP comes out with a proper action plan, the same can be extended to other local bodies in the State.

It was pointed out in the petition that Bengaluru has a large floating population, but lacks sufficient number of public toilets. The BBMP has failed to set up the required number of public toilets besides failing to maintain cleanliness of toilets as per Section 245 of the Karnataka Municipal Corporations

Act. Further hearing has been adjourned till January 12, 2021.

## Mosque's loudspeaker

In another PIL, the bench pulled up the Chairman of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) for not following its February direction to initiate action as per the law against a mosque in Govindarajanagar for illegal use of loudspeaker.

The KSPCB had failed to adhere to the court's direction to nominate an officer to

randomly visit the place where the loudspeaker is installed by the mosque and to record the decibel readings.

Also, the court questioned the lack of response from the government to its query on how the jurisdiction police could issue a licence, that too in perpetuity, sans authority under the Noise Pollution (Regulation and Control) Rules, 2000.

Petitioner Sumangala A. Swamy, a 64-year-old advocate, had complained about illegal use of loudspeaker.



A view of the level crossing near Carmelaram railway station. \*SUDHAKARA JAIN

P2

# Relief for motorists: SWR sanctions Carmelaram RoB

The project reduces travel time for motorists heading towards Sarjapur Road, ORR, Varthur and Gunjur

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

In what will be a huge relief to motorists, South Western Railways (SWR) has come out with a plan to build a Railway over Bridge (RoB) at Carmelaram level crossing. For years, motorists have been asking for an RoB to help ease traffic in the congested area.

The Carmelaram level crossing (gate number 132) is one of the busiest, and an RoB will go a long way in reducing travel time as it eliminates the wait time at the spot. Prior to the lockdown, over 70 trains were operated on this line every day. Currently, the level crossing is used by motorists to reach Sarjapur Road, Outer Ring Road, Varthur and Gunjur.

The project is estimated to cost ₹40.3 crore and Railways will bear ₹11.26 crore through Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh.

According to Chief PRO of SWR E. Vijaya, the Railway Board communicated to SWR that tenders for the project shall be invited only after the pre-requisite conditions are met. This includes

**It is crucial that land required for the project is made available prior to taking up the project. In the city, land acquisition issues delayed RoB projects at Baiyappanahalli**

**E. VIJAYA,**  
Chief PRO, SWR

consent of the State government for closure of level crossing, design and complete land acquisition.

"It is crucial to make sure that land required for the project is made available prior to taking up the project. In the city, land acquisition issues delayed RoB projects at Baiyappanahalli. There were land acquisition problems even at Kodigehalli. We will take up the issue with the authorities concerned prior to taking up the project," the official said.

Member of Parliament (Bengaluru Central) P.C. Mohan told *The Hindu* that measures will be taken to ensure that the project does not face land acquisition hurdles. "Construction of

**Gunjur, Sarjapura Road, Varthur and surrounding areas are rapidly developing. At this juncture, the bridge, which is a long-standing demand, will absolutely be necessary**

**JAGADISH REDDY,**  
Varthur Raising

the RoB will ease traffic congestion in the area. The State government is pro-actively supporting railway projects. The BBMP will make sure that the project gets completed as early as possible," he said.

While welcoming the move, Jagadish Reddy of Varthur Raising, said, "Gunjur, Sarjapura Road, Varthur and surrounding areas are rapidly developing. At this juncture, the bridge, which is a long-standing demand, will absolutely be necessary," he said.

He added that congested and small railway bridges in and around the area should be widened, especially the one on Panathur-Belagere Road.

P2

# Urban Lens Festival to start today

The festival will screen 18 films online from December 1 to 6 at [ihsurbanlens.in](http://ihsurbanlens.in)

**STAFF REPORTER**  
BENGALURU

The seventh edition of the Urban Lens Film Festival will begin on Tuesday. "True to COVID times, the festival will be hosted online. But we see it has only expanded the scope and audience for the festival, making it a truly global platform to look at urban experience," said Subasri Krishnan, Lead - Media Lab, Indian Institute of Human Settlement (IIHS), that hosts the festival.

While there are no films that directly deal with the pandemic, film editor and curator of film festivals Bina Paul has curated a special package of films titled,

'Works of Art are Landscapes of the Mind', that "move through ideas of memory and its erasure, secrets, discovery of each other and contemplations of death".

It includes documentaries, *Babenco*, *Tell Me When I Die* filmed as the Argentinian-Brazilian filmmaker Hector Babenco moved to his death and *The Seasons in Quincy: Four Portraits of John Berger*, a portrait of thinker John Berger set in the tiny Alpine mountain village of Quincy, to where John Berger shifted in 1973, abandoning the metropolis.

"These films could probably alter the landscape of a

viewer's mind as all art is meant to do. At this moment when all the world hit by the pandemic is rebooting, perhaps this alteration is what will bring greater understanding, tolerance and joy," the curator Bina Paul said.

The curation also includes films that talk to each other across genres. For instance, two features, *Dream Land* and *Diamond Island* and a documentary *Last Night I Saw You Smiling*, all set in the city of Phnom Penh in Cambodia, deal with the rapid development of the city, its real estate, erasure of memory, culture and its aftermath.

Two Indian films, *Eeb Al-*

*lay Ooo..* and *Hun, Hunshi, Hunshilal* made three decades apart, when seen together offer a perspective of the Indian urban experience, adding to which is the acclaimed non-fiction feature, *Somewhere Nowhere*.

The festival will also screen documentaries *Cities on Speed: Cairo Garbage*, about the growing garbage problem of Cairo and "World Taxi", a portrait of taxi drivers in five cities across the world.

The festival will screen 18 films, from December 1 to 6, at [ihsurbanlens.in](http://ihsurbanlens.in) free and viewers are required to register to access the films.

P2

## HC orders issue of notice on plea on pvt. hospital selection

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Monday ordered issue of notice to the State government on a PIL petition seeking inquiry into the alleged irregularities in selection and exclusion of private hospitals to treat COVID-19 patients and the withdrawal of the June 2020 order on allowing private hospitals to treat COVID-19 patients.

A Division Bench passed the order on a petition filed by Riyaz Basha, a medical practitioner from Shivamogga.

Alleging that private hospitals were selected without following any sort of guidelines, the petitioner said some of the hospitals were

selected as they belonged to relatives of Ministers, MLAs, and politicians. The petitioner also alleged that "influences and money transactions" had taken place in the matter of selection and dropping of hospitals from the list of designated COVID-19 hospitals and care and isolation centres.

He claimed that in some cities and town, only hi-tech hospitals were selected, leaving out the smaller hospitals having all the basic facilities to treat COVID-19 patients.

### Food supply

The Bench, hearing other PIL petitions related to issues that have cropped up because of COVID-19 restric-

tions, directed the government to submit comprehensive details on the supply of nutritional food through anganwadi centres across the State. It sought data from the start of the lockdown in March to November 30.

The Bench also asked S.R. Umashankar, Principal Secretary, Primary and Secondary Education, to be present in court through videoconference hearing on December 8 as the State government had not complied with the advice of the Centre on the transfer of cooking cost in the form of nutritional pulses and other products, along with food-grains, to the children covered under the midday meal scheme.

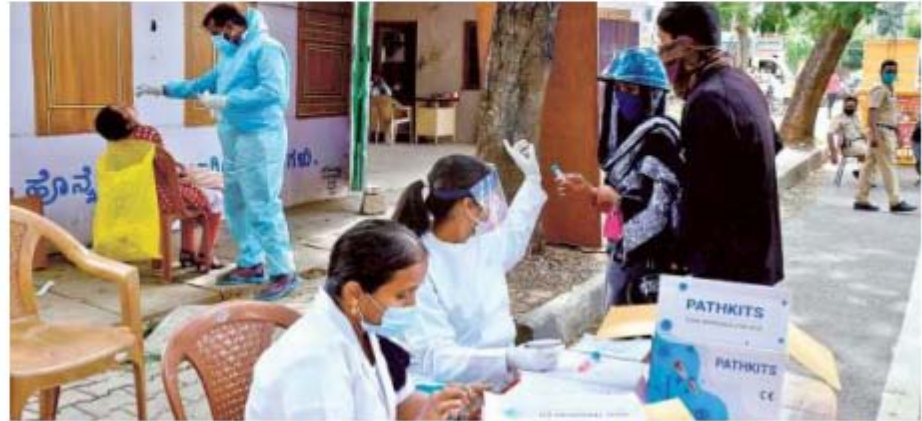
P3

# Wide variations in symptomatic positivity rates in districts

While some districts have a positivity rate below 1%, in others it is as high as 22.5%

TANU KULKARNI  
BENGALURU

In the past seven days, the asymptomatic positivity rate in all districts across Karnataka has remained below 2.3%. While the decline is a huge relief, especially when compared to the rate a few months ago, a closer look at the data shows that when it comes to the positivity rate among symptomatic COVID-19 patients, there is a huge variation across districts during the same period.



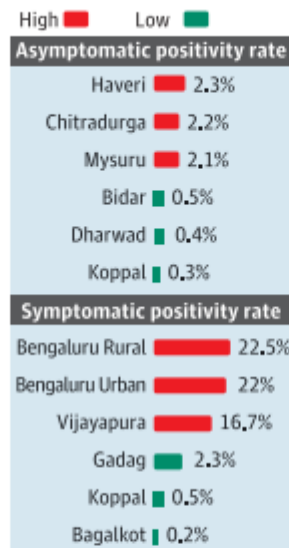
**Hard at work:** Health officials conducting free COVID-19 tests, with the help of policemen, at a police check-post near Rajarajeshwarinagar arch in Bengaluru last month. \*FILE PHOTO

## COVID-19

While one district, for instance, managed to keep the symptomatic positivity rate as low as 0.2%, in another it was as high as 22.5%. According to analysis the State COVID-19 war room as on Sunday, the symptomatic positivity rate over the past week in districts such as Bengaluru Rural and Bengaluru Urban was as high as 22.5% and 22%, respectively. On the other hand, districts such as Koppal and Bagalkot had a symptomatic positivity rate under 1%.

### Active surveillance

Giridhar R. Babu, a member of the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee, said that the percentage of symptomatic cases was an index of how active the district's surveillance system was. "In districts with a higher proportion of symptomatic cases, it indicates that the



Source : State COVID-19 war room

syndromic approach [for detecting cases] is implemented well," he said.

The syndromic approach involves active case seeking on the part of health workers by looking out for and identifying people with COVID-19 symptoms. "Districts having

### COVID-19 update

Number of positive cases reported in Bengaluru Urban on November 30

**444**

Total cases **3,69,734**

Active cases **17,248**

Discharged **3,48,348**

Deaths **4,137+1\***

\* One person died of other causes

Source: Department of Health and Family Welfare

a lower proportion of symptomatic cases indicates that they aren't actively finding more people with symptoms," Mr. Babu said.

He also pointed out that in districts with a higher proportion of asymptomatic cases, one would expect them to have higher cases with symptoms as well. "But the health administration

has not detected those with symptoms."

According to a doctor at a public health centre in Bengaluru, the number of tests conducted on symptomatic patients remains far lower than those conducted on asymptomatic patients, which had resulted in wide variations.

"Many districts need to improve their outreach programmes and ensure that they test more people with symptoms. This will help in ensuring that the symptomatic positivity rate is low," the doctor added.

However, C.N. Manjunath, director of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research, who is also part of the State's COVID-19 expert committee, said the wide variation in symptomatic positivity rate could be the result of statistical error if the number of tests conducted among symptomatic persons is very low.

# Under 1,000 cases reported

**STAFF REPORTER**

**BENGALURU**

Less than 1,000 cases of COVID-19 were reported in the State on Monday. With 998 new cases, the total number of positive cases in Karnataka stood at 8.84 lakh.

However, the number of tests conducted on Sunday was also comparatively lower at 81,333. The positivity rate for the day stood at 1.22%, while the case fatality rate stood at 1.3%. Mean-

while, out of 998 cases, 444 cases were reported in Bengaluru Urban. As many as 2,209 patients were discharged, taking the total number of discharges to 8.49 lakh. As many as 13 positive patients were reported dead, taking the total number of deaths in Karnataka to 11,778.

Out of the total 23,279 active cases in the State, 349 patients are in ICUs across different hospitals.

P3

## 4.69 L healthcare workers register for vaccine

**STAFF REPORTER**

**BENGALURU**

Around 4.69 lakh healthcare workers, including those in government and private sectors, have registered for the COVID-19 vaccination. However, many healthcare workers are yet to register and the list will be updated soon.

The Cabinet Secretary, Government of India, conducted a videoconference meeting with Chief Secretaries of various States and Union Territories on Monday. Across the State, Deputy Commissioners have held task force meetings to review cold-chain preparedness. Data collection on healthcare workers is also under way, a press release from the Department of Health and Family Welfare stated.

The State has also identified more than 30,000 vaccination sites and the process for identification of vaccinators from private facilities has been initiated.



# Testing for HIV and STDs declines sharply

OPDs in all district hospitals saw very few patients during COVID-19 pandemic

TANU KULKARNI  
BENGALURU

The number of people tested for HIV and sexually transmitted infections in Karnataka has declined sharply this year. This is an impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The centres designated to conduct these tests failed to meet the required targets as many of the centres were not functioning fully during the pandemic. Moreover, the out-patient departments in all district hospitals saw very few patients during the pandemic.

According to data provided by the Karnataka State Aids Prevention Society (KSAPS), only 26.42 % of the total targeted 26.34 lakh people have been tested in 2020-2021.

The data collected is up to

## Public tested for HIV

Year	Target	Tested	% Achieved	Positivity %
2016-2017	16.98 lakh	19.4 lakh	114.3	1
2017-2018	19.73 lakh	22.2 lakh	112.49	0.85
2018-2019	22.25 lakh	24.73 lakh	111.16	0.73
2019-2020	26.34 lakh	25.78 lakh	97.85	0.60
2020-2021 Upto October	26.34 lakh	6.96 lakh	26.42	0.67

Source: Karnataka State Aids Prevention Society

October, 2020. Out of the total 6.96 lakh people tested in 2020-2021, as many as 4,682 were found positive for HIV. In the 2019-2020 year, 97.85 % of the testing target was met.

In addition to these, the number of tests conducted to detect sexually transmitted infections (STI) and reproductive tract infections (RTI) too dipped drastically.

Only a total of 18.5 % of

the targeted 4.28 lakh people were tested for STI/RTI. KSAPS tests people for STI or RTI as a person who is detected with this is two to nine times prone to get HIV.

T. Govindaraju, Deputy Director of KSAPS, admitted that the number of tests conducted for HIV as well as other sexually transmitted diseases had been affected due to the pandemic.

He however said that in

## WORLD AIDS DAY



the coming months, they would try to increase the number of tests conducted amidst precautionary measures by deputing more mobile vans across the State. He also said that they wanted to focus particularly on high-risk groups, which include sex workers, homosexuals, truck drivers, migrants, and transgenderers.

### Blood collection

During the pandemic, blood

collection too has taken a severe toll and several blood banks across the State are facing a shortage of blood.

While the targeted units of blood that was supposed to be collected in 2020-2021 was supposed to be 8.08 lakh, only 3.22 lakh units of blood have been collected. Of these, 2.65 lakh units of blood were through voluntary blood donations.

Chethan M. Gowda, founder, KHOON - a non-governmental organisation that promotes blood donations, said that the blood donations took a severe hit during the lockdown in March as blood donation camps could not be conducted and voluntary walk in donations also declined because of fear of transmission of COVID-19 and restricted movement of public.

P5

# Kerala's new cases may have peaked in Oct. at 2.3 lakh

CM Pinarayi Vijayan says incidence lower now; test positivity in A.P. below 1%; T.N. sees 1,410 new cases

## STAFF REPORTER

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM  
Kerala's COVID-19 tally touched 6,02,982 cases on Monday, when 3,382 new cases were reported from 34,689 samples. A dip in testing on Sunday resulted in the slump. But the test positivity rate remained 9.75%.

In October, the State re-

## COVID-19

ported the maximum of 2,35,889 new cases. There were 741 deaths in October. The November figures showed the case load going down by 73,037.

Deaths did not show a big decrease, and 732 fatalities were added in November.

While low disease transmission was seen and new cases dropped in many plac-



es, in districts like Idukki, Wayanad, Kottayam and Malappuram, cases were again on the rise. Chief Minister

Pinarayi Vijayan said new cases seemed to be coming down, but the recovery rate did not show a matching in-

crease. With local body election campaigning on in full swing, the disease curve was almost certain to rise again. On Monday, 21 more deaths were added to the official list. Six deaths were reported from Thrissur, four from Thiruvananthapuram, three from Kottayam and two each from Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Malappuram and Kozhikode.

Andhra Pradesh reported 381 fresh infections, and four new deaths on Monday.

In the past day, 40,728 tests were conducted. Their positivity rate was the lowest in six months at 0.94%. The infection tally was 8,68,064 and the death toll 6,992.

The number of active cases came down to 7,840 as 934 patients recovered in the past day. The overall recovery rate were 8,53,232 and the re-

covery rate was 98.29%.

Anantapur, Krishna, Chittoor and Visakhapatnam reported one new death each.

All the districts reported less than 100 new infections.

Telangana recorded 593 cases on Sunday from only 33,040 samples. The 593 new cases included 119 from Greater Hyderabad, 61 from Rangareddy, 55 from Medchal-Malkajgiri and 40 from Karimnagar.

Another 1,410 persons tested positive in Tamil Nadu on Monday. While 1,456 persons were discharged after treatment, the number of persons presently under treatment stood at 10,997 in the State.

A total of 385 persons tested positive in Chennai.

(With inputs from Vijayawada, Hyderabad, and Chennai bureaus)

P8

**If 2020 was all about Stayin' Alive, 2021 will bring with it a fresh set of challenges — with vaccines making a steady progress, Bengaluru could see an outbreak of...**

# VIAL FEVER



| Sridhar.VIvan  
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TWEETS @sridharVMIRROR

**I**f 2020 will be remembered as the year of the coronavirus and the devastation it wrecked on humanity,

then 2021 will probably go down in history as the year of the vaccine. In the next few years, governments and health professionals will face the daunting task of distributing the vaccine and inoculating people with it. But that's not the least of it.

We're still in the trial stage and already there is news that a 40-year-



old man from Chennai, who volunteered for the third phase of the covid vaccine trial conducted by the Serum Institute of India (SII), has filed a 5-crore compensation claim. In the legal notice sent by the law firm representing him, it says the claim

is, "for a serious adverse event after being administered the under-trial vaccine".

The SII, however, has called the allegations "malicious and misconceived" and threatened to seek damages to the tune of Rs 100 crore, PTI reported.

**“The vaccine supply chain is a five-tiered one which includes national vaccine stores, regional stores, state, district and then the community centres. Each tier needs to factor in storage and distribution... It can be a significant cost to the health care system.**

– Dr US Vishal Rao, HCG Hospital

Experts say that one can also expect a lot of legal wrangles once the vaccines are rolled out to masses especially when the vaccine makers are saying that the efficacy of various vaccines can be between 60 per cent to

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>**

# The roads not taken

MLA Arvind Limbavali's tweet about the restoration of one road in Kasavanahalli has residents question about other roads in the area

KAUSHIK JN

I Y Maheswara Reddy  
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**M**ember of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Arvind Limbavali's tweet about the state of the roads in Kasavanahalli of Mahadevapura, received mixed response from the residents of the area.

"The road had heaps of mud due to underground drainage work and recent rain. The mud has been cleared, the road is levelled and the work of using wet mix on it is going on," MLA Arvind Limbavali tweeted.

However, residents claimed that fixing one road was not enough for the development of the dilapidated roads in the area. Residents took to Twitter to complain about the poor condition of the roads at KPCL Layout, Namma Owners Court, CSB Layout, Tulasi Layout, and Mudaliar Layout, which had become worse after the recent rains.

"At Namma Owners Court, the road has been dug up more than a year and still remains a mess. We have approached the authorities several times, and every time they blame lack of funds for the abandoned work," said Hemakumar K, president, Namma Owners Court Association.

Demanding that the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities to focus on the road, Shivaramappa B, a resident said that the road was unmotorable and a task to walk on.



A test drive by BM shows the difference in the state of roads, as opposed to what the MLA tweeted (inset)

**“The quality of the road restoration is far from satisfactory. The BBMP authorities have taken up drain works at several places and they need to restore them soon”** —Krishnamurthy DM, a resident



Reacting to the MLA's claim, Krishnamurthy DM, a resident said, "The quality of the road restoration is far from satisfactory. The BBMP authorities have taken up drain works at several places and they

need to restore them soon," said Krishnamurthy.

Lamenting over the lack of foresight and coordination withing agencies, Pradeep A, a resident of CSB Layout, said that the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) has laid the UGD pipes but not constructed manholes which are a must to avoid clogging or choking of UGD pipes in future. "Now, the BBMP has taken up construction of shoulder drains in the layout," said Pradeep.

However, BBMP Assistant Executive Engineer Arun SD said that measures were taken to level

6th and 10th Crosses at the KPCL Layout. "We are using a wet mix on 18th Cross to make it a motorable road," said Arun. On the restoration of roads at the Namma Owners Court, the BBMP assistant executive engineer said the funds were allocated for the restoration of the road shortly and the work will be taken up soon.

Watch this story come alive on your device by scanning this QR code



# Dasarahalli JC orders cutting of trees

**I Y Maheswara Reddy**  
c-maheswara.reddy  
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**R**ecently, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Dasarahalli Zone Joint Commissioner wrote a letter to the BBMP Range Forest Officer directing the removal the trees and plants, extended on to the road at Shanti Layout of Mallasandra Ward in Dasarahalli Assembly segment.

The BBMP JC, in the letter to the RFO, has mentioned that he is writing the letter based on the letters by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change Assistant Commissioner (F) RC Meena to Karnataka Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and a representation by Geetha Nirody to



**Geeta Nirody said that the JC was misrepresenting facts**

the BBMP Deputy Conservator of Forests.

"Plants and trees are overgrown onto the road at Shanti Layout of Mallasandra Ward. Take measures to remove those plants and trees and clean the spot," the BBMP Dasarahalli JC said in a letter.

According to the letter by RC Meena to the Karnataka Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, it is



**BM report on November 23**

about Geeta Nirody's complaint against the BBMP Engineering Department.

Meanwhile, Geeta Nirody said that she was shocked and pained to

receive the letter from the Joint Commissioner, BBMP, Dasarahalli Zone grossly misrepresenting facts and falsely stating that I have asked BBMP to come and clear the trees. "There are no trees blocking the road and I am trying to protect trees not get them cut down. Where is this request from me to this effect?" she asks.

When informed, BBMP Dasarahalli Zone Range Forest Officer Rajappa said that he would not give permission to cut the trees. However, BBMP Dasarahalli Zone Joint Commissioner Narasimhamurthy said that he was not aware of the letter sent to the Range Forest Officer or Geeta Nirody. "I joined duty one week ago. My predecessor might have written the letter to Range Forest Officer and Geeta Nirody," said Narasimha Murthy.

# November brings dip we've been waiting for

This has been a good month with big reduction in city's covid cases

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TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

**B**engaluru recorded its lowest daily score in the last few months with 444 fresh cases on November 30 (this drastic dip could have been also because only 36,161 tests were conducted). However, the month itself has been witnessing big reduction in daily fresh cases and deaths. The city that used to report close to 5,000 cases a day is now seeing less than 1,000 in many. Fatalities too have been in single-digit most of the days.

## Daily caseload

In November, Bengaluru added 29,659 cases as compared to 1,01,120 in October and 1,02,458 in September. But, the city is still the second worst-affected one in the country in terms of total number of covid cases in metro cities.

## Active cases

Till July 26, active cases were reported to be between 33,000-37,000. On August 1, the number rose to 37,760, but gradually stabilised to 34,000 in a few weeks. However, by September 24, the active cases in the city were recorded at 40,285 and peaked to 65,664 by October 16 and since then it has been gradually decreasing. By the end of November, the active cases had been reduced to 17,248. The percentage of active cases which was 21.06 per cent of cases in Bengaluru during mid-October is now at 4.96 per cent, according to BBMP war room data.

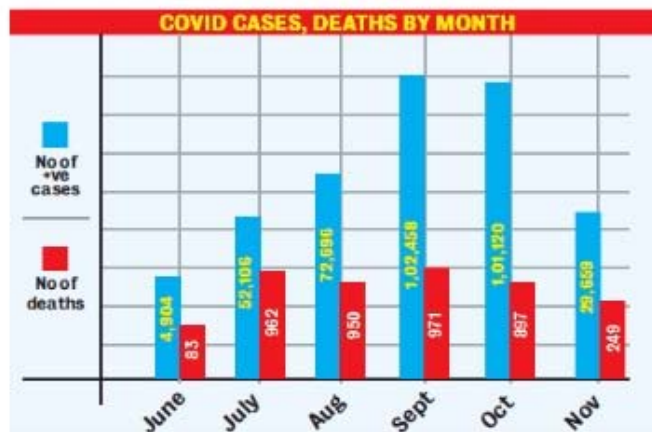
## Recovery rate

The covid recovery rate has also increased greatly by end of November. The recovery rate which was 79.35 per cent as reported on September 24, worsened to 77.7 per cent in



## State wants regional vaccine store in Bengaluru

State has proposed for three new regional vaccine stores in Bengaluru Urban, Shivamogga and Ballari and to have a better distribution network vaccine vans and refrigerated vaccine vans have been requested. During the Union Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba's video conference, state officials proposed for more such stores. As of now, 2,24,083 government health care workers and 2,45,773 private health care workers have been registered for Covid vaccine and the list will be updated as and when more beneficiaries are registered. State has identified more than 30,000 session sites (vaccination sites) and more than 10,000 vaccinators in Government set up have been identified and the process for identification of vaccinators from private facilities as well as per the norms instructed by Union Government has been initiated. As on today 68,317 government and 35,310 private potential vaccinators have been identified.



mid-October. By November 30, it had reached 93.92 per cent.

## Positivity & testing

An analysis of case fatality rate (CFR) shows that it was 0 per cent in March, 5.94 per cent in April, 2.85 per cent in May, 1.69 per cent in June, 1.85 per

cent in July, 1.27 per cent in August, 0.95 per cent in September, 0.89 per cent in October, and 0.84 per cent in November. In terms of the monthly deaths' data, Bengaluru recorded 249 deaths in November, while October was at 887, September at 971,

August at 950, and July at 962.

On the other hand, the positivity rate in March was 3.76 per cent, April at 1.14 per cent, May at 1.10 per cent, June at 6.9 per cent, July at 24.5 per cent, August at 13.45 per cent, September at 12.79 per cent, October at 7.97 per cent, and November at 2.29 per cent.

The testing has been fluctuating between 40-50,000 tests in a day and the total testing in Bengaluru so far has crossed four million (44,45,834).

## Containment zones

There were 40,563 containment zones in August in Bengaluru now there are just two. This is because of a change in the SOP of the government which decided to stop barricading and putting up posters. Only those places where multiple Covid cases are reported are considered as containment zones.

# Garbage contractors gain upper hand

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**O**n Monday, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) conceded to the arguments put forth by garbage contractors on the payment of an additional 16 per cent per auto tipper towards daily collection of waste from every household. The IAS officer, who had termed the extra payment as illegal, remained absent during a crucial meeting, which was also attended by officials from the labour department.

It has been learnt that the labour department insisted the BBMP to pay additional amount to the contractors stating that the labourers are entitled to four weekly offs a month and 10 national holidays. The contractors, who were present in the meeting, stated that they have been deploying substitute staff when auto drivers and helpers are on leave.

In this background, N Manjunath Prasad reportedly directed officials from the solid waste management division to release the payments to the contractors, which has been kept on hold since June, including the additional

16 per cent. There are about 4,000 auto tippers, provided by garbage contractors across the city. Each auto tipper gets about Rs 63,500 a month, including 16 per cent additional amount.

In a report to the government, Thulasi Maddideni, Special Commissioner (Finance) at BBMP, had stated that the 16 per cent additional amount – which is due to labourers who work as substitutes, is part of the Rs 56,000 per auto tipper contract. “A separate amount was not promised as per the contract,” she said. To a query, Maddideni said she was on a two-day leave and could not attend the meeting.



BM report on Nov 30

16 per cent additional amount.

In a report to the government, Thulasi Maddideni, Special Commissioner (Finance) at BBMP, had stated that the 16 per cent additional amount – which is due to labourers who work as substitutes, is part of the Rs 56,000 per auto tipper contract. “A separate amount was not promised as per the contract,” she said. To a query, Maddideni said she was on a two-day leave and could not attend the meeting.

Garbage contractor B Balasubramanyam said some officials were deliberately trying to put the contractors in bad light. “We have been proven right. The labour department too spoke in favour of what we have been saying for the last one week. When the BBMP wants the garbage to be collected daily, they too have come under the purview of labour law as a principal employer,” he said. Officials who attended the meeting said they would make payments after verifying all records, including bank details and provident fund details of the labourers.

# 5-mth low: K'taka logs less than 1k new cases in 24 hrs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka's Covid-19 trajectory witnessed a major milestone on Monday when the day's fresh cases dipped below the 1,000 mark for the first time in five months. The state reported 998 new cases on the day. The last time the state had witnessed less than 1,000 cases was on June 30 when 947 positives were reported.

"The Covid numbers started surging in the first week of July. The situation turned alarming when the state started reporting over 10,000 new cases per day. Now the positive cases have come down despite the government increasing the number of tests conducted per day. This is a positive development for the state," said health minister K Sudhakar.

In its daily bulletin, the health department said 81,333 tests (including 73,000 RT-PCR) were done. The state's positivity rate on Monday was 1.2%. There were 13 deaths reported on Monday and the case fatality rate was 1.3%.



**POSITIVE TREND:** Active cases in Karnataka plunged 63% in a month – from 68,180 on October 29 to 24,776 on November 29

## Wards on city outskirts reporting more cases

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**Bengaluru:** Vasanthapura, Hoodi, Horamavu, Kadugodi, Hemmigeppura, Byatarayanapura and Bellandur wards on the outskirts of Bengaluru are reporting more Covid-19 cases now. These seven wards have been reporting at least 10 positive cases daily

for the past 10 days, according to BBMP data.

On Friday, Kadugodi (17) reported the highest number of Covid-19 cases in the city, followed by Vasanthapura (15), Horamavu (13), Hoodi and Hemmigeppura (11 each) and Byatarayanapura and Bellandur (10 each).

► **17% in Mahadevapura, P 3**

P1

# Fresh infections plunge, but rural and semi-urban share rises to 45%

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Compared to the second week of September, when the daily average of fresh Covid-19 cases in India had crossed the 90,000 mark, there has been a big drop to a little over 40,000 daily cases. However, district-wise data shows that of the 632 for which time series data is available, 284, or about 45%, saw an increase in

cases in the last week, compared to a month earlier.

On April 26, urban districts accounted for 76.8% of total cases, rural and semi-

► **Scientists alarmed at SII threat against volunteer, P 7**

urban districts 20%. On November 29, urban districts' share was 52%, rural and semi-urban 45%.

A majority of districts that have shown an increase

in cases recently are in the rural parts of the country with much smaller bases of case numbers as compared to the large cities, which were India's Covid epicentres in the beginning of the outbreak. The slowing down of large cities like Chennai, Bengaluru and Pune is more than offsetting the increase in districts with much fewer cases.

► **Share of urban dists, P 7**

P1

# 5L health staff to get vaccine in first round

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** In sync with country-wide preparations to roll out a Covid-19 vaccine for the masses, Karnataka has informed the Centre that it has prepared a list of five lakh health workers, who will be administered the vaccine first.

Karnataka's preparedness was communicated at a meeting held by the central government cabinet secretary with chief secretaries of states and UTs on Monday.

The state health and family welfare department said deputy commissioners have held meetings with district task force members to review cold chain preparedness and data collection on healthcare workers in government and private health facilities.

A list of 2,24,083 healthcare workers in the government sector and 2,45,773 in the private sector has been drawn up to get inoculated.

The state has identified more than 30,000 session sites (vaccination sites) and more than 10,000 government vaccinators. The process to identify vaccinators from private facilities has been initiated. The consignee list to install cold chain equipment has been shared and all necessary preparations are in place.

Cold storage space available with the animal husbandry department and dry storage space available with Food Corporation of India have also been earmarked. In order to ramp up cold storage capacity, the state has requested the Centre for more equipment.

The state has proposed to establish three new regional vaccine stores in Bengaluru Urban, Shivamogga and Ballari districts and to ensure better distribution network, it has requested the Centre to supply refrigerated vaccine vans.

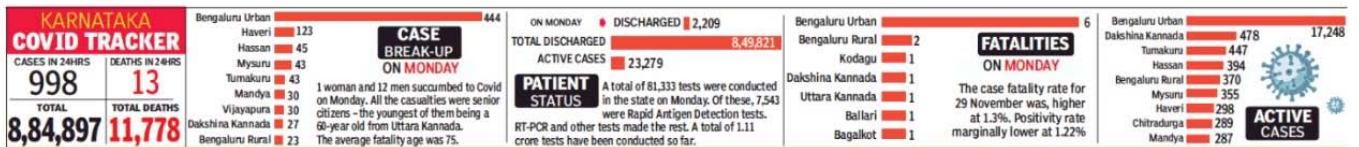
## Delhi reduces RT-PCR test price to ₹800

The Delhi government reduced the rate of an RT-PCR test from Rs 2,400 to Rs 800 from Monday evening. According to the order, issued following a directive by CM Arvind Kejriwal, Rs 1,200 will be charged for an RT-PCR test if the sample is collected at home, which will include charges for visit, sample collection and test. **TNN**

## B'LURU WATCH

Covid figures for Nov 30

Cases	Deaths	Cured	Active
444	6	1,509	17,248





# 65k safety norm violations reported in K'taka in 7 days

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Bengaluru: Karnataka, over the past week, has recorded more than 65,000 violations of Covid-19 safety norms like mandatory wearing of masks and social distancing in public spaces. Some experts rue the lack of enforcement and say self-regulation is, perhaps, the only remedy against a probable second wave.

Data from the State War Room for Covid-19 shows Karnataka recorded 65,649 cases of people violating social distancing and mask rules in seven days ending Saturday (November 28). Sources say the numbers could actually be much higher as monitoring is poor at district and taluk levels.

In Bengaluru, BBMP marshals and police have been tasked with enforcing safety norms, while in other districts, it is mostly police who have been saddled with the job, an official said.

As expected, the most violations — 14,624 — were reported in Bengaluru Urban, followed by Chikkaballapura (9,303) and Kalaburagi (4,815). Bengaluru Urban reported 5,625 positive cases during the seven days, while Chikkaballapura and Kalaburagi saw 167 and 208 infections, respectively.

Districts like Bidar (85), Vijayapura (133) and Uttara Kannada (291) reported fewer violations during the same seven-day period. While Bidar report-



**MEETING TARGETS:** A motorist argues with marshals, who flagged him down for not wearing a mask in Bengaluru

ed 50 positive cases, Vijayapura saw 140 and Uttara Kannada 178. Bidar, however, had the least number of active cases.

Ramachandran R, deputy commissioner of Bidar district, admitted lack of enforcement could be one of the main reasons for spread of the virus. "Various factors including manpower shortage could be reasons for lack of enforcement. We will be stricter with enforcement," he said.

Despite there being a sharp drop in fresh cases and with

hopes of a vaccine rising, experts say ignoring precautions can lead to big trouble.

Dr H Sudarshan Ballal, chairman, Manipal Hospitals and member of Karnataka's expert committee on Covid-19, said massive second and third waves of Covid-19 are unfolding in Delhi and some other states, stretching the healthcare system to breaking point.

"This surge is solely due to the negligence of the citizens in those states," Dr Ballal said. "They are not taking neces-

## TOP CULPRITS

District	Cases
Bengaluru Urban	14,624
Chikkaballapura	9,303
Kalaburagi	4,815
Mandya	3,695
Mysuru	3,617

From November 22-29 | Source: State War Room

sary precautions of wearing masks, ensuring social distancing, frequent hand washing and following cough etiquette. Cold temperatures of the winter and pollution have added to the problem too."

Dr Ravindra M Mehta, head of the department of pulmonology and interventional pulmonology, Apollo Hospitals and member of BBMP's Covid-19 expert committee, said the pandemic is showing bi-phasic or tri-phasic patterns where the incidence of infections rages for a while and abates only to rise again. Behavioural patterns like wearing masks and social distancing can reduce the chance of infection, he said.

"In Bengaluru, we have found that Covid-19 incidence, by and large, lags behind cities like Delhi and Mumbai by roughly about 2-3 months," Dr Mehta said. "Considering that Delhi's second wave began around two weeks ago, the next 2-3 months would be the period when maximum vigilance is required in Bengaluru."

# Drive to vaccinate children against tetanus hits hurdle

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**Mysuru:** The possibility of huge groups of children growing up being susceptible to diseases like tetanus and diphtheria in Karnataka is stark as efforts to vaccinate students against these diseases hit a massive hurdle due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Drive to administer tetanus and diphtheria (TD) vaccines were to be carried out for pupils in class 1, 5 and 10 in all district schools on November 25 and 27, but it failed to evoke even a decent response due to fear of contracting Covid-19 and the fact that schools are closed.

Officials suggest that not even 50% of students were vaccinated. As a result, headmasters of all schools have been tasked to ensure children come to school on a stipulated day and get vaccinated.

“Since only half the number of students studying in class 1, 5 and 10 turned up on these two days, we have decided to extend the last date for vaccination to December 31,” said DDPI Panduranga. “All headmasters have been asked to coordinate with taluk health officials and ensure students are vaccinated.”

Authorities say the vaccine is extremely important as children are vulnerable to these two common diseases. Tetanus is caused by bacteria which target the nervous system, leading to painful muscular contractions, especially of the jaw and neck. Diphtheria is also caused by bacteria and leads to difficulty in breathing, heart failure, paralysis and even death.

Sources in the education department said the vaccination drive is statewide.

“On November 20, chief secretary Vijay Bhaskar TM, in a video conference, had asked all district administrations to ensure students are vaccinated,” said an official from the department of public instruction. “This vaccination drive was originally scheduled for June. However, due to the pan-



Syed Asif

**IN OVERDRIVE:** A BBMP health worker collects a swab sample from a man who arrived in KR Market in Bengaluru on a BMTc bus on Monday

demic, it was pushed back. But now parents and students are not coming forward to get vaccinated. The vaccine is mandatory for all students in government and private schools.”

Panduranga said the response to the drive is better in rural areas compared to schools in urban locales. “We conducted the vaccination drive after taking all precautionary measures,” he said. “It is sad that parents are still not showing interest. I held a meeting with all block education officers (BEOs) in this regard today and instructed them to achieve 100% target.”

However, faculty and school managements say the big challenge is to convince parents. “Parents are not prepared to bring their children because of fear of Covid-19. They fear they could be infected by the virus. In such a scenario, we are also helpless,” said a school principal, who did not wish to be named.

## Legal authority to help kids selling knick-knacks

**Bengaluru:** The high court on Monday directed the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority to chalk out a scheme to help identify children selling toys, flowers and other knick-knacks at traffic junctions.

A division bench gave this direction after both the BBMP and government did not respond to the court's November 18 order for framing a scheme to collect data of such children. KLSA has to submit a report by December 22; the government and BBMP have been asked to support the authority in the matter.

The court is hearing a PIL filed by NGO Letzkit, seeking directions to ensure that children are not forced to sell toys, ear buds, flowers at junctions. The petitioner said after public transport services resumed on May 19 following the lockdown, children were back on the streets selling goods to make up for business loss. **TNN**

# Weekend traffic ban a hit, 7 more roads may go Church Street way

## 'Footfall Up In Past 2 Weeks'

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**Bengaluru:** The weekend traffic ban on Church Street which kicked off on November 7 has received a thumbs-up from citizens and commercial establishments, including restaurants and pubs, which are witnessing an increase in business after a dull start.

A pilot project of Clean Air Street, an initiative by the Directorate of Urban and Land Transport (DULT) along with Indian Institute of Science, the ban has been in place for four weeks and will continue till February. Buoyed by its success, DULT is planning to make seven more streets pedestrian friendly on weekends.

Deepak Batavia, president of Church Street Occupants Association, said footfall has increased in the past two weeks. "It's a great initia-

## GANDHI BAZAAR MAIN ROAD, COMMERCIAL ST ON LIST

The seven more streets that are likely to turn pedestrian friendly on weekends according to DULT plans are Gandhi Bazaar Main Road (KR Road-DVG Road), Malleswaram 8th Cross (between Margosa Road and 18th Sampige Road), 10th Main adjacent to Jayanagar shopping complex, Russell Market road, Commercial Street (Kamaraj Road-Juma Masjid Road), Brigade Road (MG Road-Residency Road) and Malleswaram 7th Cross to 10th Cross.

"We are planning to take up the Gandhi Bazaar road in the next phase. Bengaluru Smart City mission has undertaken upgradation work on some of these stretches in CBD, which is likely to be completed by March," said a DULT official.

DULT commissioner V Manjula said: "The feedback from traders and visitors of Church Street is positive and the response has been overwhelming. We will publish footfall figures in the next few days." According to Manjula, the design for pedestrianisation of Gandhi Bazaar Main Road is almost ready and residents from Malleswaram 8th Cross

have also expressed interest to replicate the project there. "But these projects are in various stages of implementation. We can implement a weekend traffic ban on a street only after design, feasibility study, public consultation with stakeholders and other things," she explained.

have also expressed interest to replicate the project there. "But these projects are in various stages of implementation. We can implement a weekend traffic ban on a street only after design, feasibility study, public consultation with stakeholders and other things," she explained.

He said outdoor dining being promoted on the street is a good idea. "But customers are not allowed to

drink beer while sitting outside," he added.

People from across Bengaluru are thronging Church Street as it has turned into the most happening wee-



**FRESH FLAVOUR:** Outdoor seating arrangement on the street has found many takers

kend spot in the city. "I have visited Church Street several times but this is a new experience. I'm getting the feel of a foreign city. I can walk on this cobblestoned street without the fear of being knocked down by a vehicle and don't have to bother about the honking nuisance," said Ajay S, a techie.

Many Church Street restaurants with outdoor seating are seeing huge crowds on weekends as many people seem to prefer the arrangement over closed AC halls due to pandemic fear.

The visitors include children and fitness enthusiasts, who want to witness the pedestrian-friendly transformation of the street. "The Broke Artists Collective's 'Take what you love, pay what you like' concept is really interesting and unique. The live music gives a festive vibe. They (authorities) should extend this to more streets and encourage artists and musicians. They could also provide some playing equipment for children," said Revathy R, a resident of Koramangala.

# 17% of cases from Mahadevapura

► Continued from page 1

According to BBMP's bulletin, Mahadevapura accounts for nearly 17% of cases during last week, while Bommanahalli zone reported 14%. These zones include areas on the periphery of the city.

BBMP officials admitted they are facing a huge challenge in enforcing mandatory masks and social distancing norms that are crucial to contain the pandemic.

## LAST WEEK'S DATA

"With easing of the lockdown, people are not understanding the importance of maintaining social distancing, though there is some attempt to follow the mandatory mask norm," said a BBMP marshal in Horamavu. BBMP marshals and police have been tasked with enforcing Covid-19 norms.

"Zones like Bommanahalli are teeming with industrial pockets and we can't expect people to maintain social distancing," a health officer said.

Sources in BBMP said they're facing huge manpower issues in enforcing mask and social distancing norms in Bommanahalli and Mahade-

vapura zones. While Rs 25,000 was collected as fine from violators in Bommanahalli on Monday till 7.30pm, it was Rs 35,750 in Mahadevapura.

Enforcement is way better in south and west zones, where the fine collected was Rs 1.1 lakh and Rs 80,750 respectively.

Sources said enforcement in Bommanahalli and Mahadevapura zones is also hindered as most violators are poor and don't carry with them enough money to pay the Rs 250 fine. "All we can do is pull them up and send them off," they added.

"Many people testing positive in these areas are either labourers or industry workers who fail to follow health protocols and ensure Covid-appropriate behaviour. They only wear masks when marshals are around and social distancing is just not followed," said Rajendra Cholan, special commissioner health and IT.

"Most of these people live in shanty localities where even if one person is tested positive, at least five others easily turn positive," he added. BBMP now plans to spread awareness about social distancing and mask use by making public announcements on autotippers, Cholan told TOI.

## Drink tea from earthen cups in SWR stations

**Bengaluru:** Tea, coffee and milk will now be served in earthen cups (kulhads) instead of paper ones at South Western Railway stations. SWR officials said the decision was taken following railway minister Piyush Goyal's announcement as part of the plastic-free initiative. "In SWR, plastic cups were discontinued two years ago and paper cups were being used to serve tea/coffee at stations," said a release. "Kulhads were introduced on a pilot basis in some stations of Hubballi division in January," the note said.

P3

## BBMP told to submit action plan on city's requirement of public toilets

**Bengaluru:** The high court on Monday told the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to undertake a study to ascertain how many public toilets are required in Bengaluru and submit a comprehensive action plan.

"The location of public toilets will have to be finalised and the scheme must provide for proper amenities and also for maintaining cleanliness," a division bench headed by Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka observed, while granting time till January 9, 2021 to BBMP. The bench said after examining the action plan, the court can issue directions which can be applied to other local bodies.



INADEQUATE AMENITIES

The court is hearing a PIL by Letzkit, Bengaluru-based social organisation, which has complained that section 245 of KMC Act mandates the BBMP to set up public urinals but it has not been implemented properly by the civic body. **TNN**

# Loo & behold! 70-yr-old govt school gets facelift

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Bengaluru: Thanks to a Bengaluru-based NGO, a 70-year-old government girls' school in Malur is ready to welcome students to an entirely new campus.

As its name suggests, One School At A Time (a registered not for profit) focuses on rebuilding one institution at a time, equipping it with classrooms, toilets, kitchen and drinking water facility.

In early 2018, when OSAAT received a request from Malur Government Model Higher Primary Girls School in Kolar district, the school was in a dilapidated condition with broken floors, cracked walls and a roof on the verge of caving in.

Vadiraaja Bhatt, managing trustee of OSAAT, said the school caters to over 300 students from classes 1 to 8. "Girls from humble backgrounds (labourers and small farmers) from more than 10 villages up to 20km away from Malur town

## 100 INSTITUTIONS BY 2025

Founded in 2003 by Indian IT professionals living in the US, OSAAT was established with the sole aim of helping government schools in rural parts of the country. Till date, they have completed 37 projects, including 26 major ones in Karnataka. They have also worked for schools in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Manipur.

GK Bhat, treasurer of OSAAT, said their 50th project began in Belagavi last month. "We have identified seven to eight schools in Belagavi that were hit by heavy rain last year. Our focus is on infrastructure and it costs us around Rs 35-40 lakh per school on average," Bhat, a retired banker, said. "We plan to complete 100 schools by 2025," he added.

attend this school. Despite many private schools nearby, it has good strength because of nine teachers and extra-curricular activities," he said.



**THEN AND NOW:** Once defined by cracked walls and broken floors, Malur Government Model Higher Primary Girls School has got a new building

Due to leakage and weakened walls, the run-down school building was almost unsuitable for conducting sessions barring one classroom. The

toilet was also in poor condition. "Providing a school with proper infrastructure and making it safe and hygienic will go a long way in educa-

ting every girl child in the community, leading to higher education and general well-being," Bhatt added.

A team from OSAAT visited the school on multiple occasions between March and October 2018 and their engineering team came up with a plan to construct a two-storey building with eight classrooms, two toilet blocks, an office and a staff room. They worked with the local administration and the education department to get approvals and get the old building demolished. Their fundraising team proposed the project to a few donors and two corporate donors in India and an individual from the US came forward to fund it.

One of OSAAT's largest projects, it cost around Rs 95 lakh. Bhumi puja was held in July 2019 and the building was ready in March 2020. The NGO got a few more donors in Bengaluru to chip in with furniture. Whenever schools restart, the school will open after a formal inauguration.

# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

ONLY KERALA LAGS IN RECOVERY NUMBERS

## Covid Grip on Southern States Seen Loosening

Our Bureau

Bengaluru: Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Telangana have reported a recovery rate of above 95% in Covid-19 infected persons, pointing to a gradual decline of the pandemic, and probably improved immunity levels in the population.

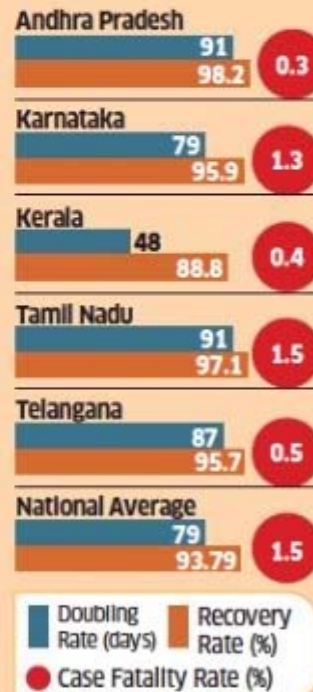
Kerala, however, has been an exception where the recovery rate is a tad below at 89%.

Manipal Hospitals chairman Dr Sudarshan Ballal said the higher recovery could be due to both improved immunity and better control measures.

The average rate of recovery at the national level itself is about 94%, inspiring hope among the Covid-19 administrators. The steady improvement in Covid-19 indicators combined with the news around the development of vaccines is expected to lift the economy further.

Kerala has been reporting a higher number of infections over the past few days, but that is not causing concern among senior health officials because it has not led to an increase in deaths. The state has not only reported fewer deaths compared to its southern peers but finds itself somewhere at the bottom of the heap with an impressive record. The state has had four deaths for every 1,000 infected persons.

### South's Scorecard



(Source: Govt bulletins)

The higher recovery could be due to both improved immunity and better control measures

**Dr Sudarshan Ballal,**  
Chairman, Manipal Hospitals

Another encouraging trend has been the doubling rate or the number of days taken for the Covid-19 positive cases to double galloping to a national average of 79 days. Among the southern states, it takes more than three months for the cases to double in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, 87 days in Telangana, and 79 days in Karnataka. In the case of Kerala, it takes 48 days, which probably explains why the state is not going easy on quarantine regulations as in the other states.

Back in mid-August, the number of days taken for Covid-19 positive cases to double had risen sharply across the south — indicating that the epidemic was moving towards a peak. It was in the range of 17 to 25 days across the southern states around that time.

The present trends, as for the case fatality rate or deaths per 100 infected persons, shows Tamil Nadu remains at the top with 1.5%, followed by Karnataka at

1.3%, Telangana at 0.5%, Kerala at 0.4% and Andhra Pradesh at 0.3%. Except Tamil Nadu, all other states have a death rate below that of the national average (1.5%).

According to Dr Ballal, there has been a dramatic improvement in Covid-19 cases across the south, except in Kerala. The southern states, he said, did not see a resurgence of the pandemic as it happened in parts of North India at the beginning of November.

“I used to get about 100 calls or text messages a day in September and October for hospital beds, and I don’t get a single call now. Which means hospital beds are available even without influence,” he said.

Dr Ballal hailed Karnataka’s decision to ease restrictions on blocking of beds in private hospitals which he said had made all those beds available for treating non-Covid patients, who, he said, suffered a lot during the peak season of the pandemic.

P3

## K’taka Sees Further Dip in Covid Cases

Our Bureau

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka reported a further decline in cases on Monday, with the state registering just 998 cases in the past 24 hours.

This took the state’s total tally to 884,897. Thirteen Covid-related deaths were recorded, pushing the total death toll to 11,778.

Bengaluru Urban reported 444 fresh cases including six de-

aths. The city accounted for about 40% of the state’s overall caseload with 369,734 people getting infected in all.

**998**  
**TOTAL CASES REPORTED IN THE STATE**

As many as 2,209 positive persons recovered and were discharged on Monday, taking the total recoveries to 849,821.

P3

## K'taka sees steepest Covid fall

Active cases fall in state; cases also drop sharply in other southern states

KALYAN RAY  
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Karnataka recorded the steepest decline in the number of active Covid-19 cases in the last one month followed by Maharashtra, while north-west India saw a marginal rise in such cases during the same period.

On October 29, there were

68,180 active cases in Karnataka, but the number fell to 24,770 on November 29 — a drop of 43,410 active cases within 30 days, said the Union Health Ministry on Monday.

"It is important to improve the testing strategy," Giridhar Babu, a senior epidemiologist at the Public Health Foundation of India, told *DH*.

"Even when the state was under increased scrutiny for reporting more cases, Karnataka not only increased the number of tests during the surge but also was among the foremost states in using the syndromic approach for the review of district performance."

Babu said this enabled the state to curb the transmission



Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh are seeing a small surge in active cases. PTI FILE PHOTO

by isolating the symptomatic who can spread the infection to more people.

"Karnataka's success has also been possible due to the success in Bengaluru, which saw a series of reforms

and enhanced testing. Moving forward, the state conducted a statewide survey whose findings were used to implement future interventions," said Babu.

The number of active cas-

es also fell in Maharashtra by more than 39,000 within a month.

Similarly, the number of active cases declined by nearly 28,500 in Kerala and in excess of 15,000 in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Such a trend seems to suggest that the pandemic is in retreat in south India.

But there is a rise in the number of active cases in north-western states like Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh as well as Madhya Pradesh in the same period, albeit on a smaller scale.

The maximum rise was seen in Rajasthan (by 13,043) followed by Haryana (8,902) and Delhi (7,200).

P1

## Victoria Hospital set to resume non-Covid services; tests on to check for fungal presence

SURAKSHA P  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru's largest government clinical facility Victoria Hospital will no longer be reserved only for Covid patients. The 550-bed facility will soon begin non-Covid services that were shut for over eight months since March 2020.

After shifting all the existing Covid patients to the Trauma and Emergency Care Centre (TECC), which is on the hospital campus, hospital staff will take up culture tests for fungal growth in its buildings.

Victoria Hospital has four buildings on its campus that have been reserved for Covid patients: the Tower Block with A and B wings or the west and east wings, TECC, H Block and C Block.

"There was no maintenance for the past eight months. First, the TECC needs to be readied. Patients from the Tower Block need to be shifted to TECC. Operation theatres have to be fumigated and cul-



Victoria Hospital

ture tests have to be done on samples taken from OTs.

The culture test results will take seven days. There should be no fungus and bacteria. We will deploy fogging machines and start disinfecting TECC from tomorrow," said Dr Girish P G, director of Medical Education Department and Special Officer of PMSSY Hospital. Victoria Hospital comes under the medical education department.

"We will collect samples before and after sterilisation from December 1. If all tests come negative, we will immediately start non-Covid services," he said. Only Vani Vilas Hospital, PMSSY Hospital, Minto Hospital and Institute of Nephrourology Hospitals on Victoria Hospital campus are offering non-Covid services.

"H Block and C Block will be on standby for Covid patients," Dr Girish added.

### Ensure ethical standards: Parliamentary panel

Amid a row on the trials of Covid-19 vaccines in India, a Parliamentary panel has asked the government to "ensure the highest level of ethical and procedural standards" during vaccine evaluations, notwithstanding the urgency to develop a vaccine against the rampaging epidemic.

The panel's report comes at a time when the Serum Institute of India demanded Rs 100 crore in damages from a recipient who had developed serious neurological conditions after receiving the vaccine and sought Rs 5 crore compensation.

Details on Page 5

### Moderna says vaccine 100% effective, seeks clearance

Biotechnology company Moderna said on Monday that it will request the US and European regulators to issue an emergency authorisation for its coronavirus vaccine, which it said is 100% effective against severe Covid-19 cases.

Moderna said the primary analysis of the phase-3 study of its vaccine candidate mRNA-1273 conducted on 196 cases indicates an efficacy of 94.1% against Covid-19, while it was 100% against severe Covid-19.

Details on Page 10

P1



# Gram panchayats set for 2-phased polls amid Covid

Polling on Dec 22 and Dec 27; model code comes into effect

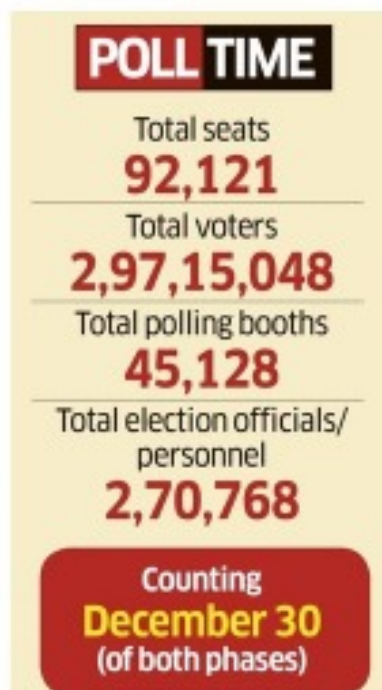
BENGALURU, DHNS

More than 2.97 crore people spread across 5,762 gram panchayats in Karnataka will vote in a two-phased polls in December amid the pandemic, in what will be a major test for authorities nervously watching the dropping Covid cases.

In the first phase, 2,930 gram panchayats will go to polls on December 22, while 2,832 gram panchayats will do the same on December 27, according to the State Election Commission (SEC). The results will be out on December 30.

Although these polls are not fought on party symbol, they are often seen as a barometer to gauge the mood in rural areas.

The state government had asked the SEC to postpone the polls due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with Health Minister K Sudhakar stating that there might be a "door delivery of the virus" during the cam-



painging.

However, the High Court rapped the government and directed the SEC to conduct the elections while hearing a petition filed by Congress leader KC Kondaiah and others.

State Election Commissioner B Basavaraju said 92,121 representatives will be elected. "There are 162 gram panchayats whose term ends after Dec 2020, six whose election cases are in court, and 74 that are either completely (33) or partially (41) upgraded to town panchayats are exempt from elections," he said.

Model code of conduct will be in effect from Nov 30 to Dec 31.

# Gardens flower in vacant plots in Koramangala

HITA PRAKASH  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Any resident of Bengaluru knows that a vacant plot is never vacant in the city. It invariably becomes a garbage dumping site and, sometimes, a public urinal.

Now, residents in upscale Koramangala have come up with a novel solution to deal with the chronic problem: community gardens.

Residents of 1st Block are growing veggies, fruits and flowers for their own consumption in vacant sites in



Residents plant saplings in a vacant plot in Koramangala 1st Block in Bengaluru on Monday. DH PHOTO/S K DINESH

their neighbourhood, in an initiative of striking ingenuity. 'Pratham Community Gar-

dens', a brainchild of Koramangala Residents Welfare Association (KRWA), is being

implemented in three places on 60X40 dimension plots.

"We spoke to about half-a-dozen owners of vacant sites with our innovative idea. While a few of them refused, many permitted us to convert them into gardens," explained Padmashree, President of the KRWA.

Along with another KRWA member Rajgopal, Padmashree not only convinced the land owners but also sensitised neighbours in the block about the idea and its multiple uses.

► Gardens, Page 2

P1

# 49 HIV patients in the state contracted Covid, five dead

Docs say those on regular ART treatment respond well

SURAKSHA P  
DHNS, BENGALURU

While people with various kinds of comorbid conditions contracted Covid-19, the plight of those with HIV was less talked about during the pandemic.

Prior to December 1, marked as World AIDS Day,

data accessed by DH revealed that 49 people with HIV were affected with Covid-19 and five of them have died.

Doctors said HIV patients regularly taking antiretroviral therapy or ART will have as good a chance of survival as those who are HIV negative.

ASHA Foundation, an NGO catering to HIV patients, said



12 of its patients contracted Covid and two have died. Doctors recommend periodic CD4 checks and multivitamins for HIV patients in addition to ART.

A normal CD4 count ranges from 500-1,200 cells/mm<sup>3</sup> in adults. A low CD4 count would

indicate that the individual's immune system has been affected by HIV.

Dr Ravi Kumar DN, Regional Programme Officer (Care, Support and Treatment), Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society, said one lakh patients are on ART in the state.

"We can't know their Covid status unless they inform us," he said. "Out of them, 49 tested positive for Covid-19 and five have died. Nearly 30,000 patients couldn't be followed up for ART treatment. Till October, there have been 80,000 deaths. It was 79,863 six months ago and the rise isn't significant compared to

the pre-pandemic period."

Dr Glory Alexander, director, ASHA Foundation, said patients taking ART and with a good CD4 count respond well to Covid. "Twelve of our patients contracted Covid and two died," she said.

One of the patients was a 48-year-old who came late and had hypoxia. He was admitted to hospital for three weeks and died. The second was a 55-year-old who had a discordant response. "He was my patient for 20 years and his CD4 count was always on the lower side. The other 10 patients aged between 25 and 65 fared well," Dr Glory said.

P2

# Beautify median strips in 2 months, says BBMP chief

BENGALURU, DHNS

**B**BBMP Administrator Gaurav Gupta has set a two-month deadline for officials to spruce up medians that have become garbage dumping grounds or hiding places for strays.

Perhaps the only place to cultivate greenery, the barren, dusty and poorly maintained median strips that have become the city's eyesores caught the administrator's attention.

Holding a review meeting of the horticulture and forest wings of the Palike, Gupta riled officials for the pathetic maintenance of medians on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) and other major roads.

He directed the horticulture officials of all the zones to beautify all circles and medians by tending to the plants within two months. He also sought details of saplings planted by the forest department, tree parks and other projects of the forest wing.



**The BBMP has directed horticulture officials of all zones to beautify and maintain all circles and medians in the city regularly.** DH FILE PHOTO

# Vydehi Hosp to start Phase 3 Covaxin trial from Dec 2

To enrol 1,000  
subjects

BENGALURU, DHNS

The highly anticipated vaccine by Bharat Biotech will soon undergo Phase 3 clinical trial in Vydehi Hospital from December 2.

Clintrac International Pvt Ltd and Vydehi Hospital have partnered to initiate the third phase of the trial at the Vydehi Institute of Medical Sciences & Research Centre.

K M Srinivasa Murthy, Di-

rector, Vydehi Hospital, told *DH* that the vaccine will be administered on 1,000 subjects in two doses.

"The first dosage will be administered on December 2. Following this, we will study the subjects for 28 days. On December 30, the second dosage will be administered," he said. The hospital is looking for 1,000 volunteers to take part in the trial. "We have a 1,800-bed facility as well as specialists in the field. Our experts and research team will evaluate the trial results. The third phase of the trial is critical in determining the success of a vaccine," he said.

Asked about a timeframe

for the final outcome, Murthy said the trial will be keenly observed by all, but he had confidence in Bharat Biotech's experience.

"This is a company that has manufactured vaccines for many diseases. We are hoping for a positive outcome at the earliest, but we will let the experts and authorities do the rest," he said.

The hospital said in a statement that it is expecting to enroll 1,000 subjects in the coming days and hope to provide quality data for analysis by the sponsor team and submission to Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) as "part of this national and prestigious trial".

P2

## HC seeks details on public toilets

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Karnataka High Court has directed the BBMP to hold a comprehensive study on setting up public privies (toilets) in the city. The court said it would pass orders based on the report, which could be applicable to other cities in the state.

A division bench headed by Chief Justice Abhay Shreenivas Oka was hearing a PIL filed by Letzkit Foundation. The bench said that BBMP must undertake a study to ascertain the requirement of public privies.

"The location of the public privies will have to be final-

ised. The scheme must provide for proper amenities in public privies and also for maintaining cleanliness and hygiene in public privies," the bench said.

The court said it can issue directions after examining the action plan, which can be applied to other local bodies. The court granted BBMP time to provide an exhaustive action plan. The petition stated that Section 245 of the KMC Act mandates the BBMP to set up public toilets. The BBMP is not discharging its duty and the failure is leading to the violation of Article 47 of the Constitution.

P2



## 'Identify kids selling at signals'

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The Karnataka High Court has directed the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA) to identify children allegedly forced to sell toys and flowers at traffic signals. It observed that both the state government and the BBMP have failed to submit a report.

In the previous hearing, a division bench headed by Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka had directed the BBMP to submit a report after collect-

ing data on such children in the city. The KSLSA has been directed to frame a scheme and submit the report by December 22. The court has directed the state government and the BBMP to extend all possible cooperation to the KSLSA.

The court is hearing a PIL by the NGO Letzkit Foundation, which contends that children are forced to sell toys, earbuds and flowers, among other things at traffic signals.

## PAVING THE WAY



**Footpaths dug up on Millers Road near Vasanth Nagar for the Smart City project. Citizens want authorities to complete the work at the earliest as it is tough to commute on these roads.** DH PHOTO/IRSHAD MAHAMMAD

# Gardens flower in vacant plots...

## Gardens, from Page 1

“With everybody chipping in, we zeroed in on three plots in our block that had enough sunlight besides neighbours agreeing to provide us with water to cultivate plants,” she explained.

The area MLA and former minister Ramalinga Reddy also helped the residents by getting the BBMP’s horticulture wing to prepare the soil for planting and paying the cost of fencing.

Residents built the fencing using discarded scrap from a nearby park and iron rods rusting on the premises of the BBMP ward office. Residents of Koramangala 3rd block helped them with 10 bags of compost generated in their own neighbourhood.

Papaya, drumsticks, banana and other flower varieties have been planted to begin with.

“Flowers were chosen to keep the areas scenic besides assisting in pollination of vegetable and fruit crops,” Pad-

mashree said.

Having completed the work in one plot, residents have taken up planting work in other plots.

According to residents, Reddy has communicated that he would sponsor any RWA interested in converting empty sites into community gardens in his constituency.

The KRWA has also divided the kids from the neighbourhood into teams of four to five kids to get trained in potting, preparing soil and planting techniques. The kids will begin to attend gardening classes. The RWA has also hired a gardener to look after all the three gardens.

Padmashree said they just wanted to keep the neighbourhood clean and had no commercial interest. “The harvest will be charged Rs 100 for a bag containing two papaya, half-a-dozen bananas and two drumsticks for the residents of the block. The money will again go to the maintenance of the garden,” she added.

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# K'taka sees less than 1k new Covid cases since March

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Karnataka on Monday reported 998 fresh infections and 13 deaths. This is the first time since March that the State has reported cases below thousand mark.

Bengaluru Urban accounted for 444 cases on Monday. The state capital now has 17,248 active cases. Haveri reported next highest caseload with 123 new infections. So far, 8,84,897 Covid-19 cases have been reported in the state, which include 11,778 deaths and 8,49,821 discharges.

On Monday, 2,209 were discharged. The active case tally is currently 23,279. Out of 81,333 tests done in the last 24 hours, 7,543 were rapid antigen tests.

Health and Medical Education Minister Dr K Sudhakar on Monday said the state had seen a sharp decline in the active cases in the last one month.

“From 68,180 active cases on 29th October to 24,776 active cases on 29th November, the active cases have declined by 63.6%,” Sudhakar tweeted.



# COVID-19 Tracker



States/UT	Active	Infected	Death	Daily cases	Daily Death
Maharashtra	90,572	18,23,896	47,151	3,837	80
Kerala	62,025	6,02,983	2,245	3,383	21
Delhi	35,091	5,66,648	9,066	NA	NA
Haryana	28,653	2,34,126	2,428	1,604	27
West Bengal	24,298	4,83,484	8,424	2,671	48
Uttar Pradesh	24,099	5,43,888	7,761	2,015	19
Karnataka	23,279	8,84,897	11,778	998	13
Chhattisgarh	20,641	2,35,998	2,840	NA	NA
Rajasthan	18,362	2,68,063	2,312	2,677	20
Gujarat	14,870	2,09,780	3,989	1,502	20
Others	98,445	36,04,350	39,476	7,309	84

**4,40,335**  
TOTAL ACTIVE  
CASES

**88,79,185**  
TOTAL  
RECOVERED

**94,58,113**  
TOTAL  
INFECTED

**1,37,470**  
TOTAL COVID DEATHS

**1,123**  
NON-COVID DEATHS\*

DHNS/PTI (10 PM,  
November 30)  
\*Patients dead due to  
non-Covid reasons

# HC TO BBMP: HOW MANY PUBLIC TOILETS NEEDED IN B'LURU?

Court asks Palike to conduct survey after PIL claims number of loos insufficient



According to Swachh Bharat Mission guidelines, city needs 1,100 public toilets and a toilet complex set up every seven km | EXPRESS

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court on Monday directed the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to conduct a study to know how many public toilets are required for Bengaluru.

The direction came after a PIL claimed that there were not enough public toilets in Bengaluru and the existing ones were not properly maintained.

A division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty passed the order after hearing the public interest litigation filed by city-based Letzkit Foundation.

Directing the BBMP to submit an action plan before January 9, 2021, the bench specified that the plan should have the details like facilities provided in existing public toilets and whether cleanliness and hygiene are maintained.

The bench indicated that it will issue directions to the state government to extend the scheme to other urban local bodies after examining the plan to be submitted by the BBMP on or before January 9.

The petitioner has sought directions to BBMP to provide sufficient number of public toilets both paid as well as for free usage and ensure that those toilets are kept clean as per the guidelines prescribed under the Swachh Bharat Mission launched by the Union government.

The petitioner also contended that as per the guidelines of the Swachh Bharat Mission, Bengaluru required 1,100 public toilets and a toilet complex set up every 7 km. However, as per the information available on the BBMP website, Bengaluru has only 479 toilets constructed between 1965 and 2014.

## HC raps state, KSPCB for temple loudspeakers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE@Bengaluru

THIS officer doesn't know A B C of the environment law but still he is Environment Officer... How Pollution Control Board washed its hands of shifting its responsibility on another agency? Are police officers helpless?

These are scathing remarks made orally by the Karnataka High Court on Monday, while pointing out both ignorance and inaction on the part of state government and Environment Officer of the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) to take steps to regulate noise pollution because of illegal use of loudspeakers at a prayer hall in Vijayanagar police limits.

Pointing at the affidavit filed by KSPCB, the bench said the Environment Officer has been designated as Regional Officer to set criminal law into motion for noise pollution and action must be initiated immediately. "The state says KSPCB has to take action, but KSPCB says State has to do that," the bench said.

Referring to disobedience shown by not acting against violators as per the order passed by the court on February 28, the bench observed that the KSPCB Chairman committed gross breach and the Environment Officer relied upon Section 15 of Environment (Protection) Act, which delegates power to the state to issue directions. The Environment Officer is redesignated as Regional Officer under Section 15 of the Act to initiate criminal proceedings. However, he pleaded his inability to prosecute offenders, the bench noted.

"Before we initiate contempt proceedings, the KSPCB Chairman should explain default on his part and comply with the order," it said, while there was no explanation from the state on the licence purportedly issued in perpetuity by a police inspector to use loudspeakers.

The petitioner, Sumangala A Swamy, an advocate, submitted that even today loudspeakers are being used illegally. The bench gave a week for both KSPCB and state to comply with the orders. The hearing was adjourned to December 9, 2020.

## Beautify Bengaluru in two months, says BBMP administrator

Bengaluru: BBMP Administrator Gaurav Gupta on Monday directed the horticulture and forest wings in the corporation to upgrade, maintain and beautify the medians and road sides in the City, especially on the Outer Ring Road and arterial roads, within two months. He expressed his displeasure over the condition and questioned them on what development work has been done. He said the horticulture wing plays a vital role in greening road sides, but the officials are not doing enough. He also asked the forest wing to submit a report on the tree parks. **ENS**

P2

# Centre reviews vaccine readiness in K'taka

State identifies over 30,000 vaccination sites and 10K vaccinators; storage facilities also being set up

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@Bengaluru

THE Karnataka Health department on Monday said that it has initiated necessary preparations for Covid-19 vaccine delivery, distribution and administration as per the Centre's advice.

This follows the video conference held by the Cabinet Secretary, government of India, with the chief secretaries of states and UTs to discuss Covid-related issues, including vaccination.

In a statement, following the meeting, the health department said the state steering committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary, Karnataka, and the state task force chaired by Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare have held meetings to review preparations being made for vaccine storage and delivery. A letter has been addressed to the deputy commissioners to ensure holding of block task force meetings.

So far, 2,24,083 government healthcare workers and 2,45,773 private healthcare workers



A technician examines a sample collected on Saturday in Bengaluru | MEGHANA SASTRY

have registered for the vaccine and the list will be updated as and when more beneficiaries are registered. The state has identified more than 30,000 session sites (vaccination sites). More than 10,000 vaccinators in the government set-up have been identified and the process for the identification of vaccinators from private facilities as well as per the norms instructed by the Centre has been initiated, it said.

As of Monday, 68,317 government and 35,310 private potential vaccinators have been identified. "Consignee list for installation of cold chain equip-

ment being supplied by the Centre has been shared with them and preparations are in place to install it. Cold storage availability in the animal husbandry department has been shared with the Centre too. Dry storage space available in the Food Corporation of India has also been obtained," officials said.

The state has requested the Centre for more cold storage equipment. It has also proposed three new regional vaccine stores in Bengaluru Urban, Shivamogga and Ballari districts and has requested for refrigerated vaccine vans to have a better distribution network.

## BBMP prepares list of 1.5L health workers for vaccine

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

BRUHAT Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has prepared the final list of health workers who will be the first to be immunised against Covid-19.

Around 1.15 lakh government health workers including doctors and administrative staff and 29,000 medical professionals in the private sector will be given the vaccine in the first phase. BBMP has also identified three facilities for vaccines storage, the latest being the Institute of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Science in Hebbal. It will submit this information as well to the government.

"We have also started the exercise of preparing the list of people to receive the vaccine in the second phase, which will include pourakarmikas and other secondary health care workers. For the second phase, we will need a larger space for storage as there will be more units and the list will also be longer. Bengaluru could also be the prime storage and supply point for Karnataka and so additional measures need to be taken," the official added.



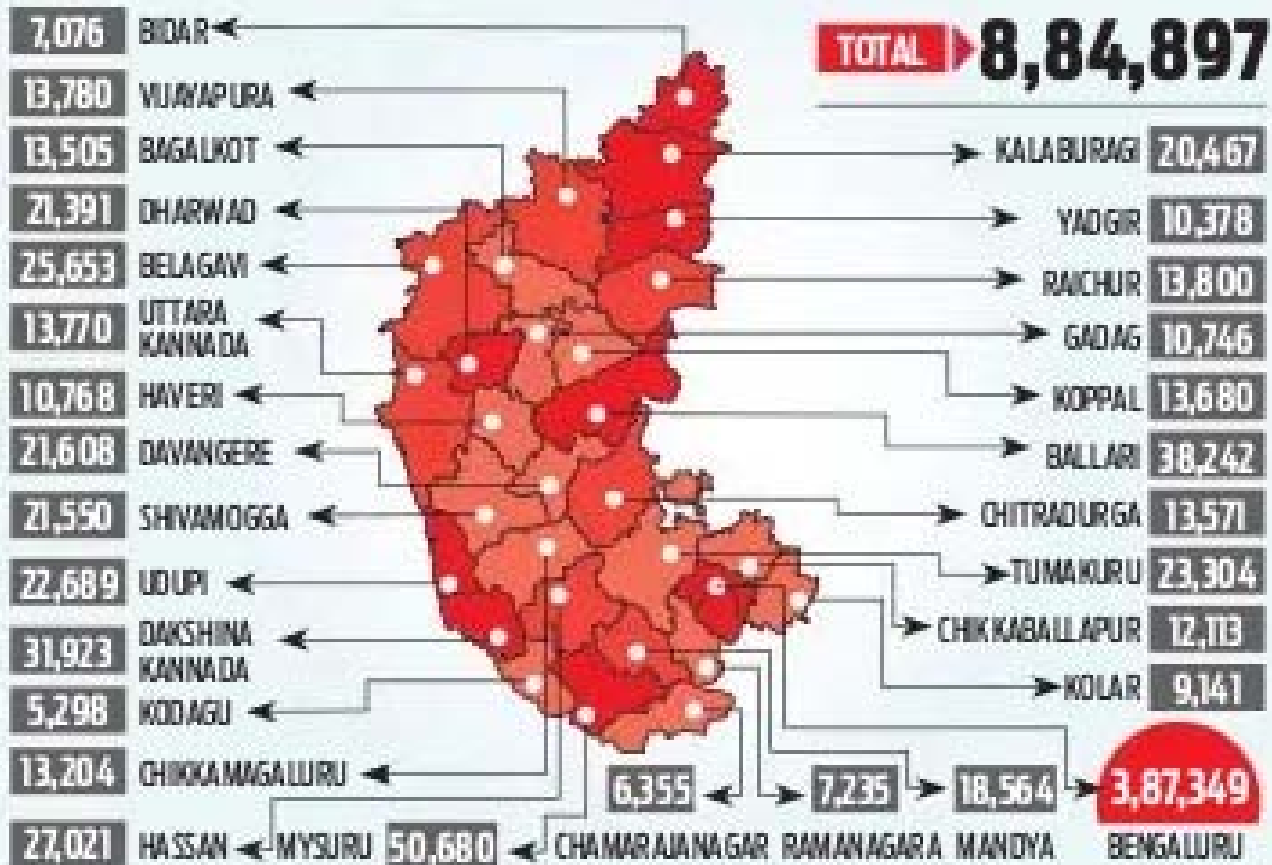
We are satisfied with (veterinary institute) because it is large, a secure government facility, and has the right set-up. We are not keen on private places  
BBMP Nodal officer

### STORAGE CENTRES

- Veterinary college, Hebbal
- Dasappa Hospital, Kalasipalyam
- B'uru Urban vaccine store, Indiranagar

P3

## CONFIRMED CASES



NEW CASES

**998**

NEW RECOVERIES

**2,209**

TALLY ON  
**MONDAY**

NEW DEATHS

**13**

TOTAL DEATHS

**11,778**

**81,333**

Samples tested

**23,279**

Total active cases

**8,49,821**

Total recoveries

# HC notice on selection of pvt Covid hospitals

**EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE**  
@Bengaluru

THE Karnataka High Court on Monday issued notice to the State government and BBMP on a PIL questioning the permission granted to private hospitals to treat Covid patients, on the allegations that select hospitals were permitted without any criteria, only to favour them.

“...all the selected private hospitals in the city of Bengaluru, are either/or corporate hospitals or hospitals managed and backed by politicians like MLAs, MPs and ministers”, the petitioner said, praying that the court direct the state government to stop treating Covid patients in private hospitals.

A division bench of Chief Justice Abhay Shreeniwas Oka and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty was hearing the petition filed by Dr Riyaz Basha, resident of Gandhi Nagar in Shivamogga.

The petitioner, who runs a clinic, contended that the government has issued an order

on June 20, with regard to a list of private hospitals empanelled with Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust. There are some irregularities and influence of the management of private hospitals in the selection of hospitals. The government had excluded 160 hospitals from the total 483 hospitals, without explanation, he alleged.

Advocate NP Amrutesh, counsel for the petitioner, argued that district health officers were playing an exclusion and inclusion game, recommending that private hospitals be listed for treatment of Covid patients. As there is no criteria on the standard of facilities, some hospitals without facilities were added, and hospitals with full-fledged facilities were left out, he said.

He argued that some hospitals charged patients exorbitant rates, ranging from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 15 lakh, but the state government and BBMP took no action. The court directed that an inquiry be held into the selection of private hospitals.

## After 5 months, Covid cases dip below 1K

BENGALURU: After 5 months, Karnataka's daily Covid count slipped below 1,000 cases, as it clocked 998 cases on Monday. Of these, Bengaluru contributed 444 cases. The state tally is now 8,84,897 new cases. Active cases in the state are 23,279, of which 349 are high risk patients in the ICU. Thirteen deaths took the toll in the state to 11,778. Since June 28, the state had been seeing over 1,000 cases per day. **ENS**

P3

### CITY READ



#### Frontline workers felicitated

Frontline workers who have been battling the Covid-19 pandemic were felicitated by the Bangalore Wholesale Cloth Merchants Association recently. In light of the pandemic, the felicitation programme was held with limited attendance. Corona warriors, including doctors, policepersons, health and sanitation workers, were given a dinner set and 5-litre pressure cooker for their service during the pandemic.

P5

# ‘Time ripe for viral infections’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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It is likely that after a week, there could be clear sky, following which minimum temperature will start to dip rapidly, and there will be a slight rise in maximum temperature.

At present, humidity is high and the time is ripe for viral infections, officials warned and advised citizens to be cautious. According to IMD records, the lowest minimum temperature of 14.3 degree Celsius was recorded in Davanagere.

In Bengaluru, the minimum temperature was 19 (2.8 degree Celsius above normal) and maximum temperature was 24.3 degree Celsius (2.9 degree Celsius below normal).