



**Bruhat Bengaluru  
Mahanagara Palike**

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE,  
BANGALORE**

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## NEARBY

### Property owners vexed by rule changes

Several property owners who have already paid betterment charges and development cess to redevelop or renovate their properties are being served notices seeking both charges running into several lakhs. The confusion stems from a recent notification of an amendment to Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act on hiking plan sanction fee, betterment charges, and development cess.



P1

## Some COVID-19 vaccines may get nod in a few weeks

### Centre, States working on roll-out plan

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Tuesday said “some of the COVID-19 vaccine candidates may receive licence in the next few weeks”, with preparatory activities for a vaccine roll-out being carried out by the Central government in collaboration with the States and the Union Territories.

The Ministry, at a press conference, said getting vaccinated is voluntary and that vaccination cannot just be a State’s or the Centre’s responsibility; “it has to be people’s participation”.

Rajesh Bhushan, Secretary, Health, said, “While we cannot predict when the three vaccine candidates currently with the Drugs

seeking emergency use authorisation will be cleared as they have to go through the due clearance process, India’s regulatory framework has a specific provision for the grant of emergency use authorisation under the New Drugs and Clinical Trial Rule, 2019.”

“This provides that under specific special situations mentioned in the rule, relaxation, abbreviation, omission, or deferment of data, including local clinical trial data, may be considered for approval. Other countries also have laws. The timeline for issuing licence is under the national regulator’s domain,” Mr. Bhushan added.

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**90-YEAR-OLD GETS U.K.’S FIRST COVID-19 JAB ▶ PAGE 11**

P1



# Property owners vexed by rule on betterment charges, development cess

So far, they had to pay a fee only when they were developing the property for the first time

K.V. ADITYA BHARADWAJ  
BENGALURU

K. Ramkumar sought permission from the civic body in January 2020 for adding a room to his house in Girinagar, which is built on a 40X60 site. He got approval and paid a fee of ₹30,000. However, COVID-19 and the lockdown happened, and he could not go ahead with the plan.

On November 11, he was shocked to receive a notice from the civic body saying that he has to pay betterment fee and development cess, as per a new amendment to the Karnataka Town and Country Planning Act, 1961. The amount comes up to ₹2.19 lakh. Having paid ₹30,000 earlier this year, he was told to pay the remaining ₹1.89 lakh in the next seven days or face legal action.

He is not alone. Several property owners who have already paid betterment charges and development cess to redevelop or renovate their properties are being served notices seeking both charges running into several lakhs.

"I don't understand this. We had paid betterment charges earlier when our house was built. Then why is the civic body asking us to pay it again? Paying ₹2.19 lakh to add a room to my house is simply unviable," Mr. Ramkumar said.



The confusion stems from the recent notification of the amendment to KTCP Act, 1961 on hiking plan sanction fee, betterment charges and development cess. •K. MURALIKUMAR

## Betterment charges as per the new amendment

% of market value per square metre of non-agricultural land			
Residential	Industrial	Commercial	Others
0.5% subject to a minimum of ₹25/sq.m.	1% subject to a minimum of ₹37.5/sq.m.	1.5% subject to a minimum of ₹62.5/sq.m.	0.5% subject to a minimum of ₹25/sq.m.

The confusion stems from the recent notification of the amendment to KTCP Act, 1961 on hiking plan sanction fee, betterment charges and development cess. The way the notification is worded suggests that property owners need to pay betterment charges not just when they are developing the property for the first time, but also when renovating or redeveloping it, say civic officials.

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike Commissioner

N. Manjunath Prasad has written to the Urban Development Department (UDD) seeking clarity on the issue, a copy of which is available with *The Hindu*. Even as the UDD is yet to clear the air, BBMP officials on the ground have begun serving notices asking property owners to pay the charges for renovation and redevelopment, leading to anxiety and confusion.

As per the new rules, betterment charges are now

fixed as a 'percentage of market value per square metre of the plot' – 0.5% for residential, 1% for industrial and 1.5% for commercial purposes – and development cess in the range of 0.1 - 0.5% of the market value of the land, unlike before when it was a fixed rate and not linked to the market value of the property. The betterment charges and development cess will likely run into several lakhs of rupees, given it is now a function of the market value of the land.

For instance, if a property owner has built on only a small portion of a large plot and seeks to extend the building, he or she may have to pay betterment charges for the entire plot. The notice issued to Mr. Ramkumar

calculates the betterment charges and the cess for the area of the entire plot and not the built-up area he sought to add. It means that even though owners had paid betterment charges and development cess for the plot while developing the property, they may have to pay it all over again if they are renovating or redeveloping it.

Property consultant K.R. Ramesh said there is no provision to collect betterment fee and development cess multiple times for the same plot of land. "This is fleeing property owners and can be legally challenged," he said, adding the notification was so worded that it was leading to retrospective tax, which is bad in law.

The BBMP Commissioner said, "We are also of the opinion that betterment charges and development cess can be collected from a particular plot only once and not multiple times. Also for renovation or extension of the building on a large plot, it is unlikely we will be able to collect betterment charges for the entire plot. We have sought clarification from UDD on the issue and a reply is awaited."

He added that the confusion was created by the way the notification was worded, and it would be sorted out soon.

P2

## Artificial garden city



Residents are questioning the use of artificial grass on the median of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya flyover since the city has the potential for natural grass. •SUDHAKARA JAIN

P2



# BBMP seeks citizens' inputs on public toilets, footpaths

This is part of a participatory budget campaign

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU**

Despite several initiatives, public urination is rampant across the city while footpaths are hardly pedestrian-friendly. It is these two issues that are being focussed upon in "My City My Budget", a participatory campaign of Janaagraha, a non-profit organisation.

Addressing civil society members and residents' welfare organisations on Tuesday, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad called upon citizens to provide inputs to the civic body on these two focus areas.

"Funds are not a constraint. We seek inputs from citizens to ensure better utilisation of the same. With no elected body in place, the Administrator is likely to present the next budget," he said. He said regular maintenance of hygiene and cleanliness were of paramount importance.

There are around 200 lakes and 1,200 parks, and over 500 playgrounds under the BBMP. "Citizens visit these places on a daily basis. Apart from these locations, toilets can be built in other places as well," he said.

BBMP's Special Commissioner (Solid Waste Management) D. Randeep said that there were 418 functioning public toilets, which have been mapped. The 115 e-toilets have also been mapped and will soon be available on Google search.

"One just has to search 'SBM toilets' to ascertain the location of the nearest toilet," he said and added that ₹80 crore had been allocated for eliminating "yellow spots" (urination points) by constructing new toilets under Shubhra Bengaluru Scheme.

With regard to footpaths, Mr. Prasad said wide footpaths were part of roads developed under TenderSURE and taken up for white-topping. "We intend to have

wider footpaths on other roads that have not been taken up for white-topping or TenderSURE," he said.

Stating that the civic body was committed to removing encroachments, he said the BBMP had taken up an encroachment removal drive from December 1. "The blanket ban on removing any kind of encroachment by the High Court of Karnataka ended on November 30," he pointed out.

To be part of the 'My City My Budget' initiative, citizens can identify issues in their localities, flag them through various channels, fix them with the BBMP and monitor infrastructure work. Citizens may submit inputs to the "Budget Bus" and electric autorickshaws that will go around the city's neighbourhoods, or to the nodal officers of the ward committees. Citizens can also convene neighbourhood workshops and submit the inputs online on [ichangemycity.com](http://ichangemycity.com).

P2

# Five waste-to-energy plants to come up in vicinity of city

They would help in scientific disposal of solid waste

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU**

After several years of talks, the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has initiated the process of establishing five waste-to-energy power plants on the PPP model in and around the city.

Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J.C. Madhuswamy informed the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday that around 5,000 tonnes of waste was generated daily in Bengaluru. Waste-to-energy plants would help in scientific disposal of solid waste. The plants would start generating power after

two years, he said.

In a reply to N.A. Harris (Congress), the Minister said the foundation stone was laid for the first power plant in Bidadi, Ramanagara district. The plant would generate 11.5 MW power using 600 MT processed waste daily. This plant was built at a cost of ₹260 crore, which was shared by the Karnataka Power Corporation Limited and the BBMP.

Satheram Enterprises would set up a 12 MW plant in Kannahalli to process 1,000 tonnes of waste. It would be completed in 24 months. Another private

firm, Indium, would set up a 4 MW plant for generating power by processing 300 tonnes of waste daily at Doddabidarakallu.

Firmgreen Enterprises would process around 1,000 tonnes of waste daily and produce compressed natural gas. The plant would come up at Mavallipura. NEG would establish an eight MW plant at Mavallipura to process 500 metric tonnes of garbage.

The BBMP has proposed to tie up with Nexus Novus to set up two plants at Marenahalli for processing 600 tonnes of waste daily, the Minister said.

P2



# Active COVID-19 cases on the rise again in city -

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

Active cases in Bengaluru Urban, which saw a decline from October to November, are now on the rise again. After registering a 79% drop in November, cases have again risen by 15%.

The number dropped from 55,736 on October 5 to 16,716 on November 5. However, the number again shot up to 17,441 on November 6. In another month, the cases increased to 19,185 on De-

ember 5. As on Tuesday, active cases in this district touched 19,468.

Munish Moudgil, who heads the State's COVID-19 war room, said the increase in active cases in Bengaluru is due to the technical reason that discharges are not updated in the system. "Daily cases have in fact come down over the last 20 days and the positivity rate has also not increased," he said.

Meanwhile, the State on Tuesday reported 1,280 new

cases of COVID-19, taking the total number of cases to 8,95,284. With 13 deaths, the toll rose to 11,880. This is apart from 19 deaths of patients due to non-COVID-19 reasons.

As many as 1,060 persons were discharged on Tuesday, taking the total number of recoveries to 8,58,370. Of the remaining 25,015 active patients, 275 were being monitored in the ICU. While the positivity rate for the day stood at 1.44 %, the Case Fa-

tality Rate (CFR) touched 1.01%.

Bengaluru Urban reported 638 cases, taking its tally to 3,75,163. With seven deaths coming from Bengaluru, the toll in this district rose to 4,197.

The daily tests continued to remain lesser than the average one lakh for the second consecutive day with 88,698 tests conducted in the last 24 hours. This includes 70,595 RT-PCR tests. With this, the total tests rose to 1,18,78,413.

P3

## State's MR experience to come in handy for COVID-19 vaccination

**AFSHAN YASMEEN**  
BENGALURU

Based on its experience during the combined Measles-Rubella (MR) immunisation campaign in 2017 wherein 1.58 crore children were covered in two months, Karnataka is well-placed to implement the COVID-19 vaccination programme, said experts on Tuesday.

Participating in a webinar on 'COVID-19 and Vaccine' organised by the Press Information Bureau, Lokesh Alahari, Sub Regional Team Leader - Karnataka, WHO India (National Polio Surveillance Project), said Karnataka has good vaccine storage and cold chain facilities with 2,855 cold chain points and 10 walk-in-coolers and four walk-in-freezers.

"The State was able to store and utilise nearly 1.8 crore MR vaccine doses supplied by the Centre in two months because of these facilities. Also, during the MR immunisation drive, the injectable vaccine had to be reconstituted with a diluent. And, for this dry storage facilities for diluents and syringes were also scientifically set up. All these will come handy for the COVID-19 vaccination," said Dr. Lokesh, who is also a



Free mass COVID-19 testing being conducted on travellers in Bengaluru. •FILE PHOTO

should be adopted for the COVID-19 vaccination. "Although there will be vaccine eagerness initially, there can be vaccine hesitancy even if there is one serious adverse event (related or unrelated). If such a situation arises, we may have to build confidence among people," Dr. Lokesh pointed out.

### Possible adverse events

It is likely that vaccination will be associated with mild adverse events like soreness at the injection site, fever, fatigue, and myalgias, said Shashi Bhushan B.L., profes-

### Election-booth approach

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

The process will be based on an election-booth approach. Each booth will have two vaccinators, an assistant to maintain records, an assistant for logistics, and two or three people for crowd management. "People will be registered and vaccinated in the



member of the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

A majority of the 10,000 vaccinators identified by the State for the vaccination are those who had carried out the MR campaign as they are already trained.

#### Communication strategy

The MR campaign was marred by initial hiccups wherein there was a lot of hesitancy from parents to get their children immunised. However, these hurdles were resolved with active involvement of the private sector and medical professional bodies. Similarly, an aggressive communication strategy

and head of the department of Pulmonary Medicine at Victoria Hospital, Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute.

"More serious reactions, such as otherwise unexplained neurological or inflammatory processes, would raise concerns. We will have to watch out for that," he said. Clinicians should also understand the basics of how different vaccines perform and, if more than one is available, be able to recommend the best for a given patient, he said. "No vaccine will be 100% effective and a vaccine that protects against developing clinical illness may not prevent transmission to oth-

jurisdiction of their residence. Although voter IDs or Aadhaar cards are not mandatory, people need to have some ID proof, like even a college ID will be fine," said Dr. Lokesh, member, State's COVID-19 TAC.

ers. Also, the duration of naturally occurring immunity to infection with severe SARS-CoV-2 is unknown and may wane with time. Therefore, the likely duration of protection by new COVID-19 vaccines is unknown." Dr. Bhushan added.

P3

## Active COVID-19 cases on the rise again in city

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P3

## Supply of life-saving medicines affected by 'Make in India' policy

Ministry of Railways cites difficulties in procuring drugs for COVID-19, cancer

S. VIJAY KUMAR  
CHENNAI

The Ministry of Railways has written to the Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, seeking exemption for procuring certain medical items manufactured outside India, particularly medicines used in the treatment of COVID-19 and cancer.

The issue was first flagged in August 2020 by Northern

Railway, which formally wrote to the Railway Board, expressing difficulty in procuring drugs and surgical items in the light of the latest 'Make in India' policy.

It said that certain drugs used in cancer treatment were manufactured outside India but available in the Indian market through agents or dealers.

"The uninterrupted supply chain of these medicines and medical items are essen-

tial in the human life saving category and providing satisfactory health care to all railway employees and their family members. In the existing 'Make in India' policy, there is no window available to procure such items from the suppliers who may not meet the Local Content Criteria required for Class-I and Class-II Local Supplier category. It is therefore proposed to seek exemption to procure such medicines and medical items from Indian Market from 'non-local suppliers'..." the letter said.

Going by the Department

for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade's (DPIIT) norms, Class-I is a local supplier or service provider whose goods, services or works offered for procurement have local content equal to or more than 50%, while Class-II is a supplier or service provider whose goods, services or works offered for procurement have local content of more than 20% but less than 50%. Only these two categories of suppliers shall be eligible to bid in the procurement of all goods, services or works and with estimated value of pur-

chases of less than ₹200 crore.

On December 3, 2020, the Ministry of Railways communicated to the Principal Chief Materials Manager heading Purchases that the DPIIT had informed the issue had been forwarded to the Department of Pharmaceuticals and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, being the nodal agencies for Pharmaceuticals, Medical Devices and Equipment.

The DPIIT also said that the Secretary (Coordination), Cabinet Secretariat, in a meeting held on November

10, 2020, had directed that the purpose of seeking relaxation was to achieve indigenisation of the items that were presently not being manufactured in the country. "It is felt that the above objective is defeated in case the subject relaxation is granted," the DPIIT noted.

However, the Ministry of Railways was advised to exercise the powers conferred under Para 14 of the 'Make in India' policy guidelines with the approval of the Minister in-charge to seek relaxation in any particular procurement, if required.

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# Some COVID-19 vaccines may get nod in few weeks

Three companies – Bharat Biotech, Serum Institute of India and Pfizer – have so far sought emergency use authorisation for their vaccines. Mr. Bhushan said once a green signal was obtained from scientists, the Centre “will launch massive production of the vaccine”.

“The Central government has made elaborate preparations and drawn an outline to ramp up production of vaccines to make it available to each and every person in the shortest possible time. We will be running parallel vaccination programmes for several priority groups,” Mr. Bhushan said.

The Ministry said at present, there are around 2.39 lakh vaccinators (auxiliary nurse midwife or ANM) across the country, but only 1.54 lakh ANMs will be used for COVID-19 vaccination to ensure that the drive has minimal impact on routine health services, including routine immunisation.

application, which can be downloaded for free by all, for vaccination delivery. The mobile app will record vaccine data and will be used for remote real-time monitoring,” he added.

Giving details of the current cold chain system, the Ministry said it consisted of 85,634 equipment for storage of vaccines at about 28,947 cold chain points across the country. “Current cold chain is capable of storing additional quantities of COVID-19 vaccine required for first 3 crore health care and frontline workers. Additional supplies would be available to States/UTs beginning 10th December 2020,” the Ministry stated.

Asking the people to have faith in vaccines cleared by Indian regulators, V.K. Paul, member (Health), NITI Aayog, said: “This is a scientific, technical body with vast experience. Don’t succumb to contrary opinion, have faith in these institutions. Take into considera-

## Prioritised groups

It added that the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for COVID-19 has made recommendations on prioritised population groups, including healthcare providers, personnel from State and Central police, armed forces, home guards, civil defence and disaster management volunteers, municipal workers, and persons above 50 years of age.

Mr. Bhushan added that the process of collecting databases of health workers has started across all States/UTs and Central Ministries. “This data is being uploaded on CO-WIN software which will be used for the vaccination process. CO-WIN platform is a mobile

only accountable transparent information from the government, otherwise we will not find ourselves standing strong against the pandemic. We are chasing the virus and we need to make sure that the virus doesn’t chase us.”

He added that besides the three vaccine candidates that are before the regulator seeking permission for emergency use, other vaccines may also arrive.

Replying to a question on the data being relied upon for possible issue of emergency use approval, Indian Council of Medical Research head Balram Bhargava added that the regulator probably has to be satisfied with risk-benefit ratio in this emergency situation.

# Govt plans vaccine booths; 30 cr to get Covid shots first

More cold chain equipment for states from tomorrow

KALYAN RAY  
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India plans to create “vaccine booths” along the lines of polling booths for an “orderly and smooth” vaccination campaign across the country as the government gears up to roll out the Covid-19 vaccine, targeting 30 crore individuals in the initial months.

One crore healthcare workers, including doctors, and two crore front-line staff such as police and disaster response team members will get the shots in the first round, followed by 27 crore age-prior-

itised individuals with comorbid conditions, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said here on Tuesday.

Currently 85,634 cold chain equipment are available for storage and transport of vaccines at 28,947 cold chain points spread all over the country.

The existing cold chain network can house the Covid-19 shots for the first three crore vaccinations in addition to 11 vaccines needed in the universal immunisation programme (UIP).

Additional supply of cold chain equipment comprising walk-in coolers, walk-in freezers, deep freezers and ice-lined refrigerators will be made available to the states from December 10 onwards, Bhushan said, sharing the first official details of the government’s rollout plan.

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# 'Pvt co profiteering from Hebbal flyover hoardings'

Pays govt just Rs 1.1 cr a year but earns Rs 2.5 cr a month: MLA

BENGALURU, DHNS

**L**aw Minister J C Madhuswamy admitted on the floor of the legislative assembly on Tuesday that a private company might be profiteering from a contract it holds to put up hoardings on the Hebbal flyover.

In a written reply, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, who holds the Bengaluru city development portfolio, said Avinashi Ads was given the contract for a 30-year period in exchange for an annual ground rent to be paid to the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA). The work order was given in May 2018.

The company, which has been permitted to put up 147 hoardings on an area spanning 61,780 square feet, has spent Rs 98.98 lakh to beautify 1.98 lakh square feet around the flyover, according to the reply. The contract requires



The Hebbal flyover, which links the city with the airport, gives unmatched visibility to advertisers. DH FILE PHOTO

the company to pay the government Rs 1.1 crore with a 5% increase every year as ground rent.

"The company has spent just Rs 98 lakh, but they've been given 147 hoardings. The hoardings will easily generate Rs 2.5 crore a month. But the company is paying the government just Rs 1.1 crore a year. Isn't this a loot," former minister Krishna Byre Gowda asked.

Madhuswamy, on behalf of Yediyurappa who was not present, said the company was selected through tendering. "Yes, we agree that the company makes a lot of profit," he said.

The minister also pointed out that the company had obtained an interim order from the high court barring any interference in the contract. Gowda grew suspicious: "If the contractor went to court, maybe it was to preempt legislative scrutiny."

BDA chairperson S R Viswanath said the Hebbal flyover was "one of the few places in the city" where the agency had given its space to put up hoardings. "What we need is an advertisement policy," he said.

Finally, Madhuswamy said he would discuss with Yediyurappa to find a legal solution to this.



# Need two years to solve city's garbage problem: Govt

Projects underway to process 4,000 tonnes of solid waste, CM tells assembly

BENGALURU, DHNS

**I**t would take another two years to solve Bengaluru's garbage problem, the state government informed the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday.

In a written reply to Shanthinagar legislator N A Haris, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, who holds the Bengaluru city development portfolio, said the government had approved various projects that would help use 4,000 tonnes of the city's solid waste to generate energy or compressed natural gas (CNG).

"All these projects will be ready in two years," Law Minister J C Madhuswamy said on behalf of Yediyurappa, who was not present in the House. "Bengaluru generates 5,500 tonnes of solid waste daily. Of this, 4,000-4,500 tonnes come

from domestic households," he added. According to the government's reply, there are five solid waste management projects in the pipeline.

The Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd (KPCL) will set up a 600-tonne capacity plant at Bidadi to use solid waste or refuse-derived fuel to generate 11.5 MW power at a cost of Rs 260 crore.

Other projects are being taken up in public-private partnership. The government has approved a waste-to-energy unit to be set up by Satarem Enterprises at Kannalli to generate 12 MW power using 1,000 tonnes of mixed waste. This will be up and running in 24 months, Yediyurappa said.

Similarly, another waste-to-energy unit will be ready in 12 months that will be set up by Indium to use 300



Bengaluru generates about 5,500 tonnes of garbage every day. The picture is from TCM Rayon Road, off Mysuru Road. DH FILE PHOTO

tonnes of mixed waste and generate 4 MW at Doddabidarakallu. The government said action was being taken to enter into an agreement with Nexus Novas for the establishment of a 600-tonne capacity waste-to-energy plant at Marenahalli. On the same lines, NEG has been permitted to set up a unit to generate 8 MW power using 500 tonnes waste.

Last month, the government

approved a project to use 1,000 tonnes of waste to produce CNG by Farmgreen at Mavalipura.

Yediyurappa also said in his reply that the government had put on hold a project to set up a waste-recycling park at Madhugiri and Kanakapura due to protests from locals.

"After Mandur, locals will naturally protest the city's waste being brought into their

villages," former Bengaluru city development minister K J George said. "The Centre gives 40% subsidy for waste-to-energy plants only after they're commissioned. But if the government can convince the Centre to give this upfront, it will incentivise more players to come forward because nobody will be ready to invest Rs 350 crore required to set up one unit," he said.

# ADB approves \$500m loan for Silk Board-airport metro

NEW DELHI/BENGALURU,  
DHNS

The much-awaited metro line from the Central Silk Board junction to the Kempegowda International Airport (Phase 2A and 2B) got a big boost on Tuesday with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) approving it a \$500 million (about Rs 3,685 crore) loan.

Noting that Bengaluru attracts a large number of people due to its capacity to generate job opportunities, the bank noted that the two metro corridors will help augment an efficient and safe transportation system for a population that's set to cross the 1.6-crore mark in a decade.

"This will enhance the economy, improve the urban environment and make the city more livable. The project supports urban transformation of Bengaluru city through a multidimensional approach of urban public transport and

urban development," said ADB Senior Transport Specialist for South Asia Kaoru Kasahara.

Though the loan is a major component of the Rs 15,000-crore project, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is still awaiting the union government's clearance for the two projects that are estimated to cost Rs 14,844 crore.

Replying to a question by MP K C Ramamurthy in the Rajya Sabha in September, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs had said it cannot provide a time frame for clearing the cost intensive project.

Reliable sources, however, say that the inter-ministerial consultation cited by MoHUA has now been completed. "The proposal will be placed before the Public Investment Board.

The final approval may be expected in the next few months. The works can start immediately thereafter as advance action for procurement has been taken," the source

explained.

The 56-km line will connect the south-end of the city, including its IT corridors, to the airport located in the north. It will have 30 stations and provide multimodal facilities like bus bays, taxi stand, motorcycle pools and pedestrian walkways and bridges.

The ADB statement said that the needs of vulnerable groups like the elderly, women, children and the differently-abled would be integrated in the design of the facilities.

## Additional funds

The ADB has approved another \$300 million (about Rs 2,211 crore) for strengthening primary healthcare in urban areas across the country and an additional \$2 million (Rs 14.73 crore) technical assistance to help Karnataka formulate urban development plans and their implementing frameworks, focusing on transit-oriented development and multimodal integration.



# Vaccine trial in Bengaluru yet to pick up pace

Hospital offers travel facility to volunteers

SURAKSHA P  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Even as Bharat Biotech filed for Emergency Use Authorisation of its Covid vaccine (Covaxin), Bengaluru-based Vydehi Hospital is struggling to find volunteers to participate in the vaccine trials.

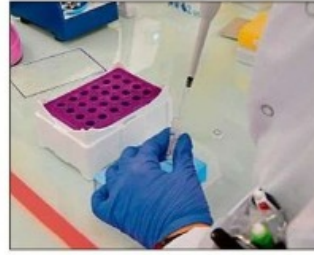
When the trials started on December 2, the hospital had aimed to administer the first dose of vaccine to 1,000 volunteers in a week. However, as of December 8, only 400 people had approached the hospital to participate in the trial.

The volunteers have to be screened to check their suit-

ability for the trial. The hospital has now offered travel arrangements for bigger groups of people - such as residents welfare associations and apartments - who want to be vaccinated as part of the trial. As an alternative, the hospital has offered to reimburse the travel cost.

Dr Rajesh Naidu, an orthopaedic doctor at Vydehi Hospital and Director of Clintrac International Private Limited, an autonomous research institute conducting the clinical trial said they were hopeful of reaching the target.

"We were trying to reach a target of 1,000 volunteers in one week. We are asking everyone. People have to come forward. Hopefully by the end of next week, we hope to inoculate 1,000 volunteers. Other centres started early and so there is more awareness. We



only started recently. It will pick up slowly," Dr Naidu said.

The hospital said they can give the first shot as and when volunteers come, till Bharat Biotech clocks 26,000 volunteers across all its 25 trial sites across India.

"The screening of the volunteers will take at least a day. If interested volunteers are coming from far in groups of 10 or 20, we can provide transport. If people have apprehension of coming to a hospital, we have a separate entrance, passage and wing for them," he added.

Covaxin clinical trials are based on a two-dose schedule, given 28 days apart. The vaccine efficacy will be determined 14 days post the second dose. It is the largest phase 3 clinical trial conducted in India. It is also the only efficacy trial being conducted in India for Covid-19 vaccine, to determine its suitability for the diverse Indian population.

"Once the ICMR has the data for the booster dose of 26,000 volunteers, we will stop giving the first shot to more people. Till this number is reached, we will vaccinate as and when the volunteers come forward without a cut-off date," Dr Naidu said.

Clintrac's Covaxin clinical trial team member said interested can contact the coordinator: Nripesh Nepal at 9739419272 or call Vydehi hospital with an extension number 1692 and ask to be connected to the Covaxin clinical trial room.

P3

## Karnataka reports 1,280 fresh Covid cases, 13 deaths

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Karnataka on Tuesday reported 1,280 new cases of Covid-19 and 13 related fatalities, taking the total number of infections to 8,95,284 and the death toll to 11,880.

The day also saw 1,060 patients getting discharged after recovery. A total of over 1,18,78,413 samples have been tested so far, out of which

88,698 were tested on Tuesday alone, and 18,103 among them were rapid antigen tests.

Out of the fresh cases reported, 638 were from Bengaluru Urban. The district also accounted for 13 deaths.

Among the districts where the new cases were reported, Mysuru accounted for 65, Chitradurga 52, Chikballapur 50, and Hassan 49.

P4



# Govt plans vaccine booths; 30 cr to get Covid shots first

## BOOTHS, FROM PAGE 1

To administer the vaccine, the Centre will pick 1.54 lakh auxiliary nurse-cum-midwives from the existing pool of 2.39 lakh such workers. The rest will continue to serve the UIP to ensure that there is no breach in the routine immunisation programme.

Efforts are on to find out more staff for vaccination as the Centre and state governments prepare for a never-done-before exercise to give the jabs to crores of adult Indians.

Each vaccination booth will have a separate room where a

person receiving the vaccine will have to wait for 30 minutes to check if he/she develops any adverse reaction.

In anticipation of some adverse reactions, the government plans to launch a communication campaign to convey to the masses to accept some adverse effects besides countering disinformation and rumours.

“Have faith in the regulator once it approves a vaccine. Don’t succumb to contrary news and fake news,” said Vinod Paul, member, NITI Aayog, and a former professor at AIIMS.

Detailed implementation

plans and training materials are being finalised; additional procurements of syringes and needles are on track.

Three companies — Serum Institute of India, Bharat Biotech and Pfizer — have applied for Emergency Authorisation Use to the Drugs Controller General of India. While the first two are carrying out clinical trials in India, Pfizer requested waiving the clinical trial need and consider its vaccine on the basis of trials carried abroad.

As many as nine vaccines are in various stages of clinical evaluation in India at the moment.

# Govt develops mobile app for real-time monitoring of Covid-19 vaccination

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Union Health Ministry has developed a digital platform, including a mobile application, for real-time monitoring of Covid-19 vaccine delivery, recording data and to enable people to get themselves registered for vaccination.

Addressing a press meet on Tuesday, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said the platform, Co-WIN, will help monitor the entire vaccination process.

“Co-WIN digital platform includes a free downloadable mobile application which can help record vaccine data. One can register themselves on it if they want the vaccine. There are five modules in Co-WIN app—administrator module, registration module, vaccination module, beneficiary acknowledgement module and report module,” he said.

Bhushan said the administrator module is for the administrators who will be conducting these vaccination sessions. “Through these modules, they

COVID-19 Tracker					
States/UT	Active	Infected	Death	Daily cases	Daily deaths
Maharashtra	73,375	18,59,367	47,827	4,026	53
Kerala	59,873	6,44,696	2,472	5,032	31
Karnataka	25,015	8,95,284	11,880	1,280	13
West Bengal	23,750	5,07,995	8,820	2,941	49
Delhi	22,310	5,97,112	9,763	3,188	57
Uttar Pradesh	21,374	5,58,173	7,967	1,776	23
Haryana	20,875	2,46,679	2,624	1,391	13
Chhattisgarh	19,516	2,49,699	3,025	1,467	15
Gujarat	14,272	2,21,493	4,110	1,325	15
Madhya Pradesh	13,280	2,17,302	3,358	1,345	11
Others	83,877	3,738,110	39,503	8,162	111

<b>3,77,517</b> TOTAL ACTIVE CASES	<b>92,15,887</b> TOTAL RECOVERED	<b>97,35,910</b> TOTAL INFECTED
<b>1,41,349</b> TOTAL DEATHS	<b>1,157</b> NON-COVID DEATHS*	DHNS/PTI (10 PM, December 8) *Patients dead due to non-Covid reasons

can create sessions and the respective vaccinators and managers will be notified,” he said.

The registration module is for people to get registered for vaccination. It will upload bulk data on co-morbidity provided by local authorities or by

surveyors. The vaccination module will verify beneficiary details and update vaccination status while the beneficiary acknowledgement module will send SMS to beneficiaries and also generate QR-based certificates after one gets vaccinated.



# Cops get seven resting cabins

**The 20 by 10 ft metal structures can be used to meet, eat and destress**

**NINA C GEORGE**  
TEAM METROLIFE

**R**esting cabins have come up for policemen at seven busy intersections in Bengaluru.

An initiative of the city police, they are sponsored by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL).

The structures can be seen at Freedom Park, Maurya Junction, Chalukya Circle, Malleswaram (next to BJP office), Town Hall, City Market and Ullala. They are made of light steel with tubes providing the framework, says Mohammed Siddiq, owner A-S Portable Cabins, who manufactured and supplied the structures.

The police identified the spots for the cabins. Each cabin is 20 ft long and 10 ft wide and can be moved around on a lorry. The cabins, which cost Rs 4.3 lakh each, are made to suit all weather conditions, says Siddiq.

The idea to install these cabins was the brainchild of former city police commissioner Bhaskar Rao. "I was passing by Freedom Park one day when I saw a police woman sitting on the pavement. I stopped the car and asked her what had happened. Without a second thought, she broke down saying she was going through severe menstrual pain," he says.

That's when it occurred to him, he says, that police



**A cabin at Race Course Road. The all-weather cabins, bought for Rs 4.3 lakh each, can be moved around, police say.** DH PHOTOS BY B K JANARDHAN

## WHAT IS INSIDE

- Meeting area with four roll-on chairs
- Four bunk beds with mattresses
- A bath and toilet with a Western commode
- Energy-efficient LED lights
- Two ceiling fans and electrical sockets
- Provision for air conditioning
- 300-litre overhead water tank
- Pantry

personnel, on long hours of duty, had no place to rest, change their clothes or even use the toilet. "I immediately discussed it with DCP (Admin) Nisha James and she suggested that we could have temporary shelters. That's how we installed these cabins," says Rao.



**These cabins are equipped with bunker beds, LED lights and a meeting space.**

Police Commissioner Kamal Pant says women now have easy access to a toilet and shelter from harsh weather.

The cabins have appeared on footpaths, already under pressure all across Bengaluru from encroachers of all kinds. "We have chosen locations where the footpath is broad and there's enough room for pedestrian movement. This is not a permanent structure and can be moved around," Pant says. The structures are strategically placed where

large gatherings and protests take place, he notes.

"While traffic policemen have always had their own posts, the law and order wing has never had any," he says.

BIAL is proud of how the cabins will help policemen.

"Placed at strategic locations, they provide them protection from harsh weather, enable smooth functioning during peak hours and also make it a primary point of contact for citizens," a BIAL spokesperson told *Metrolife*.



## B'LURU GARBAGE WOES WILL BE SOLVED IN 2 YEARS

Centre to give 40% subsidy; Former minister says plant will cost Rs 350 cr each; meeting to be convened with city MLAs, along with CM BS Yediyurappa

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE State government on Tuesday declared in the Legislative Assembly that Bengaluru's garbage woes will be solved in the next two years. Replying to Shanthinagar MLA NA Harris, who raised the issue, Law Minister JC Madhuswamy said that a waste processing plant had been proposed earlier, but was opposed by villagers who did not want it on their land.

Of the total 5,000 tonnes of garbage that Bengaluru produces, 4,000 tonnes will be used in the waste-to-energy plant that is expected to start in the next 24 months. Madhuswamy said that tenders had been called for a plant to generate gas and power.

An MoU will be signed between the government and four companies. "It cannot be done in a day or two, they require 24 months, and once it starts functioning, Bengaluru's garbage issue will be resolved to a large extent," he said. The energy generated can be sold for Rs 7 per unit to the Karnataka Power Corporation Limited (KPCL). If KPCL does not buy it, BBMP can itself use the power.

Former minister and SarvaJananagar MLA K J George said that the State has to spend ₹350 crore per plant. The Union government provides 40 per cent subsidy but only after completion, which is why not many are coming forward to invest such a huge amount. "If subsidy is given before work begins, it can be implemented," Madhuswamy said, assuring that a meeting will be convened with city MLAs, along with CM BS Yediyurappa. At present, BBMP is processing more than 1,000 tonnes of wet waste at some of the villages located some 100km from Bengaluru, including Doddabidarakallu, Kannalli, Seegehalli, Chikkaganamangala, and Lingadheerahalli.

Madhuswamy however, said there is opposition by local villagers in spite of assurance by BBMP doing it scientifically. "Therefore, we are going for waste-to-energy plants where waste is burnt. The Palike is planning to upgrade collection centres for dry waste in almost every ward."

### WASTE TO ENERGY PLANTS

600 MT plant for KPCL near Bidadi

1000 MT plant for Satheram Enterprises, near Kannalli

300 MT plant at Indium, near Doddabidarakallu

1000 MT plant to Farmgreen, near Mavallipura

600 MT plant to Nexus Nova, near Marenahalli

500 MT plant to NEG at Mavallipura



Many citizens have demanded well-maintained public toilets and pedestrian-friendly footpaths | EXPRESS

## Citizens' voice in Palike budget: Need better toilets, footpaths

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

THE Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and Janaagraha, an NGO, launched #MyCityMyBudget — a campaign for citizens' participation in the BBMP budget 2021-22 — on Tuesday. Palike Commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad had invited inputs from citizens and organisations on how the budget can be improved and what needs to be included and omitted.

He said, "Many have demanded better public toilets and footpaths. Hence, we have asked them to provide details and it will be incorporated in the next budget." He added, "In 2017-18, we re-

ceived 22,000 suggestions which helped us a great deal. This year, while preparing the budget, we want to have special focus on public toilets and pedestrian-friendly footpaths. We hope to put an end to public urination with well-maintained public toilets. Let us work together with the funds we have and build toilets that every citizen can use and fix all the roads so that people can enjoy our city and its beautiful weather."

Janaagraha civic participation head Srinivas Alavilli said the 'yellow spots' (public urination spots) are literally a blot on Bengaluru's image. "Public urination cannot be stopped until it becomes a people's movement. We invite all civic organisations to be part

of this and also fix our footpaths this year, without fail," he added.

"Bengaluru has several infrastructure issues. The BBMP and Janaagraha are working together to solve these and improve the quality of life," said Janaagraha civic participation head Srinivas Alavilli.

"The campaign is live for a month and focuses on improving public toilets and repairing footpaths. As citizens, we can participate by identifying yellow spots, unusable public toilets and bad footpaths. Once identified, we can ensure they get into the plan of action. Research shows that public urination is connected to lack of public toilets or unhygienic public toilets," she added.

## All roads to Aero India '21, KIA getting facelift: Report

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

WORK on 12 roads that lead to Aero India 2021 as well as Kempegowda International Airport is under progress, according to a BBMP report. It was presented at the Coordination Committee meeting on Tuesday, chaired by Chief Secretary T M Vijay Bhaskar. Top officials of various civic agencies attended the meeting.

Aero India 2021 will be held from February 3 to 7 at the Air Force Station in Yelahanka.

The PWD department has taken up the Hennur-Bagaluru Road which lies outside BBMP limits. "Portions of the road where land is available, will be completed by January 15," an official said.

Of the 6,664 pot-holes identified by the traffic police, a total of 2,357 have been attended to so far by the BBMP, a report said.

On the status of various undertakes, the BBMP stated that the process of giving compensation is on to 27 landowners whose property was required for the

completion of the Kundalahalli Underpass.

The chief traffic manager, BMTCL, was requested to reroute buses from Kundalahalli Junction for three months.

The Suranjan Das Junction Underpass required the removal or translocation of 32 trees. Approval from the Deputy Conservator of Forests is awaited, another official said. "A committee formed by the High Court has inspected them in February this year and cleared translocation of seven trees. HAL has agreed to translocate them in their land," he said.

In connection with a High Court order permitting removal of unauthorised religious structures on public roads, public parks etc, BECOM officials stated that it would be done after receiving confirmation from BBMP to disconnect power supply to those structures.

BWSSB will complete laying of water pipelines and sanitary lines in the 110 villages in peripheral areas by December end, the utility informed the chief secretary.



Portions of the Hennur-Bagaluru Road where land is available, will be completed by January 15

PWD official

P2

### DIRE STRAITS

# One-year-old girl severely ill with Covid needs funds for more treatment

IFFATH FATHIMA @Bengaluru

ONE-YEAR-OLD Vishalini has been in hospital for over a month, battling Covid-19 on a ventilator; her lungs severely affected by SARS-CoV-2.

In the last week of October Vishalini had high fever and trouble breathing. Her parents, daily wage workers, took her to Vani Vilas Hospital on October 26. But since her condition turned more serious, she was moved to Rainbow Children's Hospital on October 30. A test revealed she had Covid-19. Her blood pressure fluctuating, and platelet count low, doctors put her on ventilator as she developed complications of pneumonia.

"Usually, only the elderly are so severely affected by Covid-19. But seeing such severe effect on the lungs in a one-year-old is shocking and surprising for us. Many children who got Covid had mild fever for two or three or four days and recovered well," said Rakshay Shetty, lead paediatric



A child gets her sample taken in Bengaluru. Most Covid-19 positive children suffer a mild bout of the disease and recover well | MEGHANA SASTRY

intensivist at the hospital. A week after she was admitted to Rainbow, Vishalini's condition stabilised, her blood pressure and platelet count returned to normal.

But her lungs continued to show progressive change seen in Covid-19 pneumonia and a CT scan showed over 95% of both her lungs were severely affected. Conventional ventilator support wasn't enough and doctors used Airway Pres-

sure Release Ventilation, but her lungs continued to break down due to the prolonged illness. Doctors then used High Frequency Oscillatory Ventilation which helps when the lungs crumble so easily that they break down and release air inside the chest cavity.

"We did parallel investigation to understand whether there was any underlying problem with immunity but she did not have any abnor-

mality in her immune system. Vishalini was given antibiotics and remdesivir, but she was Covid positive even after 14 days," Dr Shetty said.

Vishalini's lungs still haven't improved and doctors are considering surgically removing a part of her lungs. If that does not work, they will consider putting her on an ECMO machine, which takes over the function of the heart and lungs temporarily so that they can rest and heal.

However, Vishalini's parents need around Rs 15 lakh to pay hospital bill and the cost of surgery. The doctors say they have raised Rs 3 lakh through a crowdfunding campaign, including one on Milaap.

Saktivel, Vishalini's mother, told The New Indian Express, "Whatever savings we had, are all gone after paying for her blood tests and medicines. We have no money and we need funds to treat our daughter. She is our first child and we want her to recover. We need help."

P3



# Penalise citizens for not wearing masks, not us, says hotel association

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@Bengaluru

MEMBERS of the Bruhat Bengaluru Hotels Association on Tuesday met BBMP Commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad demanding the withdrawal of the recent notification to penalise owners of commercial establishments if customers turn up without wearing masks.

They said that the target of the government should be to penalise rule-breaking citizens and not owners of establishments. They instead demanded that the government set a precedence and penalise politicians, political party workers and agitators for not wearing masks and not maintaining physical distance. They reminded the government of court orders that action should be taken against all those not following rules.

Association President P C Rao said: "It is not possible for people to wear a mask while eating or drinking in restaurants, hotels and in choultries. The government is not clear on its notification. It is the respon-



A woman being checked for fever at a cinema hall in Bengaluru | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

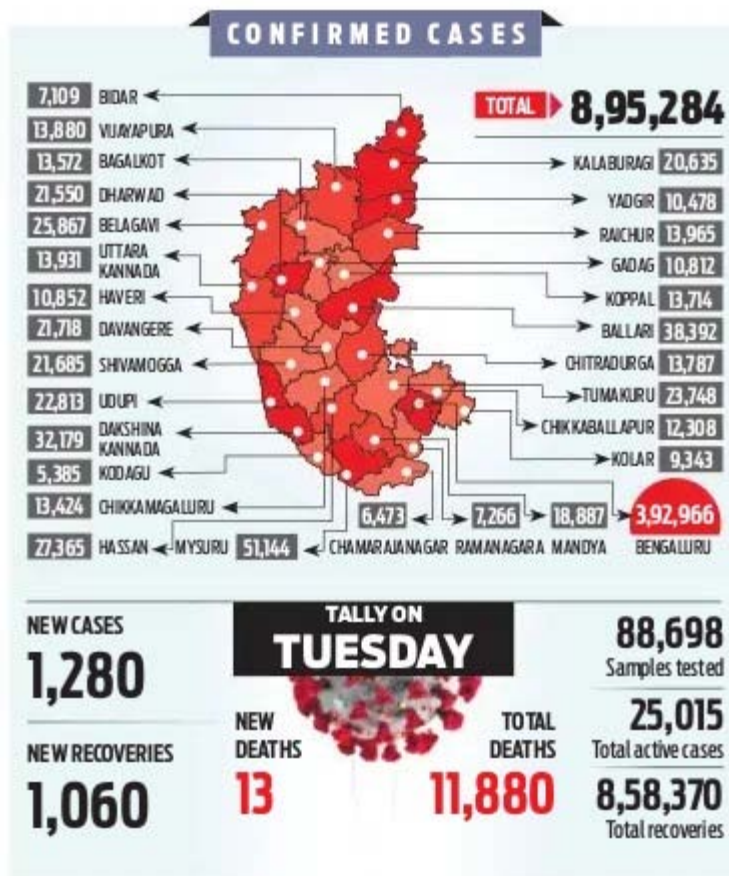
sibility of citizens to ensure that they wear a mask. However, owners of commercial establishments should also ensure that customers wear a mask at all times, except for eating and drinking."

He admitted that marshals and health officials cannot go to every unit and check if people are not wearing a mask. In such cases, shop owners should act responsibly and create awareness. But the government's orders makes owners responsible for other people's mistakes, which is not acceptable. The government should not see penalties as a

source of income for the exchequer, but use them to create deterrence, he said.

BBMP Commissioner Prasad told TNIE: "We have told them that it was the government order and what needs to be done for Bengaluru was issued by the BBMP. The suggestion will be communicated to the government for review." He added that with great effort, the number of cases had come down and that it was now everyone's responsibility to ensure that cases do not rise. Event organisers and property owners must ensure people abide by the rules.

P3





# Today UK, tomorrow the world: 1st fully tested vaccine debuts

**Opening Shot: Go For It, Says 90-Yr-Old Granny**  
 Benjamin Mueller

Britain's National Health Service delivered its first shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech Covid vaccine on Tuesday, opening a mass vaccination campaign with little precedent in modern medicine and making Britons the first people in the world to receive a clinically authorised, fully tested vaccine.

At 6.31am Tuesday, Margaret Keenan, 90, a former jewellery shop assistant, rolled up the sleeve of her "Merry Christmas" T-shirt to receive the first shot, and her image became an emblem of the remarkable race



Keenan's image became an emblem of the remarkable race for a vaccine

**“** I feel so privileged to be the first person vaccinated against Covid-19. It's the best early birthday present I could wish for because it means I can finally look forward to spending time with my family and friends in the new year after being on my own for most of the year  
 —Margaret Keenan

► **81-yr-old William Shakespeare 2nd person to get a shot, P 14**

to produce a vaccine and the global effort to end a pandemic that has killed 1.5 million people.

A video showed her being wheeled out of the ward while nursing staff lined the corridor to applaud and cheer, an echo of moving video clips re-

leased through the year when Covid-19 survivors left hospital. "I say go for it, go for it because it's free and it's the best thing that has ever happened," Keenan told reporters. **NVT**

► **Surpass Americans, P 14**

**Indian couple among those to get vaccinated**

London: Dr Hari Shukla, 87, and his 83-year-old wife Ranjan on Tuesday became the first Indian-origin couple in the world to get the vaccine.

"I'm so pleased we are hopefully coming towards the end of this pandemic and I am delighted to be doing my bit by having the vaccine, I feel it is my duty to do so and do whatever I can to help," said Shukla, who was born in Kenya and whose father hailed from Mumbai. Shukla has been honoured with an MBE, OBE and CBE for his work as director of the Tyne and Wear Race Equality Council over the years. **PTI**

P1

## B'LURU WATCH

Covid figures for Dec 8

Cases	Deaths	Cured	Active
638	7	432	19,468

P1

## Covid cost to global economy \$11tn: Study

The Covid-19 pandemic is pegged to cost the global economy a whopping \$11.5 trillion, including \$5 trillion to \$5.6 trillion in GDP, says a latest analysis by experts from the fields of medicine, economics, the environment and conservation, reports Chethan Kumar.

For a century, two new viruses per year have spilled from their natural hosts into humans, says the paper, authored by 17 experts and published in 'Science'. And, MERS, SARS, and H1N1 epidemics, the HIV and Covid-19 testify to the damage done.

► \$5tn in GDP in 2020, P 7

# Booths, ID cards part of vaccination drive

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bengaluru: Vaccination booths — like polling stations during elections — will be set up for conducting the drive against Covid and people must produce a government-recognized identity proof before getting the shot.

WHO-India's sub-regional team leader (Karnataka) Dr Lokesh Alahari said Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) software, developed by IIT-Delhi, will be used for monitoring vaccine delivery to prioritized sections of the population. He was speaking at a webinar on 'Covid-19 Vaccine Safety and Efficacy' on Tuesday.

### APP FOR TRACKING

► Covid Vaccine Intelligence Network (CoWIN) software to be used for monitoring vaccine delivery

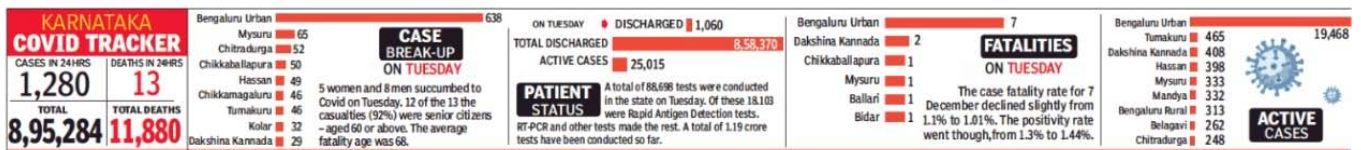
► The software will also track temperature at which vaccine is stored at primary health centres

► Person undergoing vaccination to get a certificate, and reminders about next schedule

Every person getting shots will be enrolled in government data and tracked for adverse effects, if any, Alahari said.

► Protection duration, P 2

P1



**BIG MISTAKE** Report Says Restricting Testing To International Travellers And Their Contacts In Initial Days Allowed Virus To Spread

P2



# Denial of community spread hampered testing: Experts

Sunitha.Rao@timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** Testing only people — and their contacts — who had travel history to Covid-19-affected countries in the initial months of the pandemic allowed the virus to spread, according to a report.

The report titled 'Covid-19 in India - models, mysteries, myths, miracles, mistakes and moving forward', prepared by three prominent researchers, suggests the virus may have spread through potentially infected people who went untested in the initial days.

The study, which tracks the country's pandemic management over the past 10 months, is coauthored by Dr Giridhara R Babu, professor, Lifecourse Epidemiology, Public Health Foundation of India, Bengaluru; Gautam I Menon, professor, physics and biology, Ashoka University, Sonapat and Dr Bhramar Mukherjee, professor and chair, biostatistics who also teaches at the University of Michigan School of Public Health, USA.

It says the Centre's repeated denials on community spread only caused damage. "This meant testing was, in the initial months, restricted only to international travelers returning from Covid-



**COSTLY MISS:** Experts say many potential carriers of the virus may have gone untested until April due to flawed testing policy

19-affected countries and their contacts and not anyone who reported symptoms of Covid," the report states. Menon told TOI several potential carriers could have slipped under the radar because of the flawed testing policy.

## Not tested, isolated

"The government's denial posed a problem until ICMR said anyone with influenza-like-illness or severe acute respiratory infection could be tested for Covid," Menon said. "Until April, possible carriers were not isolated."

Dr Babu said the overall response to the pandemic would have been much better

had the government been open about community transmission. "Still, the Indian government did well compared to the US and UK, although those countries are ranked better in pandemic preparedness," said Dr Babu.

The report highlights many aspects of the fight against the virus, detailing how authorities ramped up testing from 300 tests a day to more than a million. It also looks at the comparatively lower death rate per million in India, as against other countries. As on November 29, India had 99 deaths per million, whereas UK had 840, Brazil 806, US 790 and Germany

186. The report suggests several possible reasons for the low fatality rate such as a relatively younger population, compulsory child vaccination and a stronger immune system. "But there is no strong evidence to prove any of these," said Menon.

The authors say any perceived innate advantage to the South Asian population is illusory and arises from inaccurate counting of deaths.

"There is evidence that medical certification of the cause of death, limited even before the pandemic, led to many deaths being misclassified," the report states.

The authors say a better measure of mortality could have been obtained by estimating the excess deaths when compared to general mortality in non-Covid years and comprehensive historical death data where available.

Pointing out that medical certification of death is necessary to establish cause, Dr Babu said, "That does not mean there is misclassification of Covid deaths only. This could be true of other deaths attributed falsely to Covid. It can cut both ways. The report is a commentary based on our inferences. It will be published soon in a journal."

P2

## Bus priority lane on ORR hits pandemic hurdle

Christin.MatthewPhilip@timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** The pandemic has delayed a full-fledged roll out of Bengaluru's bus priority lane project, while the proposal to extend the concept to 12 high-density corridors has also been relegated to the back burner.

Although a pilot between Silk Board and KR Puram on Outer Ring Road was launched in November last year, the inauguration of a dedicated operation was delayed due to the nationwide lockdown induced by the pandemic. However, officials say most of the work, like installation of bollards, is now complete.

Under the project, the left lane is reserved for BMTC buses and emergency vehicles like ambulances. BBMP along with DULT, BMTC and traffic police had installed bollards between Lowry Junction near KR Puram and Silk Board, but private vehicles continue to stray into the lane and there is neither traffic police nor BBMP marshals to enforce lane discipline.

"We have completed all work including installation of bollards, entry and exit points and signage," a senior BBMP official said. "Only installation of cameras is pending. It's not feasible to deploy marshals to impose fines so we are planning contactless enforcement. The project will be



**NOT PRIORITY:** Although a pilot was conducted, official roll out of the project was pushed to the back burner following the outbreak

launched soon."

However, the number of office goers travelling by BMTC buses has reduced due to the work-from-home option. The number of AC buses was also cut, thanks to poor patronage arising from virus

fears. However, authorities expect offices to open in the months ahead and an increase in traffic is expected.

Last year, a survey conducted by BMTC revealed that the speed of buses and ridership had improved during the

pilot run. While journey time reduced by an average 16 minutes during peak hours, the drive also added 12,000 more people to buses.

"The dedicated bus lane helped increase the frequency of buses," a BMTC official said. "The increase in speed will also encourage people to shift from private vehicles to public transport. The average speed of buses during peak hours in the city is less than 10kmph because of congestion."

Rules stipulate a fine of Rs 500 for the first offence and Rs 1,000 for subsequent violations, but KR Puram, HAL, HSR Layout and Madivala traffic police rarely impose fines on violators.

P2



# ‘Duration of protection by vaccine unknown’

► Continued from page 1

The software tracks the temperature at which the vaccine is stored at primary health centres. The management and reporting of the adverse events following immunisation are “equally important”, said Dr Alahari.

He said a person undergoing Covid vaccination will get a certificate, and reminders about the next schedule.

Dr Shashibhushan BL, professor and head, department of pulmonary medicine, Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute, said it was important for vaccine developers to present all safety data. “It is likely that vaccination will be associated with mild adverse events like soreness at the injection site, fever, fatigue, and myalgia (body pain). More serious reactions, such as otherwise-unexplained neurological or inflammatory processes, would raise concerns,” he said.

Experts said no vaccine is 100% effective. “A vaccine that protects one from clinical ill-

ness may not prevent its transmission to others. In Covid, duration of naturally occurring immunity to infection is unknown; it may wane with time. Hence, the likely duration of protection by the new Covid vaccine is unknown,” said Dr Shashibhushan.

Mask usage, hand sanitisation and physical distancing must be maintained for some more months, he added.

Two doses of the same Covid vaccine (and not of different makers) will be required for a person. Depending on how many times the body is exposed to the virus or vaccinated, the body can generate two types of immune responses, Dr Shashibhushan said. “The primary immune response is generated when exposed to the virus for the first time or when the first dose of vaccination is given. But the primary immune response takes days to generate antibodies and immune response system (through T cells),” he added.

The secondary response is stronger and quicker.



# Alert home guards save teen from drowning

**Were Set To Close Park When Girl Fell In Sankey Tank**

Nithya.Mandyan  
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Bengaluru: An alert home guard and her brave and selfless colleague saved the life of a 17-year-old who slipped and fell into Sankey Tank on Monday evening.

Home guards Rajalakshmi G, Udhay Shankar and Paramesh Reddy were on duty at the lake premises and were shepherding out the walkers and joggers around 7pm.

Rajalakshmi had noticed that a visitor, Prema, had stop-

ped walking and was looking at the water. She told the girl to leave the park as they were going to close it. "She told me she would walk out from the Malleswaram side," the home guard said.

Rajalakshmi had barely taken a few steps when she heard a splash of water and turned around only to see the girl in the lake. The home guard, who did not know how to swim, began shouting for help and the few walkers who were present there rushed towards her. But none of them knew how to swim. That's when she summoned her colleagues, Udhay Shankar and Paramesh Reddy, who rushed to the spot.

Reddy immediately jumped into the water. "It was freezing and I didn't know the la-

**"In a well, we know the exact depth of water and moreover, there will be people around to help. But here, I was the only person who knew how to swim and there was nothing to hold on to while rescuing the girl. I was worried about her"**

**Paramesh Reddy | HOME GUARD**



**Home guards Rajalakshmi and Udhay Shankar**

**Home guard Rajalakshmi told Prema to leave, and she said she would walk out from the other side. Rajalakshmi had barely taken a few steps when she heard a splash and turned around only to see the girl in the lake. She didn't know how to swim and alerted her colleagues**

ke's depth at that spot. All I knew was that I had to rescue the girl," he told TOI.

Reddy said he took 15 minutes to pull out the girl. "She was not very heavy but the water was extremely cold and it was really dark. At night it's

difficult to spot someone in the water unless s/he is struggling. In winter it's worse as legs develop cramps due to the chill. But luckily, nothing happened on Monday," he explained. "If it was a little late, we wouldn't have been

able to save the girl. Rajalakshmi's alertness helped us," Reddy added.

Prema was taken to Sadashivanagar police station where her parents were called. "She had gone missing from her home earlier in the day. Her parents had lodged a missing complaint at Byadarahalli police station in the evening," a Sadashivanagar police officer said.

Byadarahalli police said according to the father, Prema had fought with her mother over her poor academic performance on Sunday night.

Reddy has been posted at Sankey Tank for over a month. "I learnt how to swim in a well at my native place in Vijayawada. I never got proper training but know how to save people," he said.

**'More personnel needed'**  
Senior BBMP officials blamed Sankey Tank Walkers' Association for the incident. "We have told members we would like to close the park before it gets dark, but they are objecting to it," an official said, adding: "Monitoring 40 acres of space is not easy with just three home guards. We will need more."

Association president PV Ranganath, said he had suggested BBMP officials close the tank premises for the public by 7pm. "Before the Covid-19 outbreak, the park would be open from 5am-11am and 4pm-9pm, but the pandemic changed everything. The park is now open between 4pm and 7pm," said Ranganath. "The park is huge and home guards are few. More people should be brought to monitor this space," he added.

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## SHELTER FOR CITY COPS

**FOR BETTER POLICING:** Seven cabins equipped with bunk beds, pantries and washrooms have been placed at various places in the city for police personnel on duty. The cabins were donated by Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) as part of its CSR initiative. BIAL said the cabins at strategic locations will provide cops protection from rough weather and facilitate smooth functioning during peak hours. Each cabin has a meeting area, four bunk beds and a washroom apart from LED lights, ceiling fans and electric sockets. Provision has also been made for air-conditioning units

P5



# Govt, groups plan SC fight over BBMP

## New Bill, Poll Schedule Are Conflict Points

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**Bengaluru:** The state government's decision to press ahead with plans to introduce a separate law for Bengaluru's civic administration and seek deferment of the BBMP polls has set the stage for a prolonged legal battle.

Recently, the Karnataka high court directed the State Election Commission (SEC) to hold the civic polls in February. Law and parliamentary affairs minister JC Madhuswamy said that the government would file an appeal in the court in a few days and it would ensure that the BBMP Bill was passed in the winter session of the legislature.

### POLITICS & POLICY

Many civil-society organisations, including Daksh and Janagraha, have criticised the government's stand and plan to approach the apex court to halt the bill. "The draft BBMP bill was finalised without inputs from citizens. Neither the government nor the joint select house committee bothered to hold public consultations. So, we have decided to challenge this bill in the court," said Daksh co-founder Harish Narasappa.

But Madhuswamy said that public feedback was sought online and many people had sent suggestions. The bill envisages a separate law to govern Bengaluru. Apart from increasing the number of municipal wards from 198 to 243, it proposes that two mayors, instead of one,



**MAKING A POINT:** Chief minister BS Yediyurappa speaks during proceedings on the second day of the winter session

“The draft BBMP bill was finalised without inputs from citizens. Neither the government nor the joint select committee held public consultations. So, we have decided to challenge this bill in the court.”

**Harish Narasappa** |  
CO-FOUNDER, DAKSH

should serve equal tenures and there should be 15 zonal commissioners to administer different parts of the city with limited autonomy. The zonal commissioners will report to a chief commissioner.

The joint select committee headed by BJP legislator S Raghu has scrutinised the bill. It is expected to submit a report to assembly speaker Vishweshwar Hegde Kageri on Wednesday, following which the government will table the bill in the house.

“We are committed to holding the BBMP polls. But it is necessary that civic wards are reorganised in accordance with the present constitution

of the city. If we conduct polls with 198 wards, then we cannot change them for the next five years. This is the best time to increase the number of wards and modify the city administration. It may take a few more months, but the implementation of the BBMP Bill will do the justice to the city. We will convince the Supreme Court on these points,” Madhuswamy said.

Ideally, the polls should have been conducted before September 10, when the BBMP council's five-year term ended. Covid-19 delayed the elections. Petitions filed in the high court said that there should not be further delay. The SEC was among the petitioners, who finally received a favourable ruling.

“There is a constitutional obligation to conduct polls for civic bodies and they cannot be postponed on any pretext. The proposed BBMP bill was drafted after the BBMP council's term ended and therefore, it cannot be used as a reason to defer the polls,” said KN Phanindra, a senior counsel who appeared for the SEC.



# Covid shot: Centre readying 29,000 cold chain points for immunisation

## Govt Mobilising Additional Vaccinators To Inoculate Around 30cr Priority Popn

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New Delhi: With three anti-Covid vaccines under regulatory review for emergency use, the government is gearing up with 28,947 cold chain points with 85,643 pieces of equipment across the country that are capable of storing the vaccines needed for the first set of 3 crore health and frontline workers.

The Centre is mobilising additional vaccinators, a digital platform for vaccine delivery and a detailed implementation plan to inoculate around 30 crore priority population in the first phase expected to get under way soon. The government is procuring additional cold storage capacities, and supply of equipment to states will begin from December 10, health secretary Rajesh Bhushan said, outlining the rollout logistics of the vaccine.



The government is procuring additional cold storage capacities, and supply of equipment to states will begin from December 10

Bhushan said the National Expert Group on Vaccine Administration for Covid-19 (NEGVAC) has recommended three priority groups, adding up to almost 30 crore people. These include healthcare and frontline workers, those above 50 years of age and those

with co-morbidities.

"Every single Indian who needs to be vaccinated will be vaccinated. The vaccination drive, the largest of its kind, could go on for a year or more," Bhushan said, adding the priority groups need not run sequentially. Once supply of vac-

ne starts increasing, people from different groups can be inoculated simultaneously.

The Centre is also arranging for additional vaccinators for Covid-19 in coordination with states and UTs to ensure that the regular immunisation programmes are not impacted. Of a total 2.39 lakh trained auxiliary nurses and midwife (ANM) vaccinators, 1.54 lakh will be deployed for Covid vaccination, the health ministry said.

The health secretary said nine vaccines were currently under development in the country of which six were in clinical trial stages. "Even after vaccination, precaution must be taken," Bhushan said. "Additional procurement of syringes and needles is on track along with technical training material. Detailed implementation plans will be finalised with state governments in the

coming days," he added.

The health ministry has developed Co-Win — a digital platform for vaccine delivery — that will keep tabs on the overall coverage, drop-outs, temperature loggers (for cold chain), sessions planned versus held etc. The digital platform includes a mobile app where a person can register to receive the shot. It also includes an electronic vaccination certificate in the form of a quick response code that will acknowledge the shot.

The government is putting in motion a multiple-level coordination mechanism between the Centre, the national vaccine administration committee, steering committee at the state level and task forces at district and block level. A control room set up at the state level will work 24x7 once the vaccination exercise starts.

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# Pfizer vax effective after 1st dose, says FDA

Noah Weiland & Carl Zimmer

Washington: The vaccine made by Pfizer and BioNTech provides strong protection against Covid-19 within about 10 days of the first dose, according to documents published on Tuesday by the US Food and Drug Administration before a meeting of its vaccine advisory group.

The finding is one of several significant new results featured in the briefing materials, which include more than 100 pages of data analyses from the agency and from Pfizer. Last month, Pfizer and BioNTech announced that their two-dose vaccine had an efficacy rate of 95% after two doses administered three weeks apart. The new analyses show that the protection starts kicking in far earlier.



**Last month, Pfizer and BioNTech announced that their two-dose vaccine had an efficacy rate of 95% after two doses were administered three weeks apart**

The vaccine worked well regardless of a volunteer's race, weight or age. While the trial did not find any serious adverse events, many did experience aches, fevers and other side effects. On Thursday, FDA's vaccine advisory panel will discuss these materials in advance of a vote on whether to recommend authorisation of Pfizer and BioNTech's vaccine.

Pfizer and BioNTech began a large-scale clinical trial in July, recruiting 44,000 people in the United States, Brazil and Argentina. Half of the vol-

unteers got the vaccine, and half got the placebo.

New coronavirus cases quickly tapered off in the vaccinated group of volunteers about 10 days after the first dose, according to one graph in the briefing materials. In the placebo group, cases kept steadily increasing. The vaccine's swift impact could benefit not just the people who get it but the country's strained hospitals, curbing the flow of new patients into intensive care units.

Despite the early protection afforded by the first dose,

it's unclear how long that protection would last on its own, underscoring the importance of the second dose. Previous studies have found that the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine gives the immune system a major, long-term boost, an effect seen in many other vaccines.

Many experts have expressed concern that the coronavirus vaccines might protect some people better than others. But the results in the briefing materials indicate no such problem. The vaccine has a high efficacy rate in both men and women, as well as similar rates in white, Black and Latino people. It also worked well in obese people, who carry a greater risk of getting sick with Covid-19.

Some vaccines for other

diseases set off a weak immune response in older adults. But Pfizer and BioNTech found that people over 65 got about as much protection from the coronavirus vaccine as younger people did.

Even if the vaccine is authorised by the FDA, the trial will continue. In the briefing documents, the companies said that they would encourage people to stay in the trial as long as possible, not knowing whether they got the vaccine or the placebo, so that the researchers could continue to collect information about whether the vaccine was safe and effective.

The FDA concluded that there were no "meaningful imbalances" in serious health complications, known as adverse events, between the two groups. **nyt**

P7



# 'Oxford vaccine helps prevent asymptomatic transmission'

Naomi Canton

**London:** The first full results from interim analysis of the Oxford Covid-19 vaccine were published on Tuesday in the *Lancet*, showing just three serious adverse reactions amongst just under 24,000 participants, no hospitalisation or deaths amongst those who received the vaccine, and that it is also 27% effective in preventing asymptomatic transmission.

The data is the first peer-reviewed scientific publication of Phase 3 trials of any coronavirus vaccine in the world, despite some vaccines having already received regulatory approval. AstraZeneca is now in talks with regulators across the world to get its vaccine approved and is hoping for approval from UK's regulator, the

**The published results show no hospitalisations or severe disease reported among those who received the Covid-19 jab**

MHRA, within weeks.

"We have rolling submissions with the MHRA and the EMA and we are working with the Serum Institute for their filings in India," said Mene Pangalos, executive VP, BioPharmaceuticals R&D at AstraZeneca, at a press briefing to coincide with the publication. "The best way of sharing data is publishing in a high-quality peer-reviewed journal so that the media and scientific community can review it. We have published it so others can evaluate it, not

to influence the regulator," Pangalos said.

The published results show no hospitalisations or severe disease reported amongst those who received the Covid-19 jab amongst the 23,745 participants in the UK, Brazil and South Africa. In comparison, amongst those in the control group who were given the control vaccine (not the Covid-19 vaccine), there were 10 cases hospitalised for Covid, of which two were classified as severe, including one death.

There were 131 cases of symptomatic Covid-19 disease in total amongst 11,636 participants in the UK and Brazil trials. Of these, 30.5 (0.5%) out of 5,807 cases were in the vaccine group and 101 (1.7%) out of 5,829 cases were in the control group, which equates to a vaccine efficacy of 70%.





## Wanted: A lifeline for life guards

A suicide attempt on Sunday at Sankey Tank lays bare the lack of life jackets

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**O**n Sunday evening, Sujatha, a home guard deputed at Sankey Tank, was telling visitors to the walking path and children's park to go home as it was getting dark. "I saw a girl sitting on the concrete bench. When I told her to go home, she got up from the bench. I thought she would follow me but I was shocked when she jumped into the water," said Sujatha.

She immediately contacted Parameshwara Reddy, another home guard to rush to the spot since the three other home guards posted at the lake did not know how to swim.

Fortunately, Reddy, who was assigned the night shift, had come to the lake an hour early. "I rushed to the spot and jumped into the Sankey Tank without wasting time. I'm very happy I could save the girl," said Reddy who hails from Anantapur District of Andhra Pradesh.

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>**

# Thanisandra Main Road to be motorable again

## BBMP starts white-topping on busy 9.5-km stretch of road

KAUSHIK JN

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**H**ere's a piece of good news for motorists who regularly use Thanisandra Main Road. After leaving it unmotorable for nearly two years, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has finally started white-topping work on the busy road that connects several important places, including tech parks and the airport.

It plans to complete the work on the 9-km stretch by January-end. Our target is to complete it before the Aero India show. It's a short deadline but we hope to achieve it. Two lanes on both sides of the road will be white-topped. The extreme ends will get space for laying underground utilities and won't be concretised," a senior BBMP official said. The white-topping of 9.5-km stretch between Nagawara and Bagalur Cross is part of Phase I project, announced about six to seven years ago. The project consisting of seven roads was awarded to Nagarajuna Construction Company.

Currently, the road is full of potholes and in a bad condition, with not much bitumen left on the entire stretch. Regular commuters say they have been witness to many two-wheeler riders skidding and falling from their bikes while negotiating the craters. The road was left unattended as it was taken for development under the first list of white-topping project but there was a delay with regard to execution.



Currently, the road is full of potholes and in a bad condition, with not much bitumen left on the entire stretch

**“ Our target is to complete it before the Aero India show. It's a short deadline but we hope to achieve it**

—Senior BBMP official

immediately. “We are not sure if the officials can white-top the road ahead of the airshow. What it can do immediately is fill up the potholes so that the airport's second best alternate road is in a good condition,” he said. “We have been struggling to use the road for the last two years. Even my vehicle was damaged. It takes a minimum of 20 minutes to pass through the 4-km stretch between Thanisandra circle and Ring Road,” he added.

Another stretch, which is in need of immediate attention, is the one below the under-construction

flyover near Manyata Tech Park. With the work of the flyover underway, the main road has been left unattended to for over a year. There is hardly any sign of the stretch being called a road with no bitumen left.

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





# Lake lifeguards want life jackets

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

This story has a happy ending but this story is not about the girl or Reddy. It's about the lack of emergency equipment at the lake should something like this happen again.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has spent lakhs of rupees to hire home guards and to install CCTV cameras for surveillance at the lake. But home guards say they could do with life jackets, ropes and speed boats to rescue people who jump or accidentally fall into water bodies.

A few home guards, on the condition of anonymity, told Bangalore Mirror that they do not have the safety equipment including life jackets, ropes and a speed boat.

"We are working in three shifts. Three home guards per shift are placed at different locations around the water body. If anyone jumps or fall accidentally into the lake, we don't have speedboats to reach the victims and rescue them. We have to wait for the Fire and Emergency Services personnel to rescue the people from being drowned. By the time the Fire and Emergency Services personnel reach the spot, it will be too late," said a home guard.

The home guards took the girl to Sadashivanagar Police Station and the police counselled the girl and reunited her with her parents.

KAUSHIK JN



BBMP has spent lakhs to hire homeguards

When informed about the lack of safety equipment for the home guards at Sankey Tank, Fire and Emergency Services Deputy Inspector General KT Balakrishna said that it was the responsibility of the BBMP to provide safety equipment for the home guards.

"We have provided manpower to the BBMP to guard the lakes. It is the BBMP who has to supply safety equipment. I will write to the BBMP authorities to provide safety equipment for the home guards," said Balakrishna.

Meanwhile, BBMP Chief Engineer (Lakes) Mohan Krishna said that he would write to the higher authorities in this regard. "I will take measures to supply the safety equipment for home guards at major water bodies in and around the city," said Mohan Krishna.



# Parking in twilight zone

With all signage removed for road work, much confusion prevails over where parking is allowed and where it is not, at Basaveshwaranagar 8th Main

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**R**esidents and occupants of commercial establishments are fed up with the confusion prevailing on the busy Basaveshwaranagar 8th Main, regarding where parking is allowed. Of late, there was an ongoing road work by the BBMP and the workers had taken out all traffic signages from the stretch, adding to the woes of the people working and living there. They have no clue where to park their vehicles.

Smaran (29), a software engineer and resident of Bagalgunte, along with his wife, found an office space just a week ago for their new startup venture on Basaveshwaranagar 8th Main. "The office space was cool, but parking our vehicles was not," Smaran told Bangalore Mirror. He later learnt that parking was allowed only on one side of the road. "The other side is forbidden for parking of any kind of vehicle, even though the road did not have any No Parking boards," Smaran said.

On Monday, Smaran's wife had parked her red Honda Activa on the side where parking was allowed. In the evening, when Smaran came out of his office, his wife's scooter was missing. "I enquired with the nearby security guard who told me that they would have towed her scooter to the Vijayanagar traffic police station. I headed there and they said the vehicle had not come, adding that he could check with Kamakshipalya traffic police station to see if they have her scooter. Smaran went to Kamakshipalya traffic police station and learnt that it was towed



A few vehicles parked on one side of 8th Main Road that allows parking



**“ We allow parking on one side of the road, but when people start parking haphazardly, we are forced to pick vehicles from that side too**

—A senior traffic police officer

any traffic junction — be it a main road or a cross road, the cops told him sternly.

An assistant sub-inspector, who was the in-charge for towing vehicles on 8th main, demanded Smaran to pay up Rs 1,650 as towing charges and fine amount. "I told the police officers that I will not pay a penny as I had not committed any offence. I even demanded them to show photographic evidence or a CCTV footage to establish their claim. That was when the ASI toned down and began asking how much I will be able to pay for the towing. I settled with Rs 200 and got the scooter

back," Smaran said.

This is a regular problem on 8th Main. "The towing vehicles come and make announcements for about five minutes, according to their protocols, and then all of a sudden, they tow vehicles from the side where parking is allowed," said Smaran.

A senior traffic police officer said, "It is true that there are no Parking/No-Parking signages on 8th Main, as they have been removed by the BBMP road workers. We allow parking on one side of the road, but when people start parking haphazardly, we are forced to pick vehicles from that side too."

away by the Vijayanagar traffic police, but has been taken to an offenders' vehicle parking yard behind Basaveshwaranagar police station. "How will someone know where his/her vehicle has been towed to, even when a parking offence has not been committed in the first place," Smaran argued. "My wife had parked her scooter on the only side where the traffic police had allowed parking," Smaran added.

Only after he went to the Basaveshwaranagar police station, Smaran learnt a new rule. No parking was allowed 100 metres from