



**Bruhat Bengaluru
Mahanagara Palike**

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE,
BANGALORE**

**ENGLISH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS
16-11-2020**



INDEX

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

Deepavali not entirely dimmed by pandemic

Many say enforcement of ban on sale of 'regular' crackers wasn't strict, rule on timings not followed

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The "boom" of firecrackers could be heard across the city on Sunday even as people in various areas reported haze. Rain in parts of the city did not dampen bursting of crackers. In many areas, people started bursting firecrackers as soon as it stopped raining on Sunday evening.

Meera D., a resident of Malleshpalya, said she could not even step out of her house on Saturday evening as the air outside was thick with the smoke of crackers. "Bursting of crackers went on beyond 11 p.m. What worries us more is the fact that there could be more people bursting crackers on Monday as against on Sunday and Saturday," she said.

Vijay Nishanth, activist and urban conservationist, said enforcement of the ban on the sales of "regular" crackers was not strict and restrictions on the timings of bursting



People shopping for crackers at Rajajinagar in Bengaluru on Sunday. • K. MURALI KUMAR

crackers was not at all followed. Regulations a few days before the festival was just an "eyewash", he said.

"Talks and actions on regulating production and transportation of firecrackers should begin months earlier. Until then, nothing is going to change," he said.

N. Deepak, a resident of HSR Layout, said the government's order to allow the use

of only "green crackers" had been "ineffective" because by the time the government specified what "green crackers" meant, many had already purchased firecrackers and arrangements were in place for the sales of all kinds of crackers.

"As far as enforcement of timings is concerned, people are hardly aware of it and I do not see anyone taking ac-

tion against those violating the rules or anyone deployed for its enforcement," he said.

Meanwhile, KSPCB officials said they were facing roadblocks during enforcement. "The other day, when our officials along with the police went to take action against shops that were selling non-green crackers in Rajajinagar, they faced resis-

Three cases of eye injury

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

The State-run Minto Ophthalmic Hospital reported three cases related to eye injury on Sunday. A 13-year-old boy watching people bursting crackers near his house at Sampigehalli Layout was hit by a *bijli* cracker on his left eye. He has developed lamellar corneal tear with epithelial defect, doctors said.

In a similar case, a 4-year-old boy was injured in the left eye while watching people burst crackers on Magadi Road. He has developed epithelial defects, doctors said. A 11-year-old boy was injured by crackers at Sunkadakatte, doctors said.

stance from the public, apart from the sellers," an official said.

1,565 COVID-19 cases reported in State

STAFF REPORTER
BENGALURU

As many as 1,565 COVID-19 cases were reported in the State on Sunday. With this, the total number of COVID-19 cases in Karnataka stands at 8.61 lakh. Of the new cases, 840 were reported in Bengaluru.

Meanwhile, there were 2,363 were discharged, taking the total recoveries to 8.22 lakh.

21 deaths

According to a media bulletin issued by the Department of Health and Family Welfare, as many as 21 new deaths were reported on Sunday, taking the total number of fatalities in the State to 11,529. Out of the to-

COVID-19 update

Number of positive cases reported in Bengaluru Urban on Nov 15: **840**

Total cases **3,57,280**

Active Case **18,171**

Discharged **3,35,105**

Deaths **6+1***

* One person died of other causes

tal 27,146 active cases, 746 patients are admitted in intensive care units in different hospitals across the State.

As many as 99,606 tests were conducted on Saturday and the test positivity rate for the day was 1.57%, while the case fatality rate for the day stood at 1.34%.

Footpaths damaged

Sir, – Footpaths on both sides of Kammanahalli main road, from Kammanahalli circle to Jal Vayu Vihar, were reconstructed sometime ago by laying new tiles and installing bollards, which was a good initiative. Soon after the work, however, the footpath got sunk at a number of places, leaving uneven surface which reflects badly on the quality of work. I request the authorities to get the damaged spots repaired at the earliest.

K.M .VARKEY,

Bengaluru

A.P. cases register a drop, Kerala tops 4,500

Test positivity rate in Andhra Pradesh at 1.98%; Tamil Nadu reports 1,819 fresh cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala's COVID-19 case graph moved up slowly to a cumulative 5,24,998 cases, with 4,581 new cases on Sunday from 46,126 samples. The test positivity rate was below 10 at 9.93%.

COVID-19

The State's toll rose to 1,869, with the addition of 21 deaths. Thiruvananthapuram accounted for five deaths, Thrissur and Kannur four each, Palakkad and Malappuram three each and Wayanad one death. Kozhikode district reported 574 cases, Malappuram 558, Ala-

puzha 496, Ernakulam 489, Thrissur 425, Palakkad 416, Kollam 341, Thiruvananthapuram 314, Kottayam 266, Kannur 203, Pathanamthitta 171, Idukki 165, Wayanad 101 and Kasaragod 62 cases.

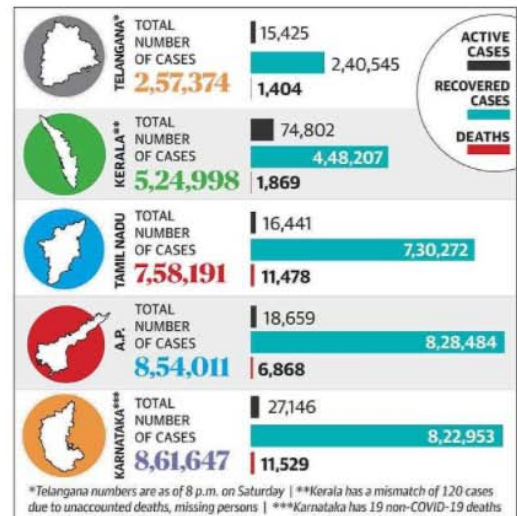
In Telangana, only 661 cases were recorded on Saturday as 21,264 people were tested. Usually, around 40,000 to 45,000 samples were tested in a day. Three deaths were reported on Saturday. The new cases on Saturday included 167 from Greater Hyderabad, 57 from Rangareddy and 45 from Medchal-Malkajgiri. Narayanpet had zero cases, and there were two each from Kumaram Bheem Asifabad, Rajanna-Sircilla, and

Yadadri-Bhuvanagiri.

Andhra Pradesh reported 1,056 new infections and 14 deaths on Sunday. It was the lowest single-day tally in four months. The daily positivity rate was one of the lowest at 1.98% from 53,215 samples. The overall positivity rate for 91.54 lakh samples was 9.3%.

The number of persons testing positive for COVID-19 in Tamil Nadu remained below 2,000 with 1,819 fresh cases reported on Sunday. The tally of active cases in the State stood at 16,441. As on date 7,58,191 persons have tested positive for the infection.

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



Rural India as bad as urban in toxic air

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Urban India routinely makes news for its air pollution, but a new Indo-US study has shown that rural India is no better when it comes to toxic air.

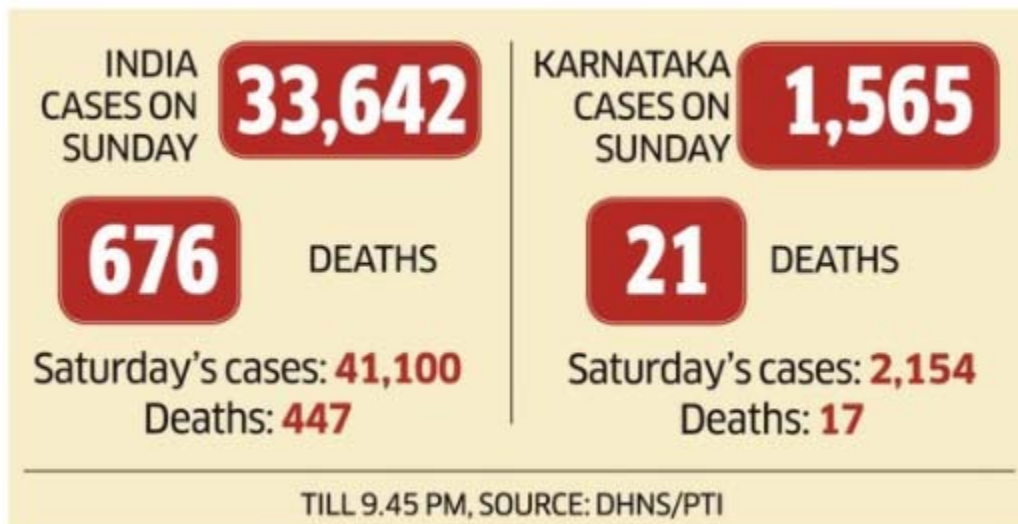
When scientists from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay, and Colorado State University calculated the amount of PM2.5 (dust particles of 2.5 micron size) across India from satellite measurements, they did not find much difference in pollution levels between urban and rural areas.



“We wished to definitively evaluate non-urban versus urban impact of air pollution through the use of all-India data at high spatial resolution (about 4.5 km) for a whole year,” said Chandra Venkataraman, a professor at IIT Bombay and one of the researchers involved in the study.

► **Pollution, Page 4**

P1



P1

Deepavali safer this year, fewer eye injuries reported

All fireworks-related cases involved only children

AKHIL KADIDAL
BENGALURU, DHNS

In the days running up to Deepavali, doctors and other medical professionals were waiting with bated breath for an inflow of people with cracker-related injuries, primarily related to the eyes. However, the actual numbers have surprised them.

Doctors at eye specialty hospitals across the city had recorded very few cases in the first 30 hours of the festival, which in previous years would see scores of patients.

Dr Sujatha Rathod, Director, Minto Hospital, explained that last year, the hospital had treated nearly 60 people for fireworks-related eye injuries.

"This year, since the festival began on Saturday, we have had three cases," Dr Sujatha explained. She, however, explained that they normally tracked fireworks-related injuries for up to three days after the end of Deepavali every year.

Another four cases were reported by Narayana Nethralaya as of 8 pm on Sunday night.

All of the cases reported so far have been children.

At Minto, the first is a 12-year-old and a resident of Vijayanagar, whose family told the doctors that he was not even participating in the games.

"We were told that he was just a bystander, either passing by or watching somebody else lighting a flower pot," Dr Sujatha explained.

The boy's medical report shows him as having suffered superficial burns to the nose and the medial sides of the upper eyelids, but it is the condition of the eyes that worries the doctors the most. He has suffered a corneal abrasion, which has prompted a drop in vision.

"We have put a patch to allow the corneal epithelial defect to heal. Overtime, we hope there will be no central scarring, which can impair vision."

However, the number of cases



A 12-year-old boy being treated at Minto. DHPHOTO/M S MANJUNATH

appeared to increase when two injuries were reported within a span of a few hours on Sunday.

The first was a 13-year-old in Sampige Halli Layout who was injured after standing near a chain of bijli firecrackers. The boy is said to have suffered a lamellar corneal tear after multiple foreign bodies entered his eye. Minto said the boy is to be admitted for further clinical management.

The second is a four-year-old boy from Magadi Road, who was also described as being a bystander. The boy has suffered a conjunctival tear after fragments from a bijli firecracker entered his eye.

The four cases at Narayana Nethralaya were described as minor

Air quality better than last year

An official from the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPSCB) clarified that the air level quality during the first 30 hours of the festival has been substantially better than the previous year.

This clearly suggests that fewer fireworks were burst, the official suggested, although he cautioned that two additional days of data collection is required to compare the current air quality to the previous year.

injuries. According to a hospital spokesperson, three are boys ranging from five to 17 years. The other is a three-year-old girl.

Meanwhile, at Shekar Hospital, Usha Keshav, Chief Operating Officer, clarified that the hospital had not registered any fireworks-related injuries so far.

"Last year, there were about 15 cases, but there have been none so far," Usha said.

A spokesperson for Vikram Hospital and Dr Agarwal's Eye Hospital also reported zero cases.

Anjanapura metro line may open by Nov-end

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Commissioner of Railway Safety (CRS) will inspect the metro line between Yelachenahalli and Anjanapura in southern Bengaluru on November 18 and 19, setting the stage for the inauguration of Reach 4B, the first under Phase 2.

Reliable sources have told *DH* that the CRS, Southern Circle, will carry out the statutory inspection of the Reach 4B section on the two days. A detailed assessment of the infrastructure, including civil, signalling and telecommunication and others, will be carried out in the following days.

If all the systems, including train and passenger safety systems, meet the standards, the CRS is expected to approve the commercial operation of trains within a week.

With this, there are hopes that the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), which had set a November deadline for opening the metro line to the public, can hope to achieve it.

The CRS is also the commissioner of metro rail safety (CMRS).

“There are examples of the metro lines getting the CMRS approval within three days if all the systems are found satisfactory. Since safety assessment is a serious issue, it is left to the discretion of the CMRS to give the green signal after assessing the details. He can approve it in three days or take weeks. He may also suggest minor corrections,” the source told *DH*.

When asked, BMRCL Managing Director Ajay Seth refused to comment on the date of the inspection. “It is true that the inspection will take place shortly. We are hopeful that by the end of November, we will be ready to commission the line,” he said.

Another source cautioned that the commissioning of the metro line would also depend on the convenience of politicians from state and central governments. “This is a joint project of the state and the Centre. We need to invite ministers and leaders from both the governments. Considering the pandemic, the details of the inauguration need to be thrashed out after the CRS clearance comes,” the source said.



A motorcyclist rides on a rain-filled Mysuru Road on Sunday. DH PHOTO/ANUP RAGHT

Sunday evening rain in many areas, more likely in next 2 days

BENGALURU, DHNS: Several parts of the city received moderate to slightly heavy rainfall on Sunday evening. The met department has forecast rainfall over BBMP areas for the next two days.

The sky which remained overcast until evening gave way to heavy showers in Nagavara, Kadugondanahalli, Kaval Byrasandra and parts of Mahadevapura, with the rainfall ranging from 16.5 mm to 21 mm.

Jayanagar, Basvanagudi, BTM Layout, Banashankari and Sarakki received moderate rainfall, according to data from the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring

Centre (KSNDMC).

RT Nagar, Sanjaynagar, Hebbal, Amrutahalli and parts of Sadashivanagar also received showers.

The BBMP control room said it had not received any complaints of tree fall or casualty. "Parts of the city had received good amounts of rain on Friday night, too. Some places received heavy rain on Sunday but we have not received any complaint," an official said.

The KSNDMC said that scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rains are likely to occur over the BBMP area for the next two days.

Int'l returnees exempted from home quarantine

**'RT-PCR -ve report
within 72 hours of
journey will suffice'**

SURAKSHA P
BENGALURU, DHNS

Now, international passengers arriving in Karnataka with a negative RT-PCR test report need not have to undergo a 14-day home quarantine as mandated in the government's August 7 guidelines.

As per the latest protocol issued by the Health depart-

facility available at the airports to undergo RT-PCR testing (where such provisions exist). The cost of Covid-19 test, if done, will be borne by the passengers themselves as per the rates fixed by the government.

International passengers arriving without RT-PCR negative certificate and not opting for RT-PCR test at airport (if facility is available)/ arriving at an airport where testing facility is not available will have to undergo mandatory 14 days of home quarantine.

If there are any symptoms within 14 days of arrival, the passenger has to self-report. For anybody arriving with symptoms, immediate testing will be done. Screening of all

ment, international passengers arriving in the state will be exempted from the 14-day home quarantine if they submit a negative RT-PCR report for the test conducted within 72 hours prior to undertaking the journey.

The test report should be uploaded for consideration on the Air Suvidha portal: www.newdelhiairport.in/airsuvidha/apho registration along with a self-declaration form with respect to authenticity of the report (will be liable for criminal prosecution if found otherwise). The test report could also be produced upon arrival at the point of entry at an airport in Karnataka.

International passengers arriving without an RT-PCR negative certificate and wishing to seek exemption from home quarantine may also avail the

passengers will continue as it is currently being done.

A circular to this effect was issued by the Health department on November 13. The circular is based on the Union government's November 5 guidelines.

Certain categories are exempted from quarantine even if they cannot produce a RT-PCR negative certificate. The circular says, "Only for compelling reasons/cases of human distress such as pregnancy, death in family, serious illness and parent(s) with children of the age of 10 years or below and not having a negative RT-PCR report shall be permitted to self-monitor their health for 14 days from date of arrival in India. However, if they develop any Covid-like symptoms, they shall immediately seek medical consultation."

Rain lashes part of state; more forecast in coastal region

BENGALURU, DHNS: Overcast conditions coupled with scattered light-to-moderate showers are forecast for parts of South Interior Karnataka and coastal region in the next few days.

On Sunday, light showers ranging from 8 to 15 mm were reported in several places in Bengaluru. Highest rainfall during the day (as at 9 pm) was at parts of Bangarpet taluk in Kolar district, which received up to 42 mm rainfall. Mysuru, Mandya, Bengaluru Rural, Ramanagara and Tumakuru were among the districts that recorded rainfall during the day.

After bountiful spells of rain during the last three months, Karnataka has received below normal showers in the first half of November. According to Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Cell, Karnataka has received 11 mm during the fortnight, against a normal of 26 mm during the period.

There was an appreciable fall in temperature - two to four degrees below minimum temperatures - in parts of Central and South Interior Karnataka. Lowest temperature recorded in Karnataka was at Davanagere at 14 degree Celsius.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BBMP identifies, values its properties, assesses lease papers

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

AN exercise by the estate wing of Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to bring all properties under its ambit has found that the lease of 113 properties needs to be taken back.

In the past four months, BBMP identified 6,828 properties in the city and brought them under its ambit. It is also fixing the notional value of these properties.

So far, of the 6,828 properties, 324 properties worth Rs 4554.64 crore were leased to government agencies, and 235 properties, worth Rs 3579.54 crore, were leased to commercial units, which are now being checked.

"Of the 235 properties, the lease of 113 properties has expired, and we are on the fast track to get them back, as the

notional value is high. Some who continue to enjoy the properties even after the lease agreement is over, are demanding that old financial revision should continue. However, we are keen on new guidance values as they will improve BBMP's financial condition also," a senior BBMP official told TNIE.

The official said a notice was served to all 235 commercial property tenants to bring their lease documents for verification also. "This is the first time the exercise of ascertaining the exact value of all properties under the corporation's ownership is being done, to know their exact asset value," the official added.

Apart from this, the assessment of all other properties, including pedestrian spaces, using Property Identification

Numbers, is also being done to ascertain their ownership. In cases where there are encroachments, details are being checked with maps and revenue department records. "Of the 6,828 properties, 1,020 are parks and playgrounds, 205 lakes, and many other open spaces. The notional value of these properties is not being fixed as they will not be touched, even if BBMP has to mortgage its properties. The notional value of all the other properties is being fixed based on current guidance value and will be revised when guidance values are revised next year. A detailed study of all properties in newly added areas of Bengaluru is being done, because there are many vacant sites and a sudden mushrooming of construction activities," the official explained.

'Most Covid victims were diabetic, hypertensive'

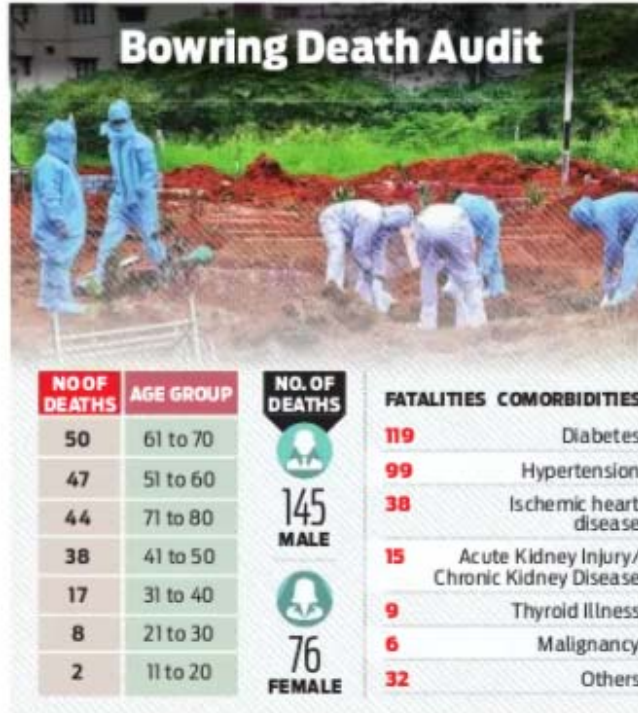
RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

A Covid death audit until November 8 at Bowring and Lady Curzon Medical College and Research Institute, a government hospital, found that a majority of the victims were diabetic (119 patients) or hypertensive (99 patients). Totally there have been 221 Covid deaths in this hospital.

"Diabetic and hypertensive patients are immunocompromised and are susceptible to secondary infections. Once they have a viral infection like Covid, their blood sugar levels rise, while their lungs are affected by the virus. In such a situation, they cannot recover. In hypertension patients, the heart is affected and when they contract Covid-19, they may suffer viral myocarditis, which is inflammation of the heart muscles, leading to death," said Dr Manoj Kumar, dean and director, Bowring College and Hospital.

In Bowring, nine patients stayed for less than an hour before succumbing to the virus, 17 people stayed for less than six hours before passing away, 19 people were in hospital for 6 to 12 hours, 16 people stayed between 12 to 24 hours, 79 people were admitted for 1 to 5 days, and 84 people stayed for more than five days.

As per Dr Mahesh DM, consultant, Endocrinology, Aster



CMI Hospital, both diabetes Type 1 and 2 are chronic diseases that produce high sugar levels in the blood (or blood glucose). In diabetics, the body may reduce insulin production which transforms body glucose into energy. Consequently glucose builds up in the body and in severe cases, diabetics have to take insulin to reduce blood

sugar levels.

"Regardless of the diabetes type, the immune system gets compromised and the patient becomes more prone to coronavirus, which thrives in a context of elevated blood glucose. Elderly patients, particularly, are more susceptible to the effects of Covid-19 in a diabetes context. Studies have shown a

strong link between controlled blood sugar and lower inflammatory markers, while high blood sugar can lead to severe complications or even cause death," Dr Mahesh said.

The largest category of patients who passed away in Bowring Hospital fell in the 61 to 70 age group (50 patients), followed by the 51 to 60 age group (47 patients), 71 to 80 age group (44 patients), 41 to 50 age group (38 patients), 31 to 40 years (17 patients), 21 to 30 years (8 patients) and 11 to 20 years (2 patients). Of the 221 deaths, 145 were male and 76 were female.

Dr Ravindra Mehta, senior consultant and HOD, Pulmonology and Interventional Pulmonology, Apollo Speciality Hospitals, said not enough research has been done to know the exact mechanism by which diabetes and hypertension leads to death in Covid patients.

However, what we do know is what happens between the virus and immune system.

"Statistically, having diabetes and hypertension increases the risk of mortality in Covid patients. They also alter the immune system, by affecting the body's ability to fight the virus. A diabetic having insulin resistance adds to the problem. If we give them steroids, sugar levels go up. The patients are susceptible to secondary infections such as fungal ones," Dr Mehta said.

50-YEAR-OLD GETS SEVERE COMPLICATIONS WITH COVID

IFFATH FATHIMA @Bengaluru

IN spite of the number of pleas by the doctors, for early reporting, if one gets symptoms of covid, people yet seem to be careless and come at the last moment, when their condition deteriorates. In one such incident, a 50-year-old patient who reported late with severe Acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) and was tested positive for Covid-19, took 60 days for the patient to recover in a private hospital and even after post recovery is still under treatment.

The patient, Rekha (name changed) was diagnosed with severe ARDS and was a diabetic patient. When she reported to the hospital, her oxygen saturation levels had dropped and had to be given oxygen and was moved to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Rekha's oxygen level kept dropping and the next method was to give her mechanical ventilation. "The patient's oxygen level was very low and she had fluctuations in her blood pressure, as she did not respond to oxygen she was given mechanical ventilation. The patient's condition was very severe and would require

longer recovery and hence a tracheostomy (which gives a prolonged ventilation support) was done on the patient." said Dr Sunil Kumar K, Consultant, Interventional Pulmonology, Aster CMI Hospital.

After 45 days of ICU admission, the patient recovered and was moved to a general ward, but she developed critical illness neuropathy — a disease of peripheral nerves, occur-



The patient's oxygen level was very low and she had fluctuations in her blood pressure, as she did not respond to oxygen she was given mechanical ventilation

Dr Sunil Kumar K, Consultant,
Interventional Pulmonology,
Aster CMI Hospital

ring as a complication of severe trauma or infection. "The patient could not move her legs and we had to provide her with nutrition and carry out physiotherapy sessions for another 15 days, after which she was discharged in October, but was yet on ventilator." said Dr Kumar.

The patient even post recovery is yet unable to move, and needs support to sit or stand and is on anti fibrotic medication. The patient even in the month of November has still been making visits to the hospital for physiotherapy and pulmonary rehabilitation every week as her condition is yet to get better. "In Rekha's case the recovery is slow, and it will take sometime. She still needs oxygen support." he added.

Dr Kumar stated that it is a must for patient to report early. "Reporting early can save ones life. People need to be sensitive to symptoms and test themselves at earliest. Checking their oxygen level on a regular basis is a must. And one should follow all the covid norms like social distancing, hand hygiene and wearing masks and stay away from getting infected with Covid."

Falling Covid-19 fatalities in Nov offer hope for Karnataka

State Sees Lowest Toll After 250 Mark Five Months Ago

Chethan.Kumar
@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: The number of Covid-19 deaths in Karnataka has been reducing consistently for a month, with November recording the lowest since the toll first crossed the 250 mark about five months ago. The state recorded 11,508 deaths as of November 14.

Experts say heightened awareness that led to early hospital admission to a dipping positivity rate which increased availability of beds and good treatment protocol are reasons for the declining trend.

'TESTING, TREATMENT HELPED CUT DEATHS'

340
Deaths in Nov so far

139
Deaths from Nov 8 to 14

1.3%
Current CFR in state

“Robust contact tracing, extensive testing, early detection and timely treatment have helped reduce fatalities. Of the 11,430 deaths recorded up to November 10, at least 5,572 had hypertension, 4,167 diabetes and 502 cardiovascular-related comorbidities... We saw a 91-year-old with diabetes and Covid pneumonia recovering because the patient sought treatment”

— Sudhakar K | KARNATAKA HEALTH MINISTER



► Fatalities in November 2nd week the lowest after the last nine days of June which saw 109 deaths

► After June, Karnataka has seen more than 400 deaths in all weeks except July 1st week (171)

It's the first time since June last week and July first week the state has seen so few deaths ever since the pandemic began to peak. This has raised hope of bringing the Case Fatality Rate (CFR) below 1% from the current 1.3%.

In November, Karnataka reported 340 deaths with the past seven days seeing only 139 deaths. The number of deaths last week (Nov 8-14) is the lowest after the last nine days of June which saw 109 deaths.

The state ended June with

India records lowest weekly tally since July

India recorded a little over 30,000 Covid cases on Sunday, the lowest single-day addition in 155 days, due to low testing and Diwali festivities. The day's toll was 426, the lowest in 163 days. The week (Nov 8-15) saw an addition of 2,92,549 cases, a steep fall from 3,25,555 fresh infections recorded last week (Nov 1-8). In fact, this was the lowest weekly addition of cases since July.

246 deaths, and since then, all weeks have more than 400 deaths with some weeks reporting over 900. The only other week after that saw less than 200 deaths is July first week (171).

► K'taka's fatality rate, P 4

P1



P2

Pandemic changes footfall dynamics at Metro stations

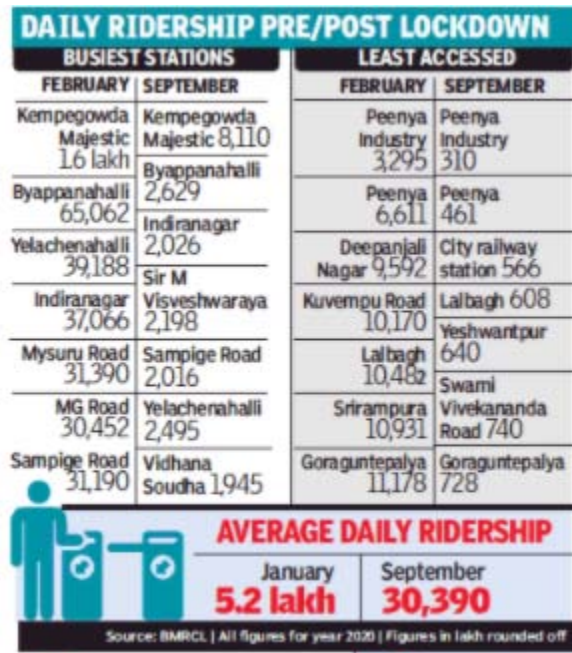
Christin.MathewPhilip
@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Namma Metro's average daily ridership has fallen from just under 5.2 lakh in January this year to a mere 30,390 in September mainly due to fear over contracting the virus and the work-from-home option, an RTI response has revealed.

Pradeep KB, a techie and Whitefield resident, filed the RTI application seeking information on footfall and in a reply dated October 22, Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (BMRCL) stated

Kempegowda Majestic interchange station was the busiest station in September – a position it held even before the nationwide lockdown was imposed. Byappanahalli, a terminal station, was the second busiest.

However, stations like Sir M Visveswaraya and Vidhana Soudha saw relatively more passengers mainly because of its proximity to government establishments. Metro stops near Bengaluru City and Yeshwantpur railway stations saw patronage drop in September since most train services were suspended.



Whitefield ind'l park roads put drivers' skills to test

Mrinalini Bhat
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Bengaluru: Commuting on potholed roads with debris, sand and silt lined up on either side at EPIP (Export Promotion Industrial Park) zone in Whitefield is nothing short of a nightmare.

While potholes teem with gravel that can throw riders off balance, motorists have to be on guard against crashing into stretches dug up for various works without barricades. EPIP is one of the earliest and fastest-growing tech parks in the city housing more than 125 different industries from 10 countries.

The roads have fallen prey to constant digging by OFC (optical-fiber cable) companies. To add to woes, BWSSB and Namma Metro sites in the area are not barricaded properly. Road users

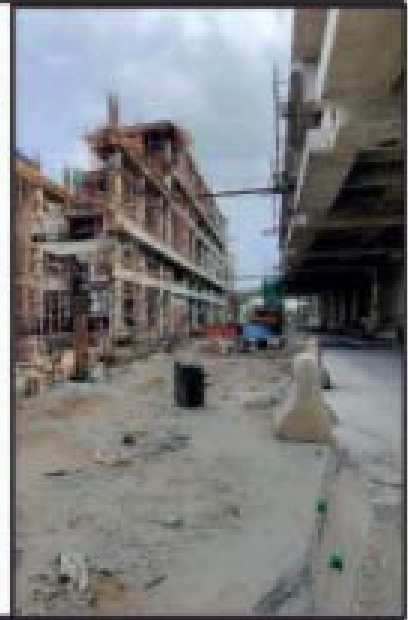
fear these work sites could be the reason for a major accident soon. With multiple parties involved, citizens are perplexed about whom to approach.

Rajan Batra, joint secretary of WEPPIA (Whitefield Export Promotion Park Industrial Association), said, "Things could definitely get better if citizens, BBMP and EPIP members sit together and discuss how to improve this place. Our biggest battle is against constant digging to lay OFC cables. We have companies from all around the



We agree that upkeep of the roads in that area has to be very good. BBMP has also made it clear if there is any type of road-cutting or OFC work, it should be carried out in an authorised manner. We have already instructed that all potholes on major and ward-level roads be covered. However, I will get feedback from my officers on the state of roads and take action

Gaurav Gupta | BBMP
ADMINISTRATOR



world working out of EPIP; the infrastructure here should be on point. We cannot let them think this is how India is." "However, post lockdown, Namma Metro has stepped up pace of work. They have not only asphalted roads in a few places, but also widened some stretches," added Rajan.

Murall Govindrajulu, committee member of Hagadur ward, Whitefield, said: "This is a huge ward, which is why I recently requested BBMP to assign two engineers. Apparently, that's not how they work and have 198 engineers for as many wards. It's impossible for one person to take care of it all and also check on enforcement. There should be a separate official for enforcement."

Zibi Jamal, a resident in EPIP zone, said, "Metro work

has really damaged roads. In some areas, where work is over, roads have been asphalted. Places where stations are still being built, roads are in pathetic shape. Neither have barricades been placed around construction sites, nor lanes marked. Vehicles from both directions often end up using the same lanes."

Pavements in the area are either covered with utility cables or heaps of mud/gravel. In some other places, footpaths are missing or completely broken, exposing pedestrians to huge risks.

Surajit Singha, a resident, said, "The stretch from Inorbit mall towards Vydehi Hospital is bad. I had even raised a complaint on Sahaya app. After a month or so, they sent me a message saying the issue has been resolved. But I don't see any change."

Aniruddha Jatkar felicitates BBMP marshals and pourakarmikas

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A few days after actor Aniruddha Jatkar shared pictures of mounds of garbage on the roads in Kumaraswamy Layout that had become nuisance for motorists and residents on social media, BBMP authorities swung into action to clear it.

Aniruddha says, "I didn't post those images thinking it would get a prompt resolution. Our duty as citizens doesn't end after we cast our votes. Apart from complaining to authorities whenever we see such black spots, we need to stop throwing litter in public places to keep our surroundings clean. People need to stop thinking that it is the duty *pourakarmikas* to keep our surroundings clean."

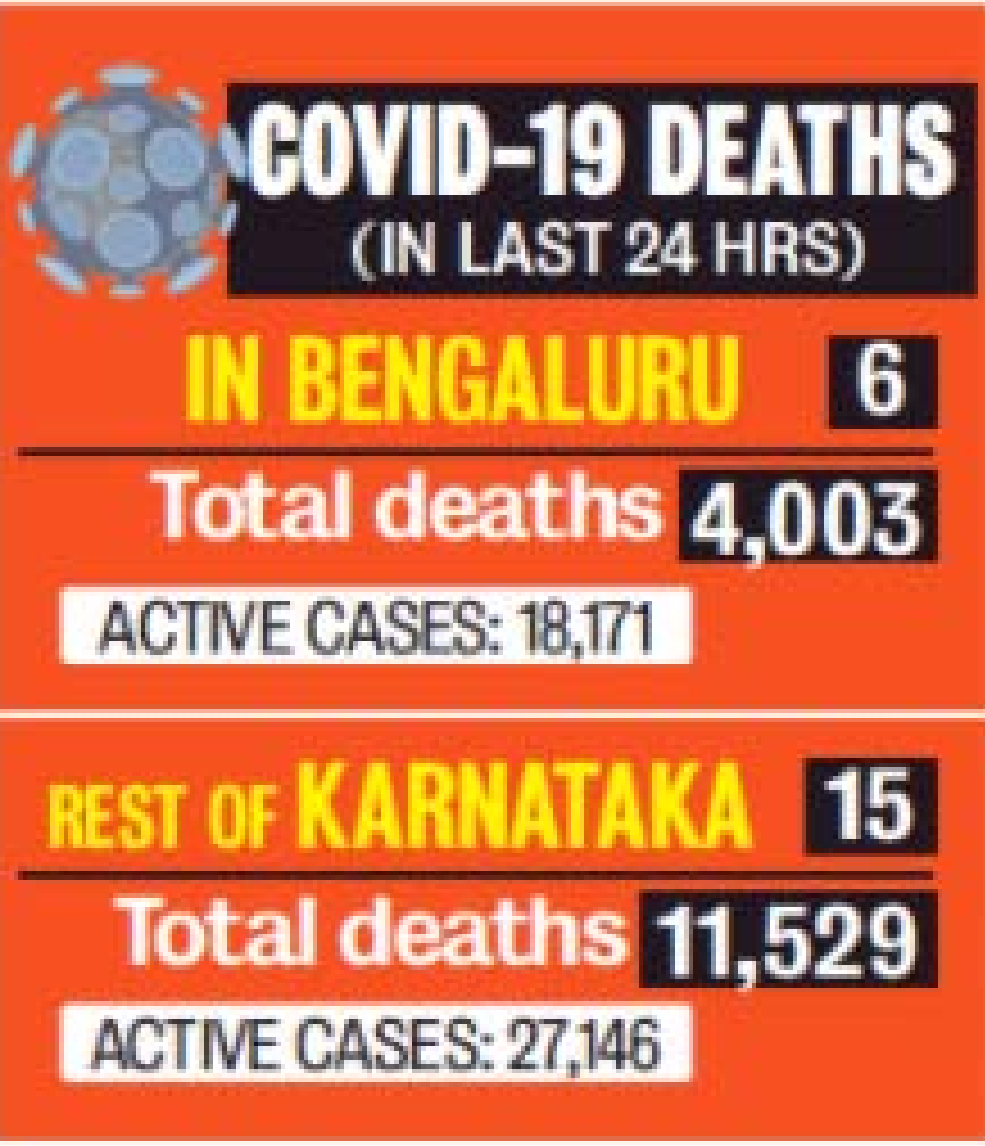
To honour the efforts of *pourakarmikas*, the actor and his wife Keerthi recently felicitated some of them. "We forget the efforts of *pourakarmikas* who work round-the-clock to keep the city clean, even during the times of Covid-19, and their work needs to be appreciated. We did our bit by felicitating 40 *pourakarmikas* and giving them Deepavali gifts," he adds.



Aniruddha (left) and his wife Keerthi felicitated 40 pourakarmikas who have been working tirelessly to keep the city clean



BANGALORE MIRROR



Advertisers are trying to duck BBMP's rules after Karnataka HC banned flexes, hoardings and banners

Palike has another enemy: Wall-Mart

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If walls could talk, they'd be selling products. At least that's what is happening in namma Bengaluru.

With the ban on hoardings, flexes and banners in the city, advertisers have found a new space to sell products - walls of buildings.

Brightly coloured advertisements for products like steel, cement and home appliances have come up on walls of buildings around the city.

Advertisers are looking for new spaces to rent ever since the Karnataka High Court banned banners, flexes and hoardings in the city. However, it has allowed putting

up of sponsored advertisements at bus shelters and skywalks.

Talking about advertisements coming up on walls of buildings, Sai Datta, a social activist said, "It is against the norms. A few advertisers have been trying to misuse public places for advertisements of various brands."

It may be recalled that BBMP authorities swung into action to remove flexes, hoardings and banners in the city in August 2018. The BBMP also directed ward engineers to remove metal frames put up at vantage points in the city. Many such metal frames were removed but some frames are still standing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 >>



ANANTHA SUBRAMANIAM K

“Action will be taken against the illegal advertisements put up at public places whether they are hoardings, flexes, banners or wall paintings

— N Manjunath Prasad, BBMP Commissioner

White-topping picks up from where it left off

Two stretches of ORR will be off-limits for motorists for 40 days as work resumes

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First the good (or maybe bad) news: After being put on hold for a long time, white-topping work will be taken up again. Now the really bad: Get ready for traffic snarls as motorists cannot use two stretches of the Outer Ring Road (ORR) for 40 days as the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) begins work. Starting Wednesday, vehicles will not be allowed to ply on one portion of the carriage-way of Babusapalya flyover and Horamavu underpass.

Both these stretches are part of the 11.5-km white-topping project which falls on ORR connecting Tumkur Road to Old Madras Road via Hebbal flyover and KR Puram.

The civic body has already completed work on the 8.7-km stretch except near Manyata Tech Park where the flyover is currently being constructed as well as near a couple of flyovers and underpasses. "White-topping work is pending near three flyovers and three underpasses between Mysuru Road to Benniganahalli. After completing work at Babusapalya and Horamavu, we will take up work in Veerannapalya, Nagawara, Hebbal and Ramamurthynagar," a senior BBMP official said.

The BBMP, he said, will be white-topping the down and up ramp of the flyovers while the remaining portion of the flyover will be asphalted.

During the construction phase, vehicles will only be allowed on the service road.

"We are using M60 concrete, which takes just seven days for curing. The construction may take 8-10 days. We are confident that work will be completed in both the places by December 26," the official said.



After being stuck for months, white-topping work has begun on Laggere, ORR

While the BBMP has achieved good progress on white-topping work on the 11.5-km ORR stretch, the officials are yet to complete almost half of the 10.7-km stretch on the ORR connecting Mysore Road and Tumkur road via Summanahalli junction.



Watch out for these roads

White-topping is proposed on	Traffic diversion plan	Timeline
Babusapalya flyover towards Horamavu – 640-metre	Allowed on service road	Nov 18 to Dec 6
Babusapalya flyover towards Hebbal	Allowed on service road	Dec 6 to Dec 22
Horamavu underpass towards Hebbal – 615-metre	Allowed on service road	Nov 19 to Dec 7
Horamavu underpass towards Ramamurthynagar	Allowed on service road	Dec 7 to Dec 26

"We have resumed the work between Goraguntapalya and Summanahalli via Laggere," the official said, adding that the stretch between BEL Circle and Goraguntapalya has been dropped

as the road is not very wide.

Last week, BBMP Administrator Gaurav Gupta had taken the officials in-charge of the white-topping work to task for not completing the project on time.

Covid has claimed 4,003 in city so far

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On Sunday, Bengaluru created the dubious record of 4,000 Covid deaths, becoming the city with the third-highest death toll in the country after Delhi (7,243) and Mumbai (10,542). Bengaluru has 3.57 lakh cases as of now and 4,003 deaths. But the consolation is that for the last few days deaths in the city have been reduced to single-digit figure.

By May, the city had just 12 deaths. But, from there on it was grim. In June, 83 deaths were

Lowest tally in months

Bengaluru recorded its lowest Covid tally in the last few months with 840 new cases on Sunday. However, the dip in cases is also attributed to low testing. Karnataka reported 1,565 fresh cases thereby taking the total to 8.61 lakh while the 2,363 were discharged from hospitals. Around 21 deaths were reported in the state the total deaths to 1,565.

recorded, 962 in July, 950 in August, 971 in September and 897 in October. "As of now, it looks

like the city hit the peak in mid-October and since then the cases have been reducing. With the reduction in total cases, the number of deaths too is decreasing though it is too early to say as the health department's death data is never updated on the same day as they include a lot of backlog cases," a doctor said.

He said that with Diwali ending on Monday, we need to wait and watch for a few weeks as to how the cases will progress in the near future.

"If the cases continue to stay

low, then the deaths can be under control. However, if there is a Delhi-like scenario here, which is a severe third wave, then the cases may also spiral in the city and this may also cause a high death rate," he said.

According to Karnataka State war room data, the case fatality rate in Karnataka is 1.3 per cent while it is 1.1 per cent in Bengaluru. However, in the last seven days, the fatality rate in Bengaluru has reduced to 0.6 per cent (Karnataka-0.9 per cent), which is definitely a good sign.



P3

Palike is hitting the wall with adverts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Recently, BBMP Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad issued a circular directing the Joint Commissioners and Chief Engineers of eight zones of the civic body to register cases against those responsible for painting walls with advertisements.

"I have directed the Joint Commissioners (JCs) and the Chief Engineers (CEs) to remove illegal advertisements. Putting up flexes, banners and hoardings is banned in the city. I have directed the JCs and CE to register cases against advertising agencies doing this," BBMP Commissioner told media persons.

However, social activists want the BBMP Commissioner to ensure that the circular is implemented by the JCs and the CE without any fear or favour. "I want this circular not to be treated like any other circular. The JCs and CE must implement BBMP Commissioner's orders and take action against those responsible for painting advertisements on walls of



ANANTHA SUBRAMANYAM K

buildings," said Datta.

K Mathai, who played a key role in pointing out how the BBMP lost revenue worth crores of rupees due to the advertiser mafia, told Bangalore Mirror that the advertiser mafia has made a comeback despite the High Court ban on illegal hoardings, flexes and banners.

"I have also complained to the BBMP Commissioner against the illegal wall paintings recently. The

BBMP Commissioner has assured me that he will look into the matter," Mathai said.

The BBMP Commissioner has made it clear that advertisements at public places would be against the court order. "Action will be taken against the illegal advertisements put up at public places whether they are hoardings, flexes, banners or wall paintings," the BBMP Commissioner said.

P6

State Reports 1,565 New Cases of Covid

Our Bureau

Bengaluru: Karnataka on Sunday reported 1,565 fresh Covid-19 cases and 21 deaths, taking the infection count to 861,647 and toll to 11,529, the health department said.

The total infections also include 822,953 recoveries with 2,363 people getting cured of Covid and discharged in the past 24 hours.

Bengaluru accounts for 840 of the fresh cases, taking the cumulative Covid cases to 357,280. The city also recorded six deaths on Sunday. Barring Bengaluru city, all other districts reported less than 100 cases. Chitradurga with 52 cases was the district with second-highest cases to be reported on Sunday, after Bengaluru.

The state's positivity rate, that is the number of positive cases as against the total tests done on a day, was 1.5%. The case fatality rate is at 1.3%.



