



**Bruhat Bengaluru
Mahanagara Palike**

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE,
BANGALORE**

**ENGLISH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS
07-12-2020**



INDEX

1. [THE HINDU](#)
2. [DECCAN HERALD](#)
3. [TIMES OF INDIA](#)
4. [BANGALORE MIRROR](#)
5. [THE ECONOMIC TIMES](#)
6. [THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS](#)

NEARBY

'BBMP targeting us on mask issue'

The decision of the BBMP to hold the managements of spaces responsible for patrons failing to wear masks or follow social distancing rules has not gone down well with the proprietors.



P1

Residents tense after rumours of leopard attack

Residents of Veerabhadra Nagar near Girinagar stayed indoors on Sunday after a flock of sheep and goats were mauled to death in a suspected leopard attack. Forest officials and the jurisdictional police are yet to ascertain exactly how the animals died.

P1

READER'S MAIL

Civic woes plague residents

Sir, — Residents of 8th cross and 9th cross, 1st 'A' Main, R.R. Layout, off Ullal BBMP ward, have been put to severe hardship owing to the negligent attitude of BBMP officials. About two months ago, the retaining wall of the stormwater drain collapsed and the BBMP took up reconstruction after a complaint. During the repair work, a waterline was damaged and the road was dug up. After completion of rework, the BBMP didn't restore the waterline or road. The unrepaired road has sunk and turned into a dangerous spot where vehicles often get stuck. The spot that has sunk is in the middle of a junction where four roads converge and poses grave danger to motorists as well as pedestrians, particularly during rain. Repeated requests to the BBMP engineer over phone and even a formal complaint have proved futile. The apathy of the BBMP has caused disruption in water supply too. The authorities are requested to address our woes at the earliest.

N. Sadhasiva Reddy,
Bengaluru

P2

'BBMP passing the buck by targeting us for patrons not wearing masks'

Owners of hotels, malls, marriage halls oppose move to fine them for violation of COVID-19 rules

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The decision of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to hold the managements of spaces, such as malls and marriage halls, responsible for patrons failing to wear masks or follow social distancing rules has not gone down well with the proprietors. In an attempt to curb the spread of COVID-19 in 'super-spreader' events, the BBMP had on Saturday announced that owners could be fined from anywhere between ₹5,000 to ₹1 lakh if guests are found flouting the rules.

Hotels, small shops, restaurants, hotels, party halls, department stores, malls, cinema halls, multiplexes, marriage halls and community halls will also be fined.

Owners, however, are up in arms against the imposition of fines and accused the civic body of passing the buck.

Uday B. Garudachar, Chikpete MLA and head of Garuda Group that has three shopping malls, termed the move as "frivolous". He said malls have been following the standard operating procedure (SOP) issued by the government. "Beyond this, it is difficult to enforce the rules. It is not right to penal-



Film fans outside a theatre. The BBMP's decision is aimed at curbing the spread of COVID-19 in 'super-spreader' events. ■K. MURALI KUMAR

ise the mall owner, who may not even be present in the mall," he said and added that he would raise the issue with BBMP Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad.

An owner of a marriage hall in Seshadripuram said, "We were struggling following the lockdown and the restrictions. The marriage season is coming to an end now and booking will start only in February."

Vaishak S., owner of The Royal Hall near Dr. M.C. Modi Eye Hospital, said the civic body might as well impose a complete lockdown. "It is the responsibility of individual citizens to wear masks,

maintain social distance, etc. We are taking all precautions. How right is it for penalties to be levied against us if patrons are not wearing masks?"

Manisha Porwal, founder of Color Palette Productions, an event management company, said they could hardly police their customers. "While we insist that patrons wear masks, even going to the extent of giving away colour coordinated and customised masks, we can't really go behind them and force them to wear them," she said.

Meanwhile, hotel associations and restaurateurs said

the rules cannot be applicable to them given that they offer dining facilities. Chandrashekhar Hebbar, president of Karnataka Regional Hotel and Restaurants' Federation, said that people go to various eateries. "How can owners insist that their customers wear masks? This is impractical and cannot be implemented," he said, and added that if the BBMP insists on levying penalties, the Association would be forced to protest.

BBMP Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad maintained that if eateries follow the SOP, fines may not be levied. "We are more con-

While we insist that patrons wear masks, even going to the extent of giving away colour coordinated and customised masks, we can't really go behind them and force them to wear them

MANISHA PORWAL,
founder, Color Palette Productions

Malls have been following the standard operating procedure (SOP) issued by the government. Beyond this, it is difficult to enforce the rules

UDAY B. GARUDACHAR,
Chikpete MLA and head of Garuda Group

cerned about public events where a large number of people gather. This could result in an explosion of positive cases," he said.

With regard to marriage and convention halls, he said conditional permission is given to event organisers and owners. "When that is given, it becomes their responsibility to ensure that everybody in attendance wears masks, uses sanitisers and maintains social distance," he added.

Residents tense following rumours of leopard attack

It was triggered by the death of 17 goats and sheep on a farm off NICE Road

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU**

Residents of Veerabhadra Nagar near Girinagar stayed indoors on Sunday after a flock of sheep and goats were mauled to death in a suspected leopard attack. Forest officials and the jurisdictional police visited the spot, but are yet to ascertain exactly how the animals died.

Ravishankar S.S., Deputy Conservator of Forests, who along with his team set up camp in the area, said they are yet to trace the animal responsible for the carnage.

As many as 17 goats and sheep, including 11 lambs, that were housed in a shed were mauled to death, sparking panic in the area. The farm is located around 700 metres from NICE Road.

Mr. Ravishankar said, "Though there are strong rumours that it was a leopard, there were no direct signs like pug marks where the attack happened nor any sightings. We have collected samples from the dead animals for a further probe while the forest staff are combing the area," he said.

As a precautionary measure, forest officials made a public announcement warning residents not to venture out till the area is combed and declared safe. Vehicles



Though there are strong rumours that it was a leopard, there were no direct signs like pug marks where the attack happened nor any sightings

**RAVISHANKAR S.S.,
Deputy Conservator of Forests**

fitted with loudspeakers were used to spread the word while teams comprising the local police, forest officials, and a few locals started combing operations.

'Invested ₹3 lakh in the flock'

The owner of the flock, Manu P.B. who hails from Chanapatna, told *The Hindu* that he had borrowed the land and invested in a sheep farm with 11 lambs, six sheep and goats. "I had left the farm to attend a function and returned the next morning. A worker informed me of the incident. I had invested close to ₹3 lakh in the flock. It is a huge loss for me. The farm is not isolated. It is just a few kilometres from Nayandahalli junction," he said.

The police are questioning a group of daily wage workers who live near Manu's farm, who said they did not hear anything through the night.

Most districts fail to achieve COVID-19 testing targets

Chikkamagaluru, Bengaluru Urban have conducted tests over and above their targets

TANU KULKARNI
BENGALURU

Though the number of COVID-19 cases in Karnataka has been steadily declining over the last few weeks, health experts have warned the government not to get complacent when it comes to testing. Despite this, around 25 of the 30 districts in the State have not met the testing targets that they were given over the last week.

The State, on an average, has met 98.9% of its testing targets but this is due to five districts that have exceeded their targets. Chikkamagaluru and Bengaluru Urban are among the districts that have conducted tests over and above their targets. Both these districts have achieved a testing percentage of 132%. Meanwhile, Bidar district is lagging behind in this area and has met only 46.5% of its testing targets.

Ramachandra R., Deputy

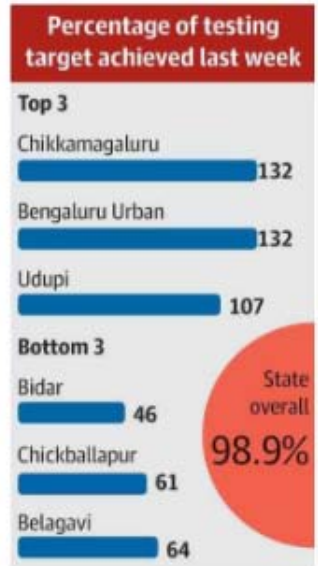


Free mass COVID-19 tests being conducted on travellers at Krantivira Sangolli Rayanna Railway Station, in Bengaluru on Sunday. • K. MURALI KUMAR

Commissioner, Bidar, said that they will soon ramp up testing. "Now, we have been given the go ahead to conduct around 2,500 tests per day. Earlier, our target was around 600 tests per day. We are now able to conduct around 1,600 tests per day and plan to soon meet the target given by the Department of Health and Family Welfare," he said. He added that they have received

instructions to focus on college students and enrol them for tests. This comes in the wake of colleges reopening on November 17.

On an average, the State government has been attempting to conduct 1 lakh tests each day. So far as many as 1.1 crore tests have been conducted in the State since March. With the administration gearing up for a possible



'second wave' at the end of the year, doctors say that there is a need for all districts to conduct rigorous testing so that cases are detected early and primary and secondary contacts of patients are immediately quarantined and the spread is curtailed.

Significant decline in ICU cases

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

There has been a significant decline in the number of critical COVID-19 patients being monitored in Intensive Care Units (ICUs) of various hospitals in November and early December.

As on December 6, while four districts had zero ICU cases, Bengaluru Urban had the highest with 143. The next highest was Tumakuru at 23. Uttara Kanada, Koppal, Chitradurga, and Haveri had one case each.

After seeing above 900 critical cases till the end of October, the State witnessed a decline in the number of critical patients since November 6 when cases fell in the under 900 bracket.

Following this, there was a further reduction and cases hovered around 800 till November 12.

Subsequently, the number of ICU cases fell to below 800 and then below 700 from November 17 and

in another two days the number further dropped to below 600. From then onwards critical cases started declining by nearly 100 every five days. Since the last two days, critical cases have fallen in the under 300 bracket. As on Sunday, the number of ICU patients remained at 280.

Overall cases

Doctors said the fall in ICU cases is proportionate to the reduction in the overall positive cases.

"It is scientifically difficult to determine if the fall in critical cases actually indicates that the virus is less virulent now," said C.N. Manjunath, nodal officer for labs and testing in the State's COVID-19 task force.

Early detection

Anoop Amarnath, member, Karnataka's COVID-19 critical care support unit (CCSU), who also heads the department of Geriatric Medicine at Manipal Hospitals, said most people now report early to hospitals

due to increased awareness. "Early detection and early intervention always help in early recovery. The decline in the number of patients turning critical is mainly because of this. Also, the stigma that was associated with COVID-19 in the initial months has decreased and most people are now not averse to getting tested and treated," he said.

Standardisation

Dr. Anoop said standardisation of treatment across the board for asymptomatic, mild, moderate and severe cases and also in management of SARI and ILI cases has also contributed to the decline in the number of critical cases.

On Bengaluru having the highest number of critical cases, the doctor said this was because the city sees a lot of complex cases. "As a tertiary/quaternary referral centre, it is expected to see this kind of number vis-à-vis the population," he added.

1,321 new cases, 10 deaths

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

As many as 1,321 new COVID-19 cases were reported in the State on Sunday. With this, the total number of cases touched 8.93 lakh.

The number of discharges on Sunday stood at 889, taking the total to 8.55 lakh. According to the media bulletin issued by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, 10

COVID-19 deaths were reported on Sunday, taking the total toll to 11,856. Meanwhile, of the 25,381 active cases in the State, 280 patients were admitted in ICUs across the State.

As many as 99,320 COVID-19 tests were conducted on Saturday. The positivity rate of the day was 1.33%, while the case fatality rate for the day stood at 0.75%.

P3

CORRIDORS OF POWER

Serial trouble with MLAs

Even as the Central Administrative Tribunal keeps adjourning the petition filed by IAS officer B. Sharat questioning his transfer from the post of Deputy Commissioner of Mysuru less than a month after his posting, his successor Rohini Sindhuri (*in picture*) is finding herself at the receiving end of the ire of one MLA after another in the district. Weeks after former Minister and JD(S) MLA S.R. Mahesh raised questions over her alleged role in an Endowment Department project at Tirumala in Andhra Pradesh, Ms. Sindhuri incurred the wrath of some more MLAs, particularly ones belonging to the Congress and the JD(S), over her plans to hold Spandana, a grievance redressal programme. Though Spandana was aimed at taking the district administration closer to the people by holding



programmes in different taluks, it rubbed the MLAs the wrong way, as the programmes were planned to be held without invitations to the MLAs. Sensing the rage of the Opposition MLAs, Minister for Revenue R. Ashok jumped into the arena to play a fire-fighting role. He asked the DC to cancel the programme even as MP for Mysuru Pratap Simha lashed out at the MLAs for their attitude towards a "pro-people programme". Ms. Sindhuri eventually cancelled the scheduled programmes. In the official announcement of

cancellation, the reason was not attributed to either her spat with the MLAs or the direction by the Revenue Minister, but to the gram panchayat election code of conduct.

One for the scribe

The BBMP recently launched an awareness campaign to check the spread of COVID-19, with focus on three Ws – wearing mask, washing hands, and watching your distance. At the end of the launch, as usual, several presspersons approached BBMP Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad and administrator Gaurav Gupta for their quotes/bytes. Before speaking about the event, Mr. Prasad pointed to a reporter present and noted that he was not wearing a mask. "This is not the first time. I have noticed you without your mask several times now," he said. He went on to give him a mask and

said, "Here, this is on behalf of the BBMP. Wear it well." The reporter was left searching for words.

Taxing the NWKRTC

What happens when politics gains the upper hand over sound economics? It leads to unwarranted appointments and fiscal burden. This is what is happening with the creation of new boards and corporations and a slew of appointments. Recently, the North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (NWKRTC), which has cumulative losses running into crores of rupees and is finding it hard to even pay salaries, got a new political appointment to appease a section of rebels. A post of vice-chairman has been created and the corporation will have to cough up about ₹1 lakh extra a month.

LAIQH A. KHAN
CHITRA V. RAMANI
GIRISH PATTANASHETTI

P4

‘Volunteers testing positive not unexpected’

International pharma companies that are testing COVID-19 vaccines in thousands of volunteers as part of their Phase-3 trials employ similar trial designs.

Pfizer had an analysis at 170 cases of infection; Moderna announced interim results at 95 cases, the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine analysed 131 cases in their interim analysis and Russia’s Sputnik V at 26 cases. All of these companies have reported a vaccine efficacy of over 92%, with only the Oxford vaccine – that is also being tested at Pune’s Serum Institute of India (SII) – reporting an efficacy range of 62%-90%, depending on the vaccine dose deployed.

The number of expected COVID-19 cases among trial participants is part of the statistical design and determines the number of participants that are recruited across multiple trial sites. Thus, Bharat Biotech has recruited 25,800 persons across India – some who

will get the actual vaccine in two doses over 28 days – while SII has 16,000 participants across the country.

The latter hasn’t disclosed the number of COVID-19 cases it expects as part of its interim analysis.

“After reaching the target number (n=130) of symptomatic COVID-19 cases, the study will continue to assess safety until the completion of the study duration. It is planned to continue the Phase-3 trial until 130 study participants in the per-protocol population develop PCR-confirmed symptomatic COVID-19 disease during follow-up beginning 14 days after the second dose of vaccine or placebo,” said a summary by Bharat Biotech on the ICMR website.

With the trials being double-blinded, neither the recipient nor the administering doctor knows who gets the vaccine and who a placebo, such end points are set to calculate vaccine efficacy.

Cow Bill may rock Assembly session

BENGALURU, DHNS

The joint legislature session beginning on Monday is expected to be a stormy affair, as the ruling BJP government will look to pass the Cow Slaughter Amendment Bill among other contentious Bills.

With parts of the country being roiled by farm protests, the Opposition will look to corner the government on farm laws, the recent suicide bid of NR Santosh, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's political secretary, and other issues.

Though the BJP state executive committee has adopted resolutions on both cow slaughter and 'love jihad' laws, any Bill on the latter is unlikely during the current session, according to Law and Parliamentary Affairs minister J C Madhuswamy.

The Congress announced that it will oppose both the laws, with Opposition Siddaramaiah saying that several people will be left unemployed if the cow slaughter Bill is passed.

The government will also face stiff resistance on three other Bills: The Industrial

Will table BBMP Bill: Ashoka

The state government was keen on holding BBMP elections for 243 wards and a separate Bill will be passed in the upcoming session, Revenue Minister R Ashoka said on Sunday. If the Bill is passed, the government will not have to approach Supreme Court challenging the recent High Court order, he said.

Details on Page 2

Disputes and Certain Other Laws (Karnataka Amendment) Bill, 2020, The Karnataka Land Reforms (Second Amendment) Bill, 2020, and The Karnataka Agricultural Produce Marketing Bill, 2020.

These three were re-promulgated as ordinances after they couldn't be passed during the monsoon session in September.

The government is also on the back foot due to disquiet within party ranks.

Pfizer seeks India approval

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Pharmaceutical giant Pfizer has become the first company to apply for an Emergency Use Authorisation (EAU) for its Covid-19 vaccine in India, days after it received such an approval from the UK where the vaccination campaign is expected to roll out shortly.

The company has also sought a waiver from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) for the mandatory clinical trial requirement. Two other imported vaccines, Sputnik (Russian) and Covishield (made by the Pune-based Serum Institute, using the same master seed in the AstraZeneca-Oxford University vaccine) are carrying out clinical trials at the moment.

INDIA COVID CASES (SUNDAY)

32,964

DEATHS

370

Saturday's cases: **36,011**; Deaths: **482**

KARNATAKA CASES (SUNDAY)

1,321

DEATHS

10

TILL 9.45 PM,
SOURCE: DHNS/PTI

Saturday's cases: **1,325**; Deaths: **12**

While Pfizer has decided not to sell its vaccine in the private market, it is unclear at the moment whether the Union Health Ministry would buy this vaccine priced at \$19.5 a dose (nearly Rs 1,450) in the US market. Moreover, storage and transportation of the vaccine pose a huge logistical challenge because of its ultra-low cooling needs.

A company official said it will supply the vaccine only through government contracts after receiving regulatory approval.

► **Pfizer, Page 4**

Serum moves DCGI for nod

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Serum Institute of India on Sunday became the first indigenous company to apply to the DCGI seeking emergency use authorisation for Oxford vaccine in the country, citing unmet medical needs due to the pandemic and in the interest of the public at large, sources said. **Page 5**

17 goats killed in suspected leopard attack in B'luru

BENGALURU, DHNS: Seventeen goats and sheep were killed in a suspected leopard attack near Veerabhadra Nagar in Eeranna Gudde in Bengaluru South on Sunday morning. Forest officials said they were yet to find evidence of the animal's entry into the urban area.

Police quoted residents as saying that two leopards entered a farm shed in the early hours of Sunday and attacked the livestock. Manu, the owner, lost 17 goats and sheep — including 11 lambs — in all.

The Range Forest Officer of Turahalli Forest visited the spot and conducted an inspection.

Manu told *DH* that he had gone to attend a function on Saturday and returned in the morning, only to find the animals dead with various injuries. He noticed some pugmarks near the fence and alert-

ed the police. Police said this is the first such incident reported in Girinagar area.

"We request everyone to provide any evidence or video footage to confirm it's a leopard attack. It will help us to take necessary steps," Bengaluru Urban Deputy Conservator of Forests Ravishankar said.

The farm is located near Turahalli and Kaggalipura forests and is about 700 metres from the NICE road.

Wildlife biologist Sanjay Gubbi said Bengaluru outskirts always had leopards. "With the loss of natural habitat and prey, there has been an increase in livestock killing. The public should not panic as leopards are shy animals and avoid people," he said.

One dies, 290 taken ill in AP due to mysterious disease, Page 5

Fewer corona patients at Victoria but non-Covid services still shut

Resident docs to protest today against 'hollow' promises

SURAKSHA P. DHNS
BENGALURU, DHNS

Resident doctors will hit the streets on Monday in protest against the continued closure of tertiary care services for non-Covid patients at Victoria Hospital, the largest government-run medical facility in Karnataka.

The protest will be held in front of the main building of the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI).

Tertiary services for non-Covid patients are yet to begin even a month-and-a-half after Covid patient numbers began dropping at the hospital. The monthly patient data released by the Karnataka Association of Resident Doctors has revealed the extent of the problem. While 16,443 non-Covid patients registered in February, the number was just 102 in April.

The hospital once had a staggering 3,000 outpatients a day and its surgeons would operate on 75-100 people. But they have not lifted the scalpel in the last nine months. Resident doctors said statements by officials on allowing non-Covid patients have largely remained empty promises.

"They shifted patients from the Master Plan Building (MPB) to Trauma and Emergency Care Centre one-and-a-half month ago," Dr Dayanand Sagar, president, Karnataka Association of Resident Doctors, told *DH*. "Since then they haven't taken any initiative to start non-Covid services. All the statements of reopening non-Covid services are mere lip service."

Doctors' requests to begin outpatient services at least in the MPB have been turned down with excuses like bath-



From 4,000 outpatients a day, Victoria Hospital now sees just 150-odd patients in the OPD. *DH* FILE PHOTO

Now for 150-odd patients, we have 500 doctors," said Dr Sagar.

If other medical colleges in the state can allow non-Covid patients, why cannot the BMCRI do the same, doctors ask.

"The fumigation and disinfection are for operation theatres. Now the number of in-patients is only 200. The OPD block has never been used. Why weren't the culture samples taken one-and-a-half months ago itself? The sample reports would have come by now. If not in-patients, why can't outpatients be seen. None of the HODs

was even called for a meeting

what will we do with our degree," Dr Sagar asked.

10.8 lakh patients hit

Victoria Hospital, one of the major tertiary care hospitals in the city, was chosen as a dedicated Covid care hospital since the pandemic began nine months ago, the statement from Karnataka Association of Resident Doctors (KARD) noted, adding that hospital caters to nearly six to seven districts around Bengaluru.

"The hospital is a beacon of hope for millions of poor patients who can only afford two meals a day. A casualty which used to be filled with patients during emergency care is empty," it said.

While it was justified to reserve the entire hospital to care for Covid-19 patients when the pandemic was at its peak, now thousands have been treated and discharged. "But what is the situation now? There are less than 100 patients daily since the past one-and-a-half months. An entire tertiary care hospital with more than 5,000 employees today treats merely 100 patients," the statement said.

What impact has closing down Victoria Hospital caused to the common public? It's not just the patients, it's their families which have been affected. Going by 4,000 daily patients that the hospital used to serve before the pandemic, as many as 10.8 lakh patients have been in the past nine months.

"Medical students, post-graduates who have joined BMCRI for the sake of education have been affected. What about the medical equipment worth crores that lie in dust? What about the human resources that lay unutilised? How long will it take to open the gates of the hospital that hasn't seen such silence in its 100 years long history?" the association asked.

BBMP Eng News Paper Clippings 07-12-2020 - Microsoft Word

No way to verify if due process was followed for tree-felling: Activists

BENGALURU, DHNS

As the deadline ended to present objections on felling trees for metro works, activists said the information provided on the BBMP website has not been followed on the ground.

They point to a lack of markings on trees as proof that the officials did not conduct the process in a transparent way.

On November 21, the BBMP issued a public notification to remove 106 trees for two metro works. This would include 91 trees at Jyotipuram near KR Puram and 15 trees on the RV Road-HSR Layout line.

Activists and citizens have questioned the procedure, claiming that they had no way of verifying if the measures adopted at the proceedings of the Technical Empowered Committee (TEC) were followed.

"It is clear that they have al-



On November 21, the BBMP issued a public notification to remove 106 trees for two metro works. DH FILE PHOTO

ready decided to cut the trees," said Rajani Santosh, a Jayanagar resident, who wanted to know how the BBMP would address the public's concerns.

"They have arranged the process in such a way that citizens will have no way of verifying if aspects of the public notice and documents were followed on the ground.

There is no clarity on what they would do after the 10-day notice period," Rajani said.

Tavarekere resident Adesh Sagar H K B conducted a survey of 16 trees from the East-end Junction to the Silk Board junction and wrote to BBMP saying some trees appeared to have been marked for widening the space though the met-

ro construction on the stretch has already been completed.

A sham, say activists

An activist dubbed the process of public notice a sham. "For a layman interested in saving trees, the procedure adopted by the BBMP is confusing," she said.

"There is no way to understand if a tree is cut for the metro project or to build an alternative road during the construction of a metro line."

A tree that needed to be cut because it is standing in the way should have been included in the original plan and environmental impact assessment of the metro project, the activist added.

BBMP officials said they have received about 25 objections and the Forest Department has got more than 20. "Measures will be taken to address the concerns raised by the citizens," an official said.

Govt keen on holding polls to 243 BBMP wards: Ashoka

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government is keen on holding BBMP elections to 243 wards and a separate bill will be passed in the upcoming legislature session to facilitate it, Revenue Minister R Ashoka said on Sunday.

Speaking to reporters, the minister said that if the bill was passed during the upcoming session, the government would not have to go to the Supreme Court to appeal against the high court ruling. Just last week, the high court had ordered the state election commission to hold elections to the existing 198 BBMP wards and notify the polls within six weeks.

The term of the BBMP's last council ended on September 10 but the gov-

ernment has withheld the elections citing the need to delimit wards.

Ashoka noted that passing the BBMP bill would increase the number of wards to 243 and hold the elections accordingly, adding that consultations were going on with legal experts.

The BBMP bill was drafted by a joint select committee of the legislature that was formed to discuss the need for a separate law to govern Bengaluru.

At present, Bengaluru and all other cities are governed by the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act.

The draft bill also extends the BBMP mayor's tenure to two-and-a-half years and raises the number of BBMP zones from eight to 12 or 15.

100-mld sewage plant at Hebbal to open soon

BENGALURU, DHNS

The BWSSB will soon commission the new sewage treatment plant at Hebbal, which can treat 100 mld of wastewater flowing into the Hebbal valley that once nurtured Dakshina Pinakini, the river originating in Nandi Hills on the northern outskirts of Bengaluru.

The Rs 250-crore project, supposed to have been completed last year, was delayed following an on-site accident that killed three engineers last year.

A BWSSB official said some work was pending, which would be completed in the next few days. The treated water in the Hebbal valley will recharge the groundwater, an official said.

The total sewage load in the Hebbal valley is 288 mld, of which only 185 mld is being treated at two 40-mld capacity STPs located next to stormwater drains, the old 60-mld STP in Hebbal, Horamavu STP (20 mld), Jakkur STP (15 mld) and Yelahanka (10 mld).

The commissioning of the new STP would have brought the sewage flow to the lake to near-zero were it not for the



The STP at Jogappa Layout, near Hebbal. DH FILE PHOTO

rehabilitation of the old 60-mld plant in Hebbal. “The plant was built in 1990 and has almost stopped working. There is an urgent need for rehabilitation work. We will take it up soon and hope to finish in about a year,” another official said.

Officials have warned that linking the 110 villages (that were added to the BBMP in 2007) to the underground sewage line network would bring additional loads of sewage, which would need more treatment plants.

“Housing projects in these villages are rising. While we do not have to worry about apartments which have their own treatment plants, there are still many properties whose wastewater has to be treated,” a senior official said.

Face masks can reduce infections by more than 45%, says study

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

While a majority of Indians are still reluctant to wear a mask even after 96 lakh Covid-19 cases, new scientific evidence has emerged from Germany demonstrating how the protective face cover can lower the number of new cases by more than 45%.

The regions with a mandatory mask rule in Germany witnessed a substantially lower number of new infections compared to other large cities that did not implement such a mandate.

In a study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* earlier this week, European researchers compared results from multiple public sources showing that face masks reduced the number of newly registered Covid-19 infections between 15% and 75% over 20 days after their mandatory introduction.

"Assessing the credibility of the various estimates, we conclude that face masks reduce the daily growth rate of reported infections by around 47%,"

COVID-19 Tracker

States/UT	Active	Infected	Death	Daily cases	Daily deaths
Maharashtra	80,079	18,52,266	47,734	4,757	40
Kerala	61,064	6,36,393	2,418	4,778	28
Karnataka	25,381	8,93,006	11,856	1,321	10
Delhi	24,693	5,92,250	9,643	2,706	69
West Bengal	23,894	5,02,840	8,723	3,143	46
Haryana	22,427	2,43,896	2,588	1,498	24
Uttar Pradesh	22,160	5,54,944	7,924	1,932	24
Chhattisgarh	20,048	2,46,809	2,989	1,229	12
Gujarat	14,695	2,18,788	4,081	1,455	17
Madhya Pradesh	13,391	2,14,505	3,337	1,455	11
Others	88,723	37,21,825	39,262	8,690	89

3,96,555
TOTAL ACTIVE CASES

91,39,257
TOTAL RECOVERED

96,77,522
TOTAL INFECTED

1,40,555
TOTAL DEATHS

1,155
NON-COVID DEATHS*

DHNS/PTI (10 PM, December 6)
*Patients dead due to non-Covid reasons

they reported in the journal.

The finding comes at a time when the Centre made a renewed appeal to the people to wear the masks and follow social distancing norms notwithstanding the vaccine hopes on the horizon. "The role of masks is vitally important. Masks will continue even after the vaccine as that would help to break the

chain of transmission for the virus," said Balram Bhargava, Director-General, ICMR.

With more and more scientific evidence reinforcing the importance of face masks, the World Health Organisation too updated its guidance on this protective piece of cloth.

The WHO advises that the general public should wear a

Active caseload drops to 4L

The Covid-19 active caseload in India has dipped to 4.03 lakh, the lowest after 138 days, comprising 4.18 per cent of the total coronavirus infections reported so far in the country, the Union health ministry said on Sunday.

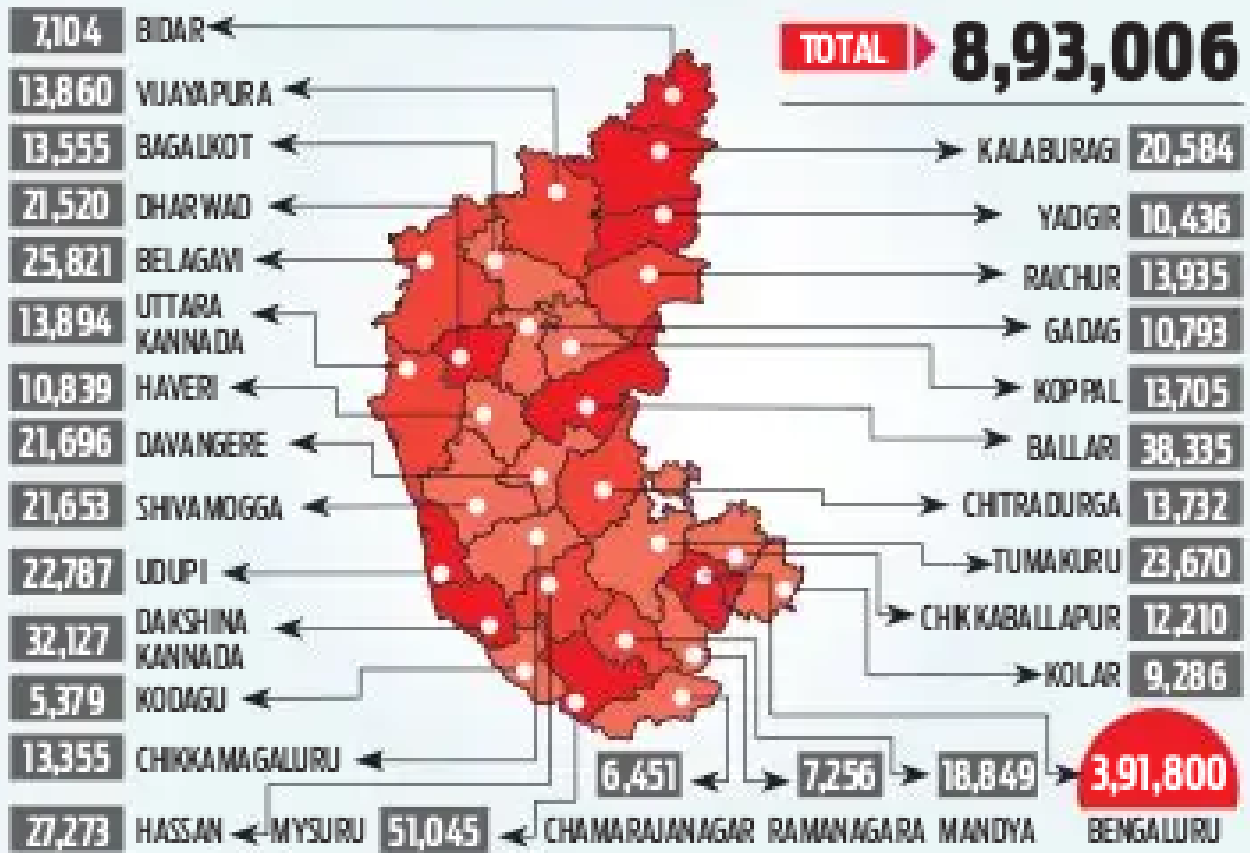
The total active cases were 4,02,529 on July 21. Continuing with the trend of the last nine days, India has reported more daily recoveries than daily new cases in a span of 24 hours.

non-medical mask in indoor (shops, shared workplaces, schools etc) or outdoor settings where physical distancing of at least one metre can't be maintained.

Even indoors, people should wear a mask when receiving visitors if they can't maintain distance or assess the ventilation standard.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

CONFIRMED CASES



TALLY ON SUNDAY

NEW CASES

1,321

NEW RECOVERIES

889

NEW DEATHS

10

TOTAL DEATHS

11,856

99,320

Samples tested

25,381

Total active cases

8,55,750

Total recoveries

Govt may allow those with comorbidities to self-register for shots

Will Tag & Track Covid Vaccine Delivery Via App

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Bengaluru: India, which faces the daunting task of identifying high-risk people with comorbidities, may consider allowing them to self-declare their condition to get the vaccine. Not all states have data on this set of people who have to be inoculated after healthcare and frontline workers.

Part of India's vaccine-delivery preparation is to tag and track vaccines from the place of origin (ports/pharma firms) to person receiving the dose. This will be enabled by the CO-WIN app, an upgraded version of the

2 vaccines by Jan, four by April likely

The Centre is expecting two vaccines, AstraZeneca's Covishield & Bharat Biotech's Covaxin, to be available by January and four vaccines by April, raising the prospects of inoculating 30 crore priority population by July. **P 7**

Electronic Vaccine Intelligence Network (eVIN) used for other immunisation programmes since 2015.

While eVIN tracked vaccines up to the cold chain, CO-WIN will track them to the last mile. Every person receiving a vaccine will get an SMS with details of date, venue, time of vaccination and name of vaccinator. The app will also generate certificates.

► **Data from 3rd round, P 4**

After 3-week plateau, Covid cases show a 16% decline

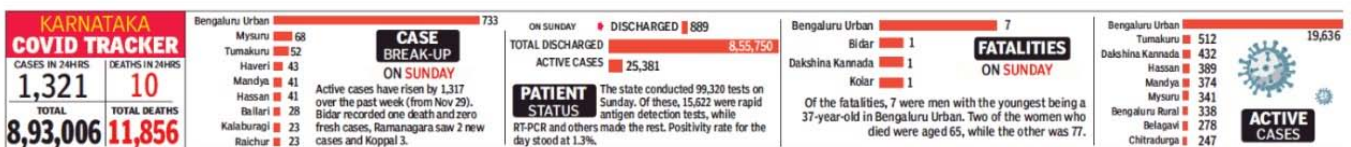
After staying around the same level for three weeks, fresh Covid-19 cases in India fell this week by around 16% from the previous seven days, reports Amit Bhattacharya. With this, the weekly count of cases is now down by nearly two-thirds (62%) from its peak in September 6-13, with no signs yet of a second wave in India.

The toll has shown no significant movement in the past four weeks and continues to hover around the 3,500 mark, with 3,539 deaths recorded during the week (Nov 29-Dec 6). However, compared with the peak of 8,175 deaths recorded in Sept 13-20, Covid-related fatalities have dropped by 58%.

Karnataka saw 1,321 cases on Sunday, including 733 from Bengaluru. Ten deaths were reported in the state.

► Weekly cases down, P 7

P1



TOP PRIORITY Cops, Pourakarmikas, Teachers Likely To Be Inoculated; State Confident Of Identifying Those With Comorbidities

P2

K'taka may need vaccine for 15L frontline workers in 2nd round

Chethan Kumar &
Sandeep Moudgal | TNN

Bengaluru: Estimates by the state's health department suggest Karnataka may need to vaccinate at least 15 lakh people from two categories regarded as top priority by the central government - healthcare workers and frontline warriors.

States are preparing to roll out vaccination drives within "weeks" and healthcare workers and frontline warriors will be inoculated in the first two rounds. This could mean 30 lakh doses of vaccines for Karnataka alone, especially given that most vaccine candidates showing promise require two doses to be effective.

The department had announced that 5 lakh healthcare workers will be vaccinated in the first round, but a senior health official said they estimate that at least 10 lakh frontline workers would need the vaccine in the second round. This list is likely to include police personnel, teachers, anganwadi workers and waste collectors among others.

"Just as with healthcare workers — 5 lakh of the 1 crore in the country are in Karnataka — we estimate that about 5% of the 2 crore frontline workers that will get vaccinated



CATCHING THEM EARLY: A healthcare worker collects swab samples from passengers arriving on long-distance trains in Bengaluru on Saturday

in India will be from the state," said Arundathi Chandrashekar, mission director, National Health Mission, which will spearhead the vaccination. "This number could change as the Centre is yet to release guidelines on who should be included in this category. A committee is still deliberating on this."

Karnataka has 80,000 policemen, nearly two lakh teachers (government and government-aided), around 66,000 anganwadi workers and 62,000 anganwadi helpers and thousands of pourakarmikas — around 18,000 in Bengaluru alone.

Arundathi said data on the 5 lakh healthcare workers, including 2.4 lakh from the private sector, are being entered in the Central data-

base and that it would be completed by Tuesday. "Once guidelines are issued for frontline workers, the same procedure will be followed for them," she said.

The state has identified more than 30,000 vaccination sites and more than 10,000 vaccinators in government set up so far, and this number will increase as the process to identify vaccinators from private facilities has been initiated. They will be picked from a pool of 68,317 government and 35,310 private potential vaccinators identified so far.

3rd round vaccination

While the first two rounds of inoculation are expected to be conducted smoothly, the challenges of identify-

ing potential beneficiaries from high-risk groups needing vaccination in the third round may pose a challenge. The state, however, is confident of overcoming it.

Health minister K Sudhakar told TOI: "Our database is comprehensive considering 1.1 crore households were surveyed earlier this year. With regard to the more vulnerable sections of society, including senior citizens and those with comorbidities, we have to streamline the data to get the numbers. My hope is that by January 2021, we will see the first round of vaccines arriving for our health workers."

Health commissioner Pankaj Kumar Pandey said the modalities of how to identify people with comorbidities will be finalised based on the Centre's guidelines, whenever that is shared with states. "We have the wherewithal to even conduct another door-to-door survey if the need arises, given that we now have identified an efficient process of doing it," Pandey said.

As reported by TOI, the findings of the door-to-door survey concluded in May had shown that every third household in the state falls under the vulnerable category and one in every 34 vulnerable homes had a person with comorbidity.

Data from 3rd round may see people self-registering

► Continued from page 1

Beneficiary data for the first two rounds will be entered by state authorities, while data from the third round, which will prioritise comorbid people, may see individuals self-registering.

"Self-registration option has been included in CO-WIN and local officials will authenticate applications before vaccination. The option is disabled at the moment as governments will enter data of healthcare workers," Arundathi Chandrashekar, director, National Health Mission which will spearhead vaccination, told TOI.

The government has kept the option of collecting data of persons with comorbidities and uploading them as bulk en-

VACCINE PLANNING

tries, but this would require massive data across the states which may not be viable within dedicated timelines.

"If such data is unavailable and/or any surveys planned are not complete, the government is likely to allow self-registration. A central committee is deliberating various options," Arundathi said.

Up to 20% May Be Comorbid

Experts part of ICMR and other government of India com-

eVIN features

> Provides real-time info on vaccine stocks, flows & storage temperatures across all cold chain points

> Has reached 32 states and UTs; rollout in Andaman & Nicobar, Chandigarh, Ladakh and Sikkim soon

> Over 28,000 cold chain points across districts use it



> Over 41,400 vaccine cold chain handlers trained in digital record-keeping

> Nearly 24,000 electronic temperature loggers installed on vaccine cold chain equipment for accurate temperature review

Source: Ministry of health & family welfare

“Around 15%-20% of the population may have comorbidities. The NCD data is not complete; it has only passive enrolments which started in October 2019 and only a third of data has been digitised. We'll soon be starting an active survey and hope to cover the entire population by 2022. We're likely to include additional fields in surveys to include comorbidities

Arundathi Chandrashekar | DIRECTOR, NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION

mittees said various options, including self-declaration, using the non-communicable diseases (NCD) national database and door-to-door survey findings in states like Karnataka and Mumbai region may be considered.

"Around 15%-20% of the population may have comorbidities. The NCD data is not complete and has only passive enrolments which started in October 2019 and only a third of

data has been digitised. We'll soon be starting an active survey and hope to cover the entire population by 2022. We're likely to include additional fields in surveys to include comorbidities," Arundhati added.

Some states like Karnataka are looking at additional fields for comorbidities as part of the National Family Survey. "Everything will depend on the central guidelines," Arundathi said.

Weekly cases falling for 12 weeks now

► Continued from page 1

There were 2,45,599 new cases reported this week, down from 2,91,903 last week (November 22-29). The weekly case count had been around the 2.9-lakh mark in the previous two weeks as well. This week's cases, therefore, represent the first big fall in numbers in four weeks.

The fall, coming on the

third week after Diwali, also shows that there's no second wave of Covid in the country yet, although there have been spikes and falls in several states. Overall, weekly cases in the country have been falling for 12 weeks now, except for one week when a slight increase was recorded. Meanwhile, active cases in the country fell below 4 lakh for the first time in 139 days. The pool of active cases

has been shrinking steadily since the peak of the pandemic in September.

However, the rate of reduction in active cases has slowed considerably in recent weeks, with the count also rising for a few days. It has taken 26 days for active cases to fall from 5 lakh to 4 lakh. By contrast, the drop from 6 lakh to 5 lakh had taken 12 days, and the previous two one-lakh falls had each hap-

pened in a week's time.

On Sunday, fresh cases in the country dropped to 33,231. The day's death toll too fell to 391, which was the first time since July 2 that India had recorded less than 400 Covid fatalities in a day. The drop in the toll was mainly on account of Maharashtra recording 40 fatalities on Sunday, a big drop from the previous day's count of 95.

MONDAY MOTIVATION: Residents living around Hennagara Lake in Anekal taluk plant 250 saplings on their weekly off day

THE TREE MUSKETEERS

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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

How was your Sunday? Can you top this? Chilly weather on Sunday morning did not deter around 40 people, including a few children, from planting more than 250 saplings at the Hennagara Lake land, near Jigani Industrial Area, Anekal taluk. The children seemed more enthused, leading the way for their parents.

Hennagara Lake is spread around 330 acres and is one of the well-maintained lakes in and around Anekal taluk. But with construction activities gaining momentum at Jigani and other nearby areas, the lake land had become a destination for unscrupulous building contractors to dump construction debris here.

But it was the residents who banded together to do something about this. "I lodged a complaint against those dumping garbage on the lake land and got it stopped. I then created the Hennagara Lake Collective to bring together like-minded citizens that care for the environment. We collaborated with SayTrees who helped us to get CSR funds (Corporate Social Responsibility) to plant saplings," said Tushar Chandra, a resident of Celebrity Lake View Layout.

Expressing concern over the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>



Around 40 people, including a few kids, came together to plant more than 250 saplings around the Hennagara Lake on Sunday

“ Sewage is flowing into the lake from the nearby apartments. Pollutants from nearby industries also flow into the lake. If the flow of sewage and pollutants continues, this lake may become another Bellandur

— MY Manjul Sanjeev, resident and assistant executive engineer at KPTCL

MASK UP, BENGALURU

- If you don't listen to the Marshals, they will book you under Epidemic Diseases Act
- Eateries livid with new rule that fines them if customers are not wearing face coverings



1,321 new cases in State, 10 deaths

Karnataka on Sunday reported 1,321 fresh COVID-19 infections and 10 mortalities taking the total cases and fatalities to 8,93,006 and 11,856 respectively, the health department said. The total number discharged were 8,55,750, including 889 on Sunday. The city reported 733 infections and seven fatalities more than half of the total infections and deaths in the state. The reduction in cases and infections since the past two months finally culminated in zero infections in Bidar whereas only four districts reported deaths, including Bengaluru.

BENGA

Epidemic Act to rescue of harassed marshals

Persons not wearing masks, attacking officials booked under stringent Act

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The BBMP has filed complaints under The Epidemic Diseases Act, 1957, for the first time ever, against people who refused to pay the fine for not wearing a mask and also abusing officials while on duty. Two FIRs have been registered in SG Palya police station in South Bengaluru after the accused who were stopped for not wearing masks inside their car, manhandled the marshals.

Up until now, the police used to book FIRs under IPC sections pertaining to objecting a public servant from carrying out their duty, but now they have registered cases under the Epidemic Disease Act. The BBMP and the police decided to book people under this Act as the incidents of citizens assaulting marshals for fining them for not wearing masks was on the rise.

A BBMP chief marshal said that the first incident was reported in South Bengaluru and an FIR under the Epidemic Diseases Act was registered in the SG Palya police station.

He said that the officials had stopped a car with five men inside and none of them were wearing a mask. When stopped by the marshals, the driver got down and began abusing the officials for stopping them. He not only refused to wear the mask while talking to the marshals, but also refused to pay the fine and drove away, the marshal said. The officials had recorded



Marshals say most people they stop for not wearing masks go into a combative mode

“ They not only refused to pay the fine, but also manhandled the staff and assaulted them while they were on duty. They also disturbed traffic at the junction. —Somashekar Patil, BBMP South incharge of marshals

the incident and submitted it to the police along with the complaint copy.

In another incident, on Wednesday, BBMP marshals who were on duty near Jayadeva junction, stopped a car with two people inside for not wearing masks. Somashekar Patil, BBMP south zone incharge of marshals, said, “Our official Shivakumar along with others asked the two to pay

the fine but the people in the car only abused the officials. They not only refused to pay the fine, but also manhandled the staff and assaulted them while they were on duty. They also disturbed the public and the traffic movement at the junction. The officials had to take the help from the police who took the two violators to the Suddaguntepalya police station

where they registered an FIR against them.”

Another marshal on the field said that many such incidents take place on a daily basis and that it has become a tough task for the marshals to stop the motorists when they're not wearing masks as the motorists often try to speed by putting the officials in danger. He said that booking such people under the Epidemic Act could bring some seriousness among the public and they might start wearing masks diligently.

The police have registered both the cases under the Epidemic Act and have taken action against the accused.

P3

Hoteliers cry foul after BBMP's stiff penalty kick

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A day after the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) decided to penalise owners of eateries, event organisers and other business establishments if their customers do not follow Covid appropriate behaviour, the hoteliers association mocked the new rules as a “fund-raising scheme” of the government. They also wondered why a similar rule allowing a penalty of up to Rs 1 lakh, is not imposed at government offices, political programmes and so on.

On Saturday, the BBMP had come out with new penalties that primarily held establishment owners or event organisers responsible if the customers or attendees do not follow social distancing norms or wear mask. Such stringent rules were introduced fol-



lowing government's prediction of a second wave of covid-19 infections over the next 40 days. The government is of the view that public gatherings should be held only with minimum crowd and utmost caution. Bangalore Hotel Owners Association and Karnataka Kalyana Mantapa Owners Association

Customers err, eateries pay	
Who	Penalty
Hotel, darshini, food centres, retail shops, street vendors	Rs 5,000
Non-AC restaurants, party halls, shops, departmental stores, shops selling brands, cinema halls, multiplex, shopping mall	Rs 25,000
AC restaurants, party halls, shops, departmental stores, shops of brands, cinema halls, multiplex and malls	Rs 50,000
3 star and above hotels, wedding and community halls with capacity of more than 500	Rs 1 lakh
Public meetings, rallies, public festivals	Rs 50,000
Second-time offenders	Rs 10,000

lowing government's prediction of a second wave of covid-19 infections over the next 40 days. The government is of the view that public gatherings should be held only with minimum crowd and utmost caution. Bangalore Hotel Owners Association and Karnataka Kalyana Mantapa Owners Association

expressed its dissatisfaction with the BBMP's holding the establishment owner responsible for the fault of their clients. The association suggested the government penalise those who do not follow the rules instead of penalising the owners.

All we can do is ensure that our workers are wearing mask and the sanitiser is kept at the entry points. Penalising us for someone else's mistake is not right,” PC Rao, president of the hoteliers association, said. “This steep penalty is nothing but a fund-raising scheme. It could also lead to black-mailing and corruption,” he said.

If the BBMP is serious about the second wave, he said, the order should also include government offices and political events. “Will the BBMP penalise themselves if the people coming to the city market, which is owned by the corporation, do not follow social distancing?” he asked.

T Vasani, who owns a wedding hall, said the government's decisions are confusing not just for people but also for businessmen. “The most we can do is put up boards with Covid instructions along with regular announcements. We cannot pin blame on people who attend weddings. This could even lead to conflicts and there is high chance of wedding itself getting broken,” he said.

Currently, the marshals and the police are slapping a penalty of Rs 250 for people not wearing mask or following social distancing norms. They plan to act as per the new order from Monday.

What the fish?

Ulsoor Lake's new fence worth around ₹40L has been cut to facilitate entry of miscreants and illegal fishing, waste-dumping is carrying on

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A fence near Ulsoor Lake that was built in August shows that what may take months to make requires merely a few hours to destroy. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had spent around Rs 40 lakh to build a concrete wall and fence around the lake's boundary on Gurdwara Road.

The purpose of the wall and the fence was to prevent miscreants from misusing the lake.

But, now a portion of the chain link fence has disappeared and the miscreants have easy access to the lake again.

"The corner of Ulsoor Lake has become a destination for illegal fishing and also for people to dump all types of waste. I have come across people throwing waste into the lake. There is no one to keep a vigil on such people," said Bramhananda Reddy, a resident of Gupta Layout.

Hundreds of people from nearby areas such as Shivajinagar, Sivanchetti Gardens, Cox Town, Kallahalli, Ulsoor and Gupta Layout visit Ulsoor Lake for a walk in the morning and evening. Miscreants entering the lake is a problem.

"The issue has been raised during the ward committee meeting. I will raise it once again during the next ward committee meeting. Illegal fishing is routine at the lake," said Mohan Kumar, vice-president, Ulsoor Residents' Welfare Association.

BBMP spends lakhs on upkeep

The BBMP has been spending lakhs of rupees to keep Ulsoor Lake clean every year.

It has appointed home guards to keep a vigil on those who dump waste and indulge in fishing but dumping of waste (on Gurdwara side) and illegal fishing continue without any hassles.

"Illegal fishing has become a nuisance for the people visiting the lake. I want the BBMP authorities to increase the height of the concrete wall up to five or seven feet to prevent people from entering the lake.

"It is painful to know the damage



Miscreants get in through the holes in the new fence and are often seen fishing at the lake

“The BBMP must increase the height of the concrete wall to up to five or seven feet to prevent people from entering the lake

—V Purushottam, spokesperson, Halasuru Rising

done to the newly-fixed fence," said V Purushottam, a spokesperson of Halasuru Rising.

BBMP Chief Engineer (Lakes) Mohan Krishna said the lakes department had a few months ago lodged a police complaint against the miscreants gaining entry into the lake area.

"We have constructed a concrete wall and erected a new fence recently. I will direct my subordinates to visit the spot," said Mohan Krishna.

Slow down, no-go zone ahead in Kanaka Nagar

Motorists have to either avoid a pothole-ridden road or go very slow here

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A small stretch at Kanaka Nagar in Vishwanath Nagenahalli ward in Hebbal Assembly segment is proving to be a massive hurdle for motorists, especially two-wheeler riders. The road adjacent to 13th Cross of Kanaka Nagar is pock-marked with potholes.

All motorists have to slow down when they reach here, irrespective of whether the gate at the railway level crossing is shut or open. Residents on the 13th Cross of Kanaka Nagar complain that the authorities concerned have not taken any measures to fix this problem, despite repeated reminders to them.

"We have no alternative but to go to the Outer Ring Road if we want to go towards Hennur or Banaswadi. We have been complaining to the authorities and elected representatives requesting me to asphalt this road, but in vain," said S Nagaraj, a resident of Vishwanatha Nagenahalli.

Rajasekhar N, a resident of the area, said the road has been ignored for years. "Motorists continue to suffer on this stretch that has more than 100 potholes and craters. The only way to avoid mishaps is to ride very slow," said Rajasekhar.

Manoj M, a resident of Kanaka Nagar, said the road on the other side of railway level



Bumpy ride on road adjacent to 13th Cross in Kanaka Nagar



“ We have no alternative but to go to the Outer Ring Road if we want to go towards Hennur or Banaswadi. We have been complaining to the authorities, but in vain

—S Nagaraj, resident of Vishwanatha Nagenahalli

cross was even and well-maintained. "We want the authorities concerned to fix this problem as early as possible in the interest of thousands of motorists who commute on this road either to go towards the Outer Ring Road

or come towards Kanakanagar and Vishwanatha Nagenahalli and other areas from the Outer Ring Road," said Manoj.

A resident of Kanaka Nagar said on the condition of anonymity that a little rainfall is enough to reduce the stretch into a quagmire, thus making it

difficult for the two-wheeler riders to commute here. "It is tough to navigate the manholes and craters whenever it rains," he said.

Vishwanatha Nagenahalli ward former corporator Rajasekhara N remained unavailable for comment.

Citizens get litter out of Vasanthnagar

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On Saturday morning, about 40 citizens from all walks of life and age groups gathered outside Desserted Café (opposite Mount Carmel College) and began cleaning up almost all roads of Vasanthnagar. The occasion was a Plog Run organised by Citizens for Citizens (C4C).

When the group met outside the cafe, founder of India Plog Run Ramakrishna Ganesh, explained the process to each of them. All participants wore masks, maintained social distancing, wore gloves and vests, and were given a bag each to go along designated routes in four teams to cover almost all roads of Vasanthnagar.

They collected plastic, paper,



Nineteen bags of garbage was collected during the Plog Run

bottles, and such other litter from roads and footpaths. The teams covered routes of 2 km each, covering 8 km in the area between Palace Road, Miller Road, Cunningham Road and 1st Main Road, Vasanthnagar, in about 45 minutes. All the 19 bags of garbage collected were handed over to BBMP Health officials.

BBMP Commissioner Manjunatha Prasad flagged off the event, and also picked up half a bag of litter himself from the service road of Palace Road. "I am happy that citizens have come forward to clean up Vasanthnagar in this manner, and bring about awareness regarding littering. Bengaluru

needs more such efforts," Prasad said.

Ramakrishna Ganesh, a social evangelist and also known for all his work for keeping Nandi Hills clean, said, "Plogging is a combination of promoting cleanliness as well as good health. When we pick up litter from the street, we also understand that in the first place it should not have been there." He made the group go through a warm-up routine before they left on the Plog Run.

Rajkumar Dugar, Founder and Convener of Citizens for Citizens, said, "We were not sure that on a cold morning, people would come out to pick trash. But we were overwhelmed by the response. Men and women, in the age group of seven to 65 years, took part. A team from Hotel Shangri-La also participated." Vikram Singh, a participant, said, "Now I will always remember the duty of a good citizen".

P5

BBMP to finish its half-done job at 19 lakes

Lakes to be developed for around ₹34 crore, to get diversion drains, fences and more

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has chalked out a plan to finish off incomplete development work at 19 lakes in the city at an estimated cost of Rs 34 crore.

BBMP Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad has written a letter to the Urban Development

Department Additional Chief Secretary on November 27 seeking funds for the protection and development of lakes in the agency's jurisdiction. The Commissioner has sought Rs 3.5 crore for further developmental works and balance boundary protection work at Amruthahalli Lake, Rs 1.5 crore for fencing of Srinivasapura Lake, Rs 2 crore for fencing and development of Medi Agrahara Lake, Rs 1.5 crore for link fencing at Narasappanahalli Lake, Rs 1 crore for Shivpura Lake, Rs 50 lakh for Bheemanakatte Lake, and Rs 1.5 crore for Sriganakavala Lake.

The BBMP has decided to spend Rs 1 crore for chain link fencing and other developmental works at Pattanagere Kenchanahalli Lake, Rs



Wet land and diversion drain being proposed for Rachenahalli Lake

1.5 crore for Kengeri Lake, Rs 4 crore for rejuvenation of Hulimavu Lake, Rs 2 crore for Beratena Agrahara Lake, Rs

“ There is a wetland at Rachenahalli. What is the need to provide for one more wetland? And diversion channel is the BWSSB's responsibility

—Sanjeev Dyamannavar, activist

50 lakh for Arehalli Lake, Rs 3 crore for constructing diversion drain at Kaikondrahalli Lake, Rs 3 crore to complete pending developmental works at Vengalaha Kere, Rs 8 crore for Nayandahalli Lake and Rs 6 crore for providing wet land, diversion

drain, flood protection work to Jawaharlal Nehru Advanced Sciences and Mahatma Gandhi Rural Energy Center at Rachenahalli Lake.

"We have sent a proposal to the higher authorities for funds to develop the lakes," said BBMP Chief Engineer (Lakes) Mohan Krishna.

Meanwhile, Sanjeev Dyamannavar, a social activist, said the BBMP has decided to spend money on the existing facilities at Rachenahalli Lake. "There is a wetland at Rachenahalli. Why is there a need to provide wetland once again? Diversion channel is the responsibility of the BWSSB. I am not aware of the floods in recent times at Rachenahalli Lake," said Dyamannavar.

P6

40 residents join hands to protect Hennagara Lake

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

dumping of debris and garbage on the lake land, MY Manjula Sanjeev, who works as an assistant executive engineer at KPTCL and owns a site near the lake, said that the lake used to be quite clean but dumping of garbage and waste made it vulnerable to pollution. "Sewage is flowing into the

lake from the nearby apartments. Pollutants from nearby industries also flow into the lake. If the flow of sewage and pollutants continues, this lake may become another Bellandur. I am grateful to my husband R Sanjeev Prasad for encouraging and supporting me to get involved in these activities," said Manjula.

The members of Hennagara

Collective have decided to follow the Miyawaki afforestation method to plant more saplings on the lake land. "Today, the volunteers planted 250 saplings. We are ready to provide more saplings but that will depend on the weather. We are thinking of engaging workers to plant around 8,000 saplings in a week," said Madhusudhan of SayTrees.

On the occasion, Seshu Ratnala, a Lake clean-up volunteer, released the cover of a book - Swetcha - A child's quest for freedom. Manjula has designed the cover page. The book is aimed at motivating children to plant saplings to preserve and protect the environment.

Elaborating on future plans to protect Hennagara Lake, Tushar Chandra said that the next task would be to clean the water in the lake, "using the phytoremediation method - with

plants on floating islands and in the path of the discharge," he said.

He appreciated Manjula Sanjeev for getting permission from Anekal Planning Authority and Hennagara Panchayat to plant saplings on the lake land.

"The ongoing afforestation programme will not only add greenery but will prevent people from encroaching the lake land," said Hennagara Panchayat Development Officer A Tulasinath.

P8

An eco-friendly way to ferry city's dry waste

Palike plans to deploy only electric or CNG vehicles to transport waste

Palike plans to deploy only electric or CNG vehicles to transport waste

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The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) begins the process of collecting dry waste, thus taking forward the decision of 'going green'. The civic body has tied up with rag-pickers and NGOs, and plans to deploy only the green vehicles, in other words, either electric or CNG (dual-fuel) vehicles.

BBMP commissioner N Manjunath Prasad said they were procuring around 600 CNG or electric autos for collection and transportation of dry waste from households and non-bulk commercial establishments. The fully-built vehicle should carry a minimum of 440 kg of pay load with a four-sided covered steel body and amplifiers/speakers or a mike system fitted for making announcements. "We recently held talks with Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL) to facilitate the use of CNG vehicles," he told Bangalore Mirror.

For a long time, many have been demanding the BBMP to think about the environment while using vehicles. "The auto tippers used by the BBMP can be a big source of pollution due to bad maintenance. I always wonder why the BBMP is not going green (except the green colour on these auto tippers). It is really a nice move by the civic agency to deploy electric or CNG vehicles at least in a few wards. We urge the BBMP to gradually go for only for electric or clean-fuel vehicles in waste collection and set itself a model," said Jyoti Prasad, techie and a civic activist. Meanwhile, the BBMP commissioner said the tenders for such autos have been initiated and it may take a couple of months before the project kicks off and we see clean energy vehicles in our neighbourhood.

Rag-pickers' network

On September 23, Bangalore Mirror had reported that BBMP, in association with several non-profit organisations, has deployed a network of rag pickers in three wards for door-to-door collection of dry waste. In a month's time, about 38 wards will come under this scheme. The Palike plans to extend



BBMP wants to procure around 600 CNG or electric autos to carry dry waste

“ We urge the BBMP to gradually move towards use of only electric or clean-fuel vehicles in waste collection and set itself a model

—Jyoti Prasad, techie and civic activist

this to all 198 wards eventually. To incentivise it for rag pickers while keeping dry waste away from landfills, they will be free to sell high-value waste such as plastic to recycling plants or scrap dealers and earn an income, said a BBMP official.

Officials said the BBMP will provide an average of two auto tippers for each ward along with a maintenance fee of about Rs 55,000 per vehicle, per month. "There will be no additional expenditure for the dry waste collection," the officer said. The BBMP commissioner added that they will be giving capital cost in terms of the vehi-

cles while the manpower will be theirs. We will bear the operational cost."

The BBMP will be spending anywhere between Rs 1 crore to Rs 3 crore per annum per ward towards collection of wet and sanitary waste from every household. This translates to around Rs 400 crore a year for all the 198 wards. The cost of collecting dry waste could come up to Rs 28 crore per annum for all 198 wards. Besides these expenses, the BBMP has roped in separate service providers for the transportation of waste from transfer stations to the waste processing units.

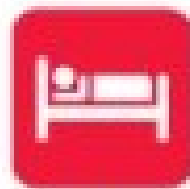


BM's story of Sept 23 on new scheme



State Sees 1,321 Fresh Covid Cases

Our Bureau



Bengaluru: Karnataka reported 1,321 new Covid-19 cases on Sunday, along with 889 discharges. There were 10 Covid related deaths. Karnataka currently has 25,381 active cases.

Bengaluru Urban district reported 733 new cases besides seven deaths. In all other districts, new cases were either in double digits or in single digit. Bidar district did not have a single case, and in most districts, there were no deaths.

The case fatality ratio (CFR) state-wide remained at 0.75% in line with the government's targets, and the positivity rate for the day was .133%.