



**Bruhat Bengaluru  
Mahanagara Palike**

**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE,  
BANGALORE**

**ENGLISH NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS  
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# First 'wave' of vaccination to cover 30 crore Indians

Broad blueprint ready: VijayRaghavan

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**

**NEW DELHI**

About 30 crore people will be part of the first "wave" to get the COVID-19 vaccine in India. They consist of health care workers, police personnel, those above 50 and those younger with underlying illnesses that make them vulnerable, said Principal Scientific Adviser K. Vijay-Raghavan.

He was speaking at a meeting organised by the Science Ministry and the

Confederation of Indian Industry on Thursday. Mr. VijayRaghavan said the national vaccine committee, headed by V.K. Paul, had finalised a broad blueprint.

He said from "March to May", vaccines were likely to be available in significant numbers and would be progressively rolled out over the years using the national immunisation programme.

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**PM TO VISIT SII** ▶ PAGE 10

# Karnataka has seen seven lineages of SARS-CoV-2: Expert

AFSHAN YASMEEN  
BENGALURU

Although SARS-CoV-2 is a genetically stable virus compared to other flu viruses, it has seen smaller changes within the genetic composition in the last eight months, said V. Ravi, Senior Professor and Head of the Department of Neurovirology at NIMHANS.

Dr. Ravi, who will retire this month, told *The Hindu* that when the parent strain

of SARS-CoV-2 in Wuhan, China, is compared to the virus, now there is no great degree of change.

"The current virus is nearly 98% similar to the Wuhan virus. But we have noticed some geographical lineages and Karnataka has had seven such lineages from the U.S., Europe, Dubai, Iran, China, Indonesia/Malaysia, and Italy," he said.

Pointing out that these lineages came directly into

Karnataka from other countries or through other States, the virologist, who is also a member of the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), said it was genetically established that the Nanjangud cluster was very similar to the European lineage.

"Although the source of infection in Nanjangud has not been detected, visitors from an European country had visited the plant in mid-

February," he said. "However, the index case in Nanjangud cluster – an employee of a pharmaceutical company – was detected positive in mid-March. We are unable to establish a link between the European visitors in mid-February and the index case in mid-March," he explained.

The evidence for linkage to the European lineage has been established by genetic sequencing. Therefore, there must have been some-

one who got infected between mid-February and mid-March, Dr. Ravi said.

"We observed that the Indonesian/Malaysian lineage was predominant among those who attended the Tablighi Jamat religious congregation in Delhi," he added. The other lineages can be traced to foreign returnees from these countries, Dr. Ravi added.

RELATED REPORT PAGE 5

P1

## Temperature drops as steady drizzle keeps Bengaluru wet

Some parts in south-interior Karnataka also receive rainfall

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

People of Bengaluru woke up to a cloudy morning on Thursday, thanks to the impact of Cyclone Nivar. A steady and light drizzle, accompanied by winds, brought down the temperature.

### 3 degrees Celsius drop

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the maximum temperature on Wednesday was 23.8 degrees Celsius, which is a three degree drop from normal temperature. The minimum temperature of 19.6 degrees Celsius, however, registered a three degree increase from normal temperature.

C.S. Patil, Director (Weather Forecast), IMD, Bengaluru, attributed the

drop in temperature to overcast skies and winds.

Over the last 24 hours (between 8.30 p.m. on Wednesday to 8.30 a.m. Thursday), the city received just 1.8 mm rains. By evening, some parts of the city received moderate rainfall. By 5.30 p.m., city had received 6.5 mm rains, while HAL (Old Airport) had received 13.8 mm and KIA had received 14.4 mm.

Mr. Patil said that south-interior districts, including Bengaluru Urban and Rural, Kolar, Tumakuru, Chickballapur, Mandya and Ramnagar, received isolated heavy rainfall on Thursday. The wet weather conditions are likely to continue till Sunday.

According to data from the Karnataka State Natural

Disaster Monitoring Centre, Kolar and Chickballapur received more rains. While Kolar recorded 44.38 mm, Chickballapur recorded 27.32 mm rainfall.

He added that cyclonic storm Nivar would continue to move north-westwards and weaken into a deep depression over the next six hours. "Under the influence of this system, south-interior Karnataka is very likely to experience light to moderate scattered rainfall on Friday, and isolated rainfall on Saturday and Sunday.

No complaints were received by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's various control rooms. Control room personnel told *The Hindu* that all staff were on alert to attend to untoward incident, if any.

P1

# Another survey of manual scavengers

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

The BBMP will be taking up a re-survey of manual scavengers in five zones of the city. As per a survey conducted in May 2013, following directions from the Centre and the State government, 201 manual scavengers were identified. Compensation of ₹40,000 from the Centre had been given to 71 people.

Documents had been collected from the remaining 130 manual scavengers and

submitted to the Centre for compensation.

Another survey was taken up in Rajarajeshwarinagar, Mahadevapura, South, West and East zones where 1,139 manual scavengers were identified.

Chairing a meeting on Thursday, BBMP Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad directed the zonal joint commissioners to conduct another survey with a focus on outer zones where work on the underground drainage is yet to be completed.

According to a communique, though manual scavenging has been prohibited, it exists in parts of the city. As per the laws of the land, employment of any person for manual scavenging is prohibited and a punishable offence. There are many machines that could be used to clean the underground drainage and pits.

Manual scavengers should be identified and rehabilitated to take up alternate jobs, officials were instructed.

P2

## City picked for global programme

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

Bengaluru is among four cities in the country selected by the World Economic Forum, a Geneva-based not-for-profit organisation, to pioneer a new global policy roadmap for smart cities developed by the G20 GlobalSmart Cities Alliance.

The other Indian cities selected for the programme are Faridabad, Hyderabad and Indore.

Confirming the development, Bruhat Bengaluru-Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) Commissioner N. Manjunath Prasad said, "Through the programme, we will be able to share best practices on a wide range of issues the world is facing, such as data privacy and data protection."

P2

# Metro services to Anjanapura to start in mid-December

It will help residents living on either side of Kanakapura Road and NICE road

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The much-awaited commercial operations from Yelachenhalli to Anjanapura on the extended Green Line of Namma Metro are likely to start next month.

Ajay Seth, Managing Director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), told *The Hindu* that the line will be opened to the public in mid-December.

A few days ago, the Commissioner of Railway Safety (southern circle) Abhai Kumar Rai had issued a sanction letter for introduction of commercial operations with riders. The BMRCL is complying with the directions of



Residents along the line have demanded that BMRCL and BBMP ensure easy access to metro stations. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

the Commissioner on passenger safety, electrical and signalling.

"The CRS has given some tasks and BMRCL will finish them in 15 days," said Mr. Seth.

The 6-km line with five

stations will help residents living on either side of Kanakapura Road and NICE road. Residents have demanded that BMRCL and BBMP ensure easy access to metro stations and robust last-mile connectivity prior to com-

missioning the line.

The corporation had set several deadlines for opening the line, but missed them due to various hurdles, including COVID-19 and labourers returning to their hometowns during the lockdown. Last year, the BMRCL had announced that the line would be opened by August, but then extended the deadline. Under Phase II of the Namma Metro project, the extended Green Line on Kanakapura Road is the first reach to be opened for commercial operations.

When asked about whether the BMRCL has any proposal to revise fares while opening the new line, Mr Seth said, "Not at this stage."

P2

## 'Impractical to vaccinate all in a short span'

We hope there will be herd immunity by the time the priority group is catered to: Virologist

AFSHAN YASMEEN  
BENGALURU

Although vaccination is the most attractive strategy, it is impractical to administer it to every citizen in India in a short time, said V. Ravi, senior professor and head of the Department of Neurovirology at NIMHANS.

"We need to prioritise and we hope there will be herd immunity by the time the priority group is catered to," said Dr. Ravi in an interaction with *The Hindu*. The doctor, often referred to as "Virus Ravi", is set to retire this month.

Dr. Ravi, who launched the State's first virology lab in 1985, has been tasked with the responsibility by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) of mentoring all the private and government laboratories across Karnataka to establish COVID-19 RT-PCR testing facilities. He was key in developing



**In my opinion, while vaccination is essential, strengthening public health infrastructure so that we do not have to scramble during a crisis is most important.**

V. RAVI,  
Head of the Department of  
Neurovirology at NIMHANS

164 (58 govt. and 106 private) ICMR-approved laboratories in less than six months.

Dr. Ravi, who is also a member of the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee, said: "In my opi-

nion, while vaccination is essential, strengthening public health infrastructure so that we do not have to scramble during a crisis is most important. Having said that, vaccines should be made available to everyone; whether the government provides it or people buy it is immaterial."

Pointing out that health-care workers are the priority group all over the globe, Dr. Ravi said: "As most studies show that the elderly and those with comorbidities are the most vulnerable, they will be the next priority groups followed by pregnant women. By the time these groups are vaccinated, we may get herd immunity."

**Basal health intelligence**

"Throughout my 35 year career as a virologist, I have seen that as a country we are capable of managing outbreaks. But, in between crises we do not have a good in-

ter-epidemic surveillance plan. We should have a basal level of health intelligence so that the next time a pandemic hits, our response is quick," said Dr. Ravi.

"A continuous structured surveillance system should be in place and we should watch out for emerging and re-emerging pathogens. We should collect samples of seasonal ailments and test them for all known bugs. If a majority of the samples test negative, then it means a new pathogen is on the prowl and we should immediately become alert," he explained.

**Way forward**

Asserting that allocation for healthcare has to go up both at the national and State level, Dr. Ravi said: "COVID-19 has given us a lot of lessons. Over 40% of our district hospitals did not have ICU facilities and 60% had no piped

oxygen supply apart from lack of trained staff. We had one or two virology labs in February. But now, we are well-equipped and we should use the existing facilities for structured surveillance of febrile, haemorrhagic and respiratory illnesses apart from encephalitis. So far, we have only been able to handle gastroenteritis without any problem."

**Better equipped now**

Expressing confidence that the State is capable of handling the second wave efficiently, Dr. Ravi said: "In the event of a second wave, we are better equipped now and we can quickly ramp up hospital bed allocation but our efforts should not be to wait for a second wave but to avert it. This can be done by continuing with the same level of testing and giving appropriate messages to people to behave responsibly."

P5

# In Karnataka, low positivity trend holds

A.P. too retains gains; Kerala records 27 deaths; Telangana adds over 800 cases

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Kerala reported 5,378 new cases of COVID-19 on Thursday, and a test positivity rate of 9.6% for 55,996 samples.

The active case pool stood at 64,486 cases. The Health Department added 27 more deaths to the list of fatalities.

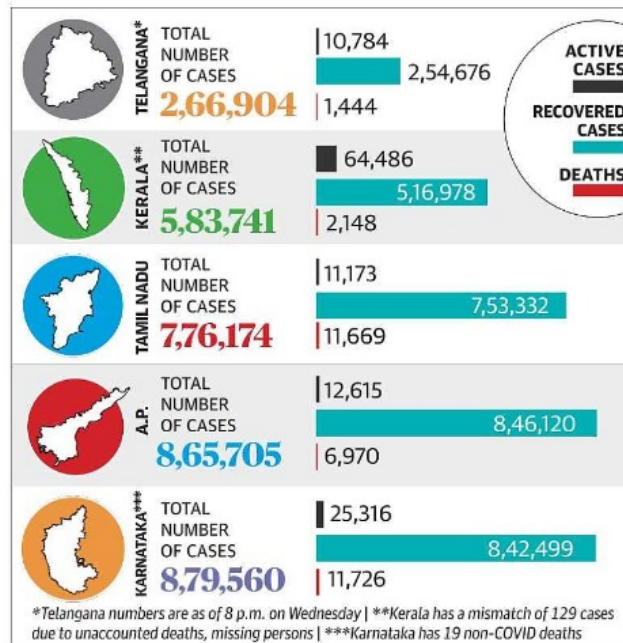
Six deaths were reported from Thrissur, four each from Alappuzha and Kozhi-

## COVID-19

kode, three each from Ernakulam and Kannur, two from Thiruvananthapuram and one each from Malappuram, Palakkad, Kollam, Idukki and Kottayam.

Malappuram district reported 719 cases, Kozhikode 686, Thrissur 573, Ernakulam 472, Thiruvananthapuram 457, Kottayam 425, Kollam 397, Palakkad 376, Alappuzha 347, Idukki 256, Kannur 226, Pathanamthitta 207, Wayanad 151 and Kasaragod 86 cases.

With a steady increase in



positive cases, Telangana reported 862 new ones as well as three deaths on Wednesday.

A Health department bulletin said on Thursday that positive cases in the State rose to 2,66,904. The number of deaths increased to 1,444. With 41,101 sample tested on Wednesday, in-

cluding 38,088 in government centres, the State had done 52,89,908 tests so far. Of the 2,66,904 positive cases, 70% were asymptomatic. Nearly 77% positive cases were 21 years to 60 years old.

Of Wednesday's cases, 164 were reported from Greater Hyderabad area.

Also, there were 63 con-

tainment areas in GHMC, including Charminar (16), Khairatabad (20), Serilingampally (16), Kukatpally (10) and Secunderabad (1) zones. There are another 61 containment areas in the districts.

Andhra Pradesh reported 1,031 new infections and eight deaths in the 24 hours ending on Thursday.

In 24 hours, 67,269 samples were tested with a positivity rate of 1.53%.

Krishna district reported two new deaths. There were no fatalities in six districts, and East Godavari, Guntur, Kadapa, Kurnool, Visakhapatnam and West Godavari reported one death each.

Karnataka on Thursday reported 1,505 new cases and 12 deaths.

The positivity rate for the day stood at 1.25% and Case Fatality Rate (CFR) at 0.79%.

Bengaluru Urban reported 844 cases and seven deaths.

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

# India clears stand after Oxford vaccine row

Sushmi Dey &  
Rupali Mukherjee | TNN

New Delhi: India will consider clinical trial data for two full-dose Oxford-AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine candidate which the firm says has an efficacy of 62% and not the “half plus full” dose regime, which is claimed to be up to 90% effective but has attracted criticism for dosing errors.

The Indian government’s position that it will consider the two full shot option comes in the wake of red flags raised by vaccine experts about the “positive” interim data, in the light of AstraZeneca’s admission that there was an “inadvertent dosing error” during

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## PM goes on vax tour tomorrow

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be flying into Hyderabad, Ahmedabad and Pune on Saturday to take stock of Covid-19 vaccine development work at facilities there. **P 8**

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the global clinical trials. AstraZeneca said the half dose option was a case of serendipity but was persisted with as it was found to deliver a better results than the two full-shot vaccine. The cut-off for vaccine effectiveness for US Food and Drug Administration is at 50%.

► **Indian trials going on, P 8**



# 1 nation, 1 election not debate but necessity for India: Modi

Akhilesh.Singh@timesgroup.com

**Kevadia:** Renewing his pitch for 'one nation one election', Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said it was not a matter of debate but a necessity for the country as he sought support for the idea of clubbing Lok Sabha and assembly polls to save resources and time.

"There is an election in India every month, which hampers development," the PM said while addressing the concluding session of the All India Presiding Officers' Conference. "Why should the country waste so much money?" Modi asked.

## PM: We're fighting terror in new ways

**P**aying tribute to those who lost their lives in the 26/11 attack, carried out by "terrorists sponsored and sent by Pakistan", PM Modi said "today, India is fighting terror by new ways and means", apparently referring to the retaliatory strikes across the border after the attacks in Uri and Pulwama. **P 13**

Modi urged the presiding officers of different legislatures to take initiative in this direction as he said the idea of 'one nation one election' needed to be intensely engaged

with. "You all should ponder over this idea that there should be one voters' list, and find a way out," he added.

He said there was uniformity in the voting age, which is 18 years, so there was no point wasting time. "Presiding officers should take the initiative towards full digitisation and legislators, I am sure, will adapt to it," he added.

As the event coincided with Constitution Day, the PM said it was a day to remember the inspiration of Gandhiji and the commitment of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel to the Constitution.

► **Strength of statute, P 10**

P1



**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE**  
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## PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

### SAHAAYA 2.0 APPLICATION WORKFLOW DETAILS


Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, is pleased to introduce 'SAHAAYA 2.0' a unified grievance application, available in Namma Bengaluru Web and Mobile Application, enabling citizens of Bengaluru City in Getting their grievances addressed.

**This SAHAAYA 2.0 application is updated with 'new features' and 'more user friendly', viz.,**



1. Citizens can lodge unified grievance through various modes like: 'Namma Bengaluru Mobile application', 'Web Portal', 'BBMP 24/7 Call Centre - 080-22660000', 'What's App No. +91 94806 85700' and also through Social Media like: 'Facebook', 'Twitter'.
2. Once the grievance is registered in SAHAAYA 2.0, the citizens will receive a message through SMS viz., through SAHAAYA 2.0, Web application, disclosing grievance's number, category of work, name of the officer/official, his/her mobile number informing that, the complainant can view his complaint details. The citizens can track his complaint status in Namma Bengaluru Portal.
3. Once the unified grievance is registered, the concerned officers can identify the exact location mentioned in the complaint, with the help of Google Map along with complainants details in the Unique Portal.
4. The officer is bound with the timeline period, for each type of complaint. On his failure to attend the grievance the unified grievance viz., complaint will have an 'auto escalation' to the next level officer and the consequential information will be sent to the complainant through SMS.
5. The complaint viz., unified grievance would be moved to the 'long-term solution', where the funds and/ or the time is required. SMS will be sent to the complainant that, your complaint is moved to 'long-term solution'.
6. Once the complaint is resolved by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, the complainant will receive consequential information through SMS. The complainant can also provide feed back on the resolution.
7. There is a provision to both the officers as well as the complaint to upload the photographs related to the grievances before and after resolving.
8. Citizens can register grievance relating to 'Pot-holes', 'Foot-paths', 'Street-Lights', 'Garbage', etc., (related complaints are available in 'Namma Bengaluru SAHAAYA 2.0 application).
9. The citizens can download 'Namma Bengaluru App through Play Store 'namma bengaluru'.

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE



Sd/- Commissioner, BBMP

P2



# Negative certificate elusive; travel, study plans disrupted

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**Bengaluru:** One unintended consequence of the state's decision to ramp up testing is that the BBMP has just not been able to provide those who test negative with a hard copy of the result. This is impacting many people as they need a negative certificate to work, travel and study among other things.

BBMP sources say they know of 67 people who had to cancel travel plans as they could not get a negative certificate in time. They say that since the number of negative results is exceptionally high, authorities are finding it a challenge to even SMS those found not infected.

While college students who want to attend classes on campus must furnish a negative certificate, airlines are also demanding one from travellers seeking to fly to places like Kerala, Dubai and Muscat among others.

Satish Rao, a volunteer who helps BBMP streamline Covid-19 management, said people are worried about negative reports not reaching them in time. "I myself have got many complaints from college students," Rao said.

For example, Ramesh (name changed), an engineering student, was in a panic after his negative certificate was delayed and he had an internal exam coming up.



**EARLY TRACKING:** Passengers who arrived on Guwahati Express from Delhi were made to give swab samples in Bengaluru on Thursday

"On November 20, Ramesh and I went to Arkere PHC where he gave his samples for testing," Ramesh's father told TOI. "He undertook RAT and RT-PCR tests. The PHC health officer assured us that he would get a message within two days on the result."

Two days later, Ramesh got neither RAT nor RT-PCR result. When he reached out to volunteers in BBMP, they suggested that he go to the same PHC and get a written letter certifying his result. "I had to run pillar to post to get the letter for my son. Nobody in the PHC or BBMP has any clue on how to go about the process," his father said.

Shibani Gopikar, a II year BA student, said she was not allowed to enter her college without a negative certificate. "I gave samples on No-

vember 21 at a PHC near Vidyapeeta, but did not get a result," said Shibani.

She said she was forced to miss an exam on November 25. "Healthcare staff do not understand our need for the certificate. When the government makes rules, they must follow up," she said. "My college permitted me to take the exam later, but my preparation was wasted. We are more worried about getting negative reports than appearing for exams."

Ishani Mehrotra, a homemaker, who flew down to visit her parents, had booked tickets to return to the US, but had to cancel them. "I gave swab samples on November 16, as the rule states test results must be within 72 hours to fly. But I didn't get a report," Mehrotra said.

## CURRENT PROCESS

- 24 hours after submitting samples, go back to the same PHC and give staff there your SRFID.
- You will be given a sheet with the result handwritten.
- Get the results written and stamped by the health official at the PHC; this is the negative certificate.

Source: BBMP

Bijoy Paul David, who had to fly on November 20 to Dubai where he works, had a similar story to tell. "The airline authorities demanded a negative certificate and said an SMS won't do," Paul said.

## Enough manpower

The problem persists although one lakh people are involved in managing Covid-19 data in the state.

"There are many like us who volunteered to work with BBMP to distribute ration kits and monitor those in home isolation," Rao said. "We are willing to work with them again to help disburse negative certificates."

However, BBMP health commissioner P Rajendra Cholan shrugged off the issue saying: "There are lakhs of people who are negative and our priority is those who are positive." On using volunteers to send out negative reports, he said confidentiality issues are a problem.

# Covid CFR a worry in 11 K'taka districts; over 8% in Dharwad

## Health Officials Keeping Close Watch On B'luru

Sunitha.Rao@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Karnataka's Covid-19 fatality rate is among the lowest in the country, but 11 districts in the state are a cause for worry.

In the past five days, Dharwad district has seen the state's highest Covid-19 fatality rate (CFR, percentage of Covid patients dying) — at 8%, followed by Dakshina Kannada district, at 4.8%. Against the national average CFR of 1.46% on Thursday, Karnataka reported 0.79%.

### REVERSE TREND

Dharwad	8.5
Ballari	5.9
Dakshina Kannada	3.2
Raichur	2
Kolar	1.8
Uttara Kannada	1.5
Tumakuru	1.3
Haveri	1.3
Mysuru	1.2
Kodagu	1.1
Vijayapura	0.6



CFR for last 15 days (%)  
Source: State health dept, data as of Nov 25

Chief secretary TM Vijay Bhaskar presided over a meeting on Wednesday to discuss testing, positivity rate and fatality rate in these districts. Besides these 11 districts, Bengaluru Urban is also un-

der focus and a special review meeting is held every week to review the situation in the state capital, said health department authorities.

► Focused testing must, P 4

## Parents confused over pre-KG 2021 admissions

Bengaluru: Many private schools in Bengaluru have launched the kindergarten admission season, but parents are in a fix over enrolling toddlers for the upcoming academic year, reports Sruthy Susan Ullas.

Social-media groups for parents are abuzz with discussions whether to enroll their children in full-fledged schools (which offer kindergarten to class 12) as there is no clarity on how things play out by next June.

► 'No socialisation', P 4

## Focused Covid testing required, says official

► Continued from page 1

While the daily target for Covid testing is 55,000 in Bengaluru, testing is much less elsewhere in the state.

Pankaj Kumar Pandey, commissioner in the health and family welfare department, admitted that the Covid fatality rate in these 11 districts is a matter of concern. "Focused testing and early identification of Covid-19 patients is required," he said. Greater emphasis, he added, would have to be given on Covid-appropriate behaviour, such as wearing masks and physical distancing, in these districts.

In the past week, Mysuru has reported 723 Covid cases and nine deaths. The district conducted 35,233 tests in this period. Dakshina Kannada reported 14 deaths among 277 Covid-19 cases in the past week, during which it did 24,523 tests.

Among the 11 districts, Kodagu carried out the fewest tests, at 7,447, in the past 15 days. It has reported 65 Covid cases in the last seven days and two fatalities. The Covid fatality rate in Dharwad has touched 8.5% in the past 15 days, followed by Ballari at 5.9%. Tumakuru, in the neighbourhood of the state capital, has reported 446 Covid cases and seven deaths in the past seven days.

Full report: [toi.in](http://toi.in)

# Cyclists complain of being denied entry at parks, lakes

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**Bengaluru:** Cycling might have gained traction amid the pandemic but many parks and lakes in the city are still out of bounds for cyclists.

For instance, a cyclist was recently not allowed to park her cycle near Kalkere Lake. Anshul Goswami said: "Apart from lack of cycle lanes, we face another bigger challenge — parking. We need a pole to tie the cycle with or a fixed parking spot. When we go to parks and lakes, security guards don't allow us to park cycles there. This happened with me on Wednesday morning at Kalkere Lake. I had faced the same issue at Jakkur Lake too."

At Cubbon Park, cyclists are banned between 5am and 8am on all days. There are complaints of cyclists' entry being restricted on weekends and other holidays too. The move came after some morning walkers opposed cyclists' movement inside the park fearing they may hit them. To resolve this, the horticulture department had earlier promised to create a dedicated lane for cyclists inside the park but it remains on paper.

**“** I have to wait till 8am to cycle inside Cubbon Park. The guard stops me. I can cycle for only about 30 minutes now. It's difficult to return home amid peak-hour traffic as there are no separate lanes on roads

**Santhosh S** | CYCLIST,  
RAMAMURTHYNAGAR



Photo for representation only

Sathya Sankaran, Bengaluru bicycle mayor, said: "There's an unfounded fear of cyclists knocking down walkers. But cyclists visit lakes and parks for recreational rides and move slowly. Awareness for cycling may have increased, but unfortunately cyclists still don't have it easy."

He said government agencies are treating cyclists on a par with motorists. "They should allow cyclists in Cubbon Park between 5am and 8am and also during weekends, when vehicles are banned."

Sankaran said he received several complaints from cyclists saying they are being stopped from entering lakes and parks. "A cycling track has been developed at Agara Lake in

HSR Layout, but cyclists are often not allowed to use it. There's also a ban on cyclists in Doddabommasandra Lake in Vidyanarayapura. A simple marking along lakes is enough for cyclists."

Rajender Kumar Kataria, secretary, horticulture department, said: "Cycling is allowed on all days, including holidays, after 8am in Cubbon Park. We are now working with Bengaluru Smart City Limited to create dedicated lanes inside the park, which should be ready within three months. We will allow cyclists throughout the day once the project is over."

BBMP is the custodian of most parks and lakes in the city. Palike commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad said he will look into the issue.

# BBMP re-survey to spot manual scavengers

Bengaluru: BBMP commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad has ordered his officials to conduct a detailed re-survey of manual scavengers in the city and neighbouring areas.

At a meeting on Thursday he asked the joint commissioners to ensure that re-survey is foolproof and extensive in 110 villages where sewerage works are yet to be completed.

The Centre has banned manual scavenging and barred individuals from entering sewer lines and septic tanks. Yet there are many places where the practice exists. Therefore, the authorities have been instructed to provide such labourers with a suitable alternative to their livelihood, civic officials said.

Prasad said jetting machines and other technology available should be used to clean sewers instead of getting people to manually clear them.

Assistant commissioner Somappa Kadakola said on directions from the central and state governments, the first survey of manual scavengers was conducted in the city on May 8, 2013. Of 201 such workers identified, 71 were provided with central aid of Rs 40,000 each for their rehabilitation.

A recent survey identified 1,139 manual scavengers in the city, excluding Yelahanka, Bommanahalli, and Dasarahalli zones. **TNN**

# Mask chains: The haute new accessory

They're not just stylish, but also help keep your mask clean

Sushmita\_Iha@timesgroup.com

Inspired by eye glasses chains, the 'mask chain' is the hot new accessory being flaunted by celebrities and influencers alike. Not only does it save you the trouble of fishing in your bag each time you want to take off or put on your mask, it can also make your getup a whole lot trendier.

## A SAFE AND STYLISH ACCESSORY

"Instead of holding the mask in your hands, putting it in your purse or pocket, or placing it on a surface riddled with germs, the chain does the trick, and hence, is a safer option. We will be wearing masks for the foreseeable future, so I feel a mask chain is worth the investment," says fashion stylist Dina Shah.

Makeup artiste Aleena Mackar adds, "It makes your mask look extremely unique and stylish and I feel a mask chain doubles up as a necklace, too."



Shilpa Shetty Kundra and Tisca Chopra flaunt their mask chains

## IT'S A HIT WITH CELEBS, TOO

From beaded chains, to ones with bows and frills, there are myriad options available. Shilpa Shetty Kundra was seen flaunting a beige and brown chain on social media recently, and even Karishma Tanna, Tisca Chopra and Ira Dubey were spotted in many variations of the accessory. Television actress Rashmi Gupta wears hers everywhere. "It's a chain I made myself after coming across a few online, and it has made my 'mask look' a lot more elegant and classy," shares Rashmi. Television actress Palak Purswani uses her chain for her masks as well as her sunglasses because it's a "safe yet chic" option.

clip it to your mask, by adding small clasps, which are easily available in the market. Or, you can simply tie the ends of the thread to the sides of the mask. However, clipped chains are a better option for those who like to wear different masks for different occasions," says Dina.

— With inputs from Farzana.Palawari@timesgroup.com and Preeti.Atulkar@timesgroup.com

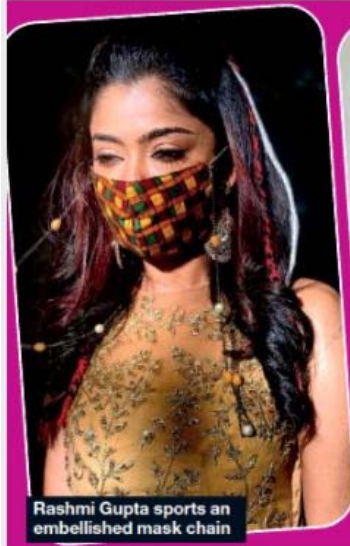
**INSTEAD OF HOLDING THE MASK IN YOUR HANDS, PUTTING IT IN YOUR PURSE OR POCKET, OR PLACING IT ON A SURFACE RIDDLED WITH GERMS, THE CHAIN DOES THE TRICK, AND IS A SAFER OPTION**

— Dina Shah, fashion stylist

## CREATE YOUR OWN MASK CHAIN

While there are trendy mask chains available online, you can easily create one at home as well.

"You can use the chains of your old sling bag or an old beaded necklace. To create one from scratch, all you need is a thread and some loose beads. Cut the thread according to your preferred length, and make sure it is strong enough to hold your mask. If not, you can double it up, before adding beads to it. You can



Rashmi Gupta sports an embellished mask chain



Palak Purswani's shiny metal chain goes perfectly with her lace mask



Ira Dubey's chain complements her outfit



Aleena Mackar goes for a delicate mask chain

# BANGALORE MIRROR



## COVID-19 DEATHS (IN LAST 24 HRS)

**IN BENGALURU** **7**

Total deaths **4,108**

ACTIVE CASES: 18,330

**REST OF KARNATAKA** **5**

Total deaths **11,726**

ACTIVE CASES: 25,316



**Srinivaspura lake was about to be history**

# Guess who built a road through this lake in Yelahanka

ANANTHA SUBRAMANYAM K

**I Y Maheswara Reddy**  
c-maheswara\_reddy  
@timesgroup.com

TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

**L**ast week, a 100-metre long and 12-metre wide road was built through Srinivaspura Lake in Yelahanka. The lake bed was filled up with mud, some play equipment was installed for children to frolic around and the encroachment was completed — with the 'lake' reduced to a barely visible puddle by the roadside.

What's so shocking about that, you would ask. Encroachments, especially around lakes, are rampant throughout Bengaluru and all civic agencies carry out regular drives to recover their usurped land. Correct?

Only this time, the road was built by the BBMP, using Rs 10 lakh of BBMP's money (or, taxpayers' money).

On October 8, BBMP's Byatarayanapura ward Executive Engineer (EE) Sudhakar Reddy, built the road, which he now claims happened due to an "oversight". It is possible that the 'oversight' may have happened due to what former corporator of Byatarayanapura ward, N Muneendra Kumar, 'saw' many years back.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20 >>



This road — which has reduced the remaining part of the lake to a puddle (below) — was constructed last week; (inset) a map from 1957 showing the extent of Srinivaspura lake



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



**I inspected Srinivaspura Lake on Tuesday along with the assistant executive engineer. The road, the drain and the play equipment are still there. The EE of Byatarayanapura ward has assured me that he will clear it immediately**

— L Venkatesh, BBMP Exec Engineer (Lakes)

P1

Divya Menon  
@timesgroup.com

**T**here is no denying it anymore. Masks are here to stay. For the foreseeable future at least. And ever since that has become clear, from the giants to the newbies, everyone in the market seems to want a slice of the mask pie.

Thanks to this eagerness to be part of the biggest trend of 2020, a whole world of masks designs and styles have opened up to the common man. "Whatever your personal style is, there is good chance that there is something that fits the bill. The types of masks range from basic and functional, organic, long lasting, fun prints and subtle shades, to full coverage, 100 percent cotton, embroidered,

## Mask up!

SAFE AND STYLISH SEEMS TO BE THE NEW BUZZWORD IN THE MARKET WHEN IT COMES TO MASKS, THE LATEST TREND IN THE LIFESTYLE CATEGORY

sporty, and so many more. There are thousands of options that one could choose from for every occasion," says Anirudh Das, senior consultant at a popular ethnic brand. "And it is not just styles either. The budget too ranges wider than one can imagine. From extremely affordable to

ridiculously expensive and everything in between, there is plethora of options in each range," he adds.

And why not? With many offices resuming business gradually, and people stepping out more for social engagements as well, a need for different kinds of masks for



different occasions has emerged lately. "We launched our first collection of masks in June and have been seeing good demand for them. We will soon launch our corporate collection that will have formal and sober looking masks suitable for regular office attire.

Also, there are separate collections for men and women, with the men's collection having sober and subtle colours and prints, and the women's collection seeing bolder use of colours and prints," says Aabha Singh, floor manager of a popular apparel store.

While this idea of diversifying into different segments in the same category isn't new, it is interesting to note that this eagerness of brands to join the bandwagon was not just to be a part of a trend. It may not be the most obvious thing to the rest of the world, but in the lifestyle products industry, masks came as a saviour. "Whenever a new trend comes into play and brands see the need for a new product in the market, everybody wants to tap into

that segment. It just makes for good business sense. But what happened with masks was more than just that. It was survival," says Bhaskar Ramanan, a business consultant. With the market at its lowest in years, this was the only product that was seeing an unbelievable spike in demand. A new product that became an essential item overnight, was nothing short of hope for a sinking market. "Also, for a lot of apparel and lifestyle product brands, they already had the resources and access to designers and vendors to produce masks. So not only did it save them from going under but has now become one of the most bought products these days, across all brands that are offering masks," Ramanan adds.

P8

# A lake was brushed out of existence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Many years back, there was a road to reach the other side of the Srinivasapura Lake. We used to call it kaal dari. It was around the lake," he told Bangalore Mirror. He remained adamant despite being told about the official surveys and maps of the area. I. Venkatesh, the BBMP's executive engineer for lakes, inspected the area on Tuesday and wrote an official letter to Reddy about the blatant encroachment.

The Srinivasapura Lake is spread across 3 acres 20 guntas but half acre of the land has been encroached. There are six asbestos sheet dwellings and two ground-plus-two floor buildings are under construction, near the lake. Construction of the two buildings has been stopped and notices have been issued to the people residing at the six temporary dwellings.

Correspondence between Venkatesh and Reddy on October 8 and November 20 has the former emphasising the need to clear the illegal constructions – road, drain – and removal of play equipment installed on the lake land. However, till date, no effort has been made to clear the encroachments on the lake land. "I inspected Srinivasapura Lake on Tuesday along with the assistant executive engineer. The road, the drain and the play equipment are still there. The EE of Byatarayanapura ward has assured me that he will clear it immediately," said Venkatesh. "We will demolish the road and drain and restore the lake land in a day or two," Reddy told Bangalore Mirror.

Coming down heavily on encroachment of the lakeland by the BBMP's Executive Engineer, V Ramprasad, Co-Founder of Friends of Lakes, said that encroaching the lake area with impunity and in disrespect to honourable High Court's orders and KTCDA (Karnataka Tank Conservation and Development Authority) law is simply not acceptable. "We are inviting floods as well as water scarcity in future. Parks, play areas, roads can be developed in other areas too but lakeland can't be converted into something else. If engineers and bureaucrats disregard Court orders, then citizens will be forced to approach the courts to save their life and future," said Ramprasad.

## The lake did exist

The map of Srinivasapura indicates the lake has existed since 1957. The survey report is certified by Bengaluru North Taluk Surveyor and Assistant Executive Engineer of Storm Water Drains of BBMP.

The other survey map is certified by Assistant Conservator of Forests, Project-2, BBMP, Environment Engineer of BBMP, Tahsildar of Bengaluru North Taluk and the Surveyor of Bengaluru North Taluk.

Subramani L, a resident of Vinayaka Layout of Srinivasapura said the lake existed for more than 100 years. "Since the lake is not large, (around two acres) there was not much water in it. Now some people have levelled a portion of the lake to convert it into a park for children," said Subramani.

Srinivasapura Lake was transferred to the BBMP in 2007 from the then Byatarayanapura Municipal Council which is one of the seven city municipal councils that were merged with the BBMP when the Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike became the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike. Except fencing, no development work was taken up by the BBMP. The BBMP Lakes Department has appointed a home guard to keep a vigil on the encroachers from November 10.

The home guard will be on duty during the day. "We will ask the Byatarayanapura ward executive engineer to issue a demolition notice to the owners of the two buildings that are under construction," said the BBMP Executive Engineer (Lakes).

Dileep, who is constructing a ground-plus-one floor building, said that he bought the site five years ago. "I took legal opinion before buying this site. Now, the BBMP Lakes Department is claiming that the land belongs to the lake. It took me five years to commence the construction of the building. I do not know what to do now."

Annamma, who resides at one of the temporary dwellings, said she has been living here for 15 years. "The Karnataka Slum Board has constructed houses for us in another place. I will be shifting to the new place shortly. The lakes department has issued notices to us stating that the land belongs to the lake," said Annamma.

# State Sees 1,505 New Covid Cases

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### Our Bureau

**Bengaluru:** Karnataka reported 1,505 new cases of Covid-19 on Thursday taking the total number of cases to 879,560. With 12 deaths, the state's Covid death toll rose to 11,726.

According to the health department, 844 of the new cases were from Bengaluru. The city's cumulative cases have reached 367,077.

Bengaluru also accounted for seven deaths and has continued to report fewer fatalities. The city has recorded 4,108 deaths so far.

The day also saw 1,067 discharges, further bringing the number of active cases down to 25,316.

Of the newly reported discharges, 367 were from Bengaluru. The city accounts for a little more than 60% of the state's active cases.

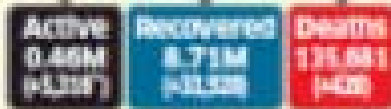
Karnataka is reporting a decline in cases despite increased testing. As many as 102,408 people were tested for the infection in the past 24 hours.



# CORONA METER

Delhi fresh cases stay above 5K+

**TOTAL CASES IN INDIA**  
**9.31M (+39,656)**



Source: COVID19INDIA, 11:20 PM IST on 2020-09-24

Samples Tested so Far\*



POSITIVE TESTS\*  
**6.81%**

Source: ICMR, \*25 test, \*\*3-day average



5 Main Metros\*

(Total Cases)

■ Active ■ Recovered  
■ Deaths

Share in Total  
**16.28%**



Source: covid19india.org (2020-09-24)

## GLOBAL COUNT



Source: worldometers.info (20-09-2020)

## MANUAL SCAVENGING STILL PRACTICED IN, AROUND CITY

IT Capital's shame gets BBMP chief's goat, Palike Commissioner Prasad orders survey, report on workers; warns of action against citizens who hire them

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@Bengaluru

CALL Bengaluru 'Boom Town', 'IT Capital of India' or even 'Global City', but the city's shame lies in the fact that manual scavenging still persists in and around the metropolis, despite strict directions from the courts and Central government.

The shame was exposed at a meeting on Thursday, when Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanaga-

ra Palike Commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad was apprised by BBMP zonal officers on the status of the disgusting practice of manual scavenging. The practice involves manually cleaning or disposing of human excreta from latrines or open drains, using buckets and shovels, or worse, bare hands.

What has emerged even more shameful are the figures pertaining to the practice: Prasad was apprised that as per a 2013 survey conducted by the Cen-

tral and state governments, 201 manual scavengers were identified, and compensation of ₹40,000 each was given to only 71 of them. In the case of the remaining workers, documents were still to be verified, and the status of the rest is not yet known.

A recent survey indicated that in all eight city zones, excluding Yelahanka, Bommanahalli and Dasarahalli, there were 1,139 manual scavengers. But the final details are not yet



known, Prasad was informed. A livid Prasad then ordered a proper survey and a report on the total number of manual scavengers in the city. He also pointed out that there were many manual scavengers in the newly-added 110 villages of Bengaluru, where this practice

is prevalent, and reminded officials that as per the court and Central government guidelines and orders, stringent action will be taken against those forcing them into such a practice by hiring them. Prasad has ordered for the report to include pertinent de-

tails about the conditions in which manual scavengers live and work in.

An agitated Prasad said: "A fresh survey should be done and all the 1,139 and 201 (from the earlier survey) workers should be checked, their living and financial conditions ascertained, homes should be constructed for them, their children should be given proper education, and alternative sources of livelihood should be offered to them."

**☞ A fresh survey should be done and all the 1,139 and 201 (from the earlier survey) workers should be checked, their financial conditions ascertained, homes should be constructed for them, their children should be given proper education, and alternative sources of livelihood should be offered to them. -N Manjunatha Prasad, BBMP chief**

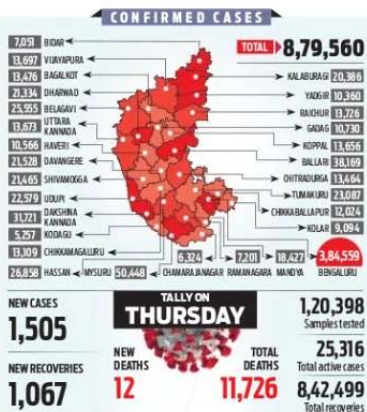
P2

## A CITY SOAKED IN RAIN



Clockwise from top: Officer-goers grab the chance to rush home after the rain abates, on MG Road, Bengaluru, on Thursday; young girls take a selfie at Brigade Road; a woman uses a basket to take shelter from the rain while shopping in Jayanagar; and people wait with their umbrellas at a bus stop

| SHRIRAM BN, MEGHANA SASTRY, VINOD KUMAR T



## DOCS FIND 35 CASES OF 'REINFECTION' IN CITY

It is rare, but could occur due to inadequate immune response, waning immunity, or mutant strain of the virus

RANJANI MADHAVAN @Bengaluru

SEVEN hospitals in Bengaluru have reported cases of "possible reinfection", which raise questions for health workers battling the pandemic.

Authorities at seven of 28 government and private hospitals in Bengaluru said that so far, they have seen 35 cases of possible reinfection. Seventeen hospitals said either they had not seen such cases or do not have data on it. Four hospitals were not reachable.

Jayanagar General Hospital came across 10 people who may have been reinfected, with the second infection being more severe, and patients becoming oxygen-dependent. They were transferred to Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases (RGICD).

"We got seven patients who contracted Covid-19 again. They developed new symptoms with radiological worsening, were more severe and were treated on the same

lines. They responded well to treatment. However, such cases need genome sequencing to confirm it was reinfection and not a prolonged infection," said Dr Sachin D, consultant of interventional pulmonology at Manipal Hospitals.

He cited a recent British study that suggested reinfection within six months is very rare due to protective immunity. Reinfection is being reported frequently

and could be either due to inadequate immune response (the first time), waning immunity, or mutant strain infection, Dr Sachin said.

RGICD detected six instances of possible reinfection. The patients were asymptomatic the first time. They had severe symptoms like breathlessness, cough, fever, lung involvement and muscle pain. Dr C Nagaraj, RGICD director, told TNIE.

"The samples were sent for genomic study and viral culture to the National Institute of Viro-

logy (Pune), to identify if the second case of positivity was the same strain," Dr Nagaraj said.

While Fortis Hospital saw one case of possible reinfection – the first in the city – Ramiah Memorial Hospital came across three health workers who contracted Covid-19 twice. However, they were asymptomatic the second time. Pristine Hospital and Research Centre found three cases, while Victoria Hospital saw five patients who got readmitted 10-15 days after discharge.

**☞ They responded well to treatment. However, such cases need genome sequencing to confirm it was reinfection and not a prolonged infection**  
Dr Sachin D, consultant of interventional pulmonology at Manipal Hospitals

राष्ट्रीय कोशिका विज्ञान केंद्र, पुणे  
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CELL SCIENCE, PUNE  
(An Autonomous Institution of the Department of Biotechnology)

P5

# Non-Covid viral infections go up, cause panic

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

THE dip in temperatures, made worse by rain due to Nivar, has led to an upswing in viral infections that are probably not Covid-19. However, with symptoms being common, doctors find themselves dealing with patients' fear of Covid-19 even as the pandemic rages.

People are rushing to doctors if they develop a cough, sore throat or even if they feel cold, fearing that they have contracted Covid-19.

"They are getting confused and are mixing up viral infections. They are forgetting that cases of viral infections rise during this season in Bengaluru, especially among children and those with asthma. They've forgotten (what life was like) before corona," said a pulmonologist and expert associated with the health department.

Either virtually, or in person, doctors find themselves trying to explain this scenario to patients



A family alights at Mysuru Road Satellite Bus Stand on Thursday | VINOD KUMAR T

amid an atmosphere of talk of a second wave and possible reinfections.

Doctors too, have to either detect or rule out a Covid infection or reinfection. "While we are prescribing anti-viral medication, we are not ruling out the possibility of re-infection, even though chances are minimal. So, to be assured

and prescribe the right course of treatment, we are advising patients to get an antibody test done, and isolate until their condition improves," said Dr Vivek P, pulmonologist.

Health experts working with the government say the state is prepared to handle a second wave. "But at present, what we are see-

ing is that people come with Covid symptoms, but an RT-PCR test comes back negative and they have (another) viral infection. We are asking patients to monitor their health for the next five days. Doctors and health workers are also being advised to keep a close watch on patients. The virus is new and we don't know how it is changing. We have to deal with situations as they develop. So far, we knew the basic symptoms and test reports would confirm Covid, but now, things are worrisome. So, antibody tests on recovered Covid-19 patients is being prescribed," a health department official said.

Dr Manohar Nageshappa of Manipal Hospital said that a study of frontline health workers and Oxford University research showed that Covid reinfection is unlikely for about six months. Isolated cases of reinfection may have occurred, but for most people who contracted Covid, the chances of getting it twice are very low.

P5

## Oxford vaccine faces questions over quality after faulty dosing regimens

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

THE Covid-19 vaccine developed by Oxford University and manufactured by AstraZeneca has found itself facing a credibility test after the two entities acknowledged faulty human trials where participants were given two dosing regimens.

Interestingly, the efficacy of the vaccine in volunteers who got a lower dose was found to be 90%, while it was only 62% among those who got full dose.

The difference in doses given

to the trial participants had left scientists perplexed but no explanation was offered for that.

Also, the trial participants consisted of very few elderly individuals, but this information was not disclosed.

It also now emerged that lower dose was given to some people due to an error in the quantity of the vaccine put into some vials, raising questions about the drug's quality.

Experts said the lack of transparency in releasing crucial information could lead to

stricter scrutiny by regulators and mistrust among people.

Following the uproar, Astra's CEO Pascal Soriot said it would conduct an additional global trial with the half first dose to assess the efficacy of its vaccine.

On Monday, Swedish-British pharmaceutical major AstraZeneca had said in a press statement that their vaccine candidate was 70% effective on average in a late-stage study, but it did not disclose the small

number of elderly volunteers or the manufacturing error.

Experts pointed out that the lack of transparency in releasing crucial information and data may lead to stricter scrutiny by regulators in many countries and mistrust among people.

"This episode has many elements which are problematic," said bioethicist Anant Bhan. "Apart from cherry-picking data to show that its vaccine is highly effective, the

company also didn't reveal that the sample size of elderly participants was very small," he said, adding that it may be only serendipity that seems to have led to a dose which showed higher efficacy. "All this is very concerning and looks like there was pressure within the company to release efficacy data quickly after results by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna," Bhan said.

SII claimed that the AstraZeneca-Oxford vaccine is safe and effective and even the lowest efficacy results are at 60-70%.



P11

## India extends international flight ban till December 31

NEW DELHI, DHNS: India on Thursday extended the ban on international flights till December 31, with exceptions for operations permitted by the civil aviation regulator, amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

"In partial modification of the circular dated 26-06-2020, the competent authority has further extended the validity regarding scheduled international commercial passenger services to/from India till 2359 hrs IST of December 31, 2020," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said.

"This restriction shall not apply to international all-cargo operations and flights



specifically approved by the DGCA," the order stated.

Scheduled international flights have been suspended since March 25 due to the pandemic, but special evacuation flights under the Vande Bharat mission had started operations on May 7.

"However, international scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-to-case basis," the DGCA order said.

India has air bubble arrangements with 21 countries — Afghanistan, Bhutan, the US, the UK, Germany, France, Japan, Qatar, Bahrain, the UAE, Maldives, Bangladesh, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, the Netherlands, Canada, Iraq, Kenya, Oman and Ukraine.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation had released guidelines on who can travel out, or travel to India, under the repatriation and travel bubble flights.

## Phase 3 trial of Covaxin begins at AIIMS

NEW DELHI, PTI: The phase 3 human clinical trial of indigenously developed anti-coronavirus vaccine candidate Covaxin began at the AIIMS here on Thursday, with Dr M V Padma Srivastava, chief of Neurosciences Centre at the premier institute, and three other volunteers receiving the first dose.

Covaxin is being developed by Bharat Biotech in collaboration with ICMR. The shot will be given to 15,000 volunteers at AIIMS in the next few days.

# Most Covid deaths in 50-72 age group

**DH analysis shows there were fewer deaths in people aged 80+ in state**

**AKHIL KADIDAL**  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**M**ore people in their fifties and sixties have died of Covid-19 than much older individuals who caught the virus, according to a DH analysis of 9,534 senior

citizen deaths in Karnataka, with co-morbidities and late diagnosis emerging as two major factors for the deaths.

The analysis considered all Covid-19 fatalities in the state of people aged 50 and above.

The worst-hit age group turns out to be between 50-72 (65, 60, 70, 55, 75, 50, 58, 68, 62 and 72), with people aged 65 having suffered the highest number of Covid-19 fatalities (793) in the state.

Next are people aged 60 (670 deaths), people aged 70 (667) and people aged 55 (484 deaths). The data shows a clear link between fatality rate and



**A medic administers Covaxin to a health worker in Ahmedabad on Thursday. PTI**

the presence of co-morbidities, with a significant chunk of people in the above ages having had three or more co-

morbidities.

On top of these serious conditions, many of the deceased had somehow slipped through surveillance measures or had failed to get themselves tested early.

Dr Thrilok Chandra, head of the Critical Care Support Unit (CCSU) which has handled over 2 lakh critical Covid-19 cases, said the primary cause of death is almost always late diagnosis.

"We have seen multi-organ dysfunction in all cases which arrived late for treatment - the kidney is compromised, the lung is compromised or the

heart is. The circulatory system is involved and Covid-19 can cause hypercoagulation which is a force multiplier," he said.

The highest number of people who died on the same day of diagnosis in Karnataka were 166 people who were aged 65. The next highest number were 154 who were aged 60. The third highest group was 141 people who were aged 70. Tellingly, 39.2% of these people also had three or more comorbidities. No other age group comes close to these high numbers of late diagnosis.

► **Deaths, Page 4**

P1

## Modi to visit Serum Institute, Bharat Biotech tomorrow

**MUMBAI/HYDERABAD, DHNS:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Saturday visit the Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII) and Bharat Biotech facility in Hyderabad to review the Covid-19 vaccine production and distribution programme.

The SII laboratory is developing Covidshield with a master seed from Oxford University/AstraZeneca. The clinical trials are under way.

The Hyderabad-based bi-

otech firm has, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the National Institute of Virology (NIV), developed India's first Covid vaccine candidate Covaxin.

Modi will visit the Hadapsar campus of SII, where he will be received by Cyrus Poonawalla,

chairman of the Poonawalla Group, and his son and CEO Adar Poonawalla.

**PM likely to visit Zydus Biotech Park in Guj, Page 5**



**Narendra Modi**

P1



# After 'error', Astra likely to run additional vaccine test

BLOOMBERG

AstraZeneca Plc is likely to conduct an additional global trial to assess the efficacy of its Covid-19 vaccine, after current studies raised questions over its level of protection.

The new trial would be run instead of adding an arm to an ongoing US trial and would evaluate a lower dosage that performed better than a full amount in Astra's studies. The company's acknowledgment that the lower level was given in "error" fuelled concerns, and the new trial would

be used to confirm whether or not the higher 90% efficacy rate stands.

"Now that we've found what looks like a better efficacy we have to validate this, we need to do an additional study," CEO Pascal Soriot said in his first interview since the data were released.

AstraZeneca and Oxford varsity, among the front-runners in the quest to deliver a vaccine, are facing mounting questions about trial results after acknowledging the error. **Astra faces tough questions, Page 9**

# Cyclone Nivar effect: Chilly, rainy sky clouds city

Similar weather conditions forecast for next two days

BENGALURU, DHNS

**H**heavy rainfall lashed eastern and southeastern Bengaluru while most other areas received light to moderate showers on Thursday due the impact of cyclone Nivar. The weatherman has forecast similar weather conditions for the next two days.

While there was no widespread heavy rain as feared, the overcast sky and scattered light rainfall brought the mercury down.

According to data from the Karnataka State Natural Disaster Monitoring Centre's Varuna Mitra, eastern and southeastern Bengaluru received higher rainfall than the western parts. However, no area in Bommanahalli and Mahadevapura zones, which fall under southern and eastern Bengaluru, respectively, received more than 29 mm of rainfall. Areas in West, RR Nagar and Dasarahalli zones



**A man and two children take shelter under an umbrella on Thursday.** DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

received 5-10 mm of rain.

Varthur received 29 mm while Begur, Indiranagar, HSR Layout, Marathahalli, Bellandur, Indiranagar, Dodanekkundi and Yelahanka received between 18 mm to 25 mm of rainfall. Banashankari, Yelahanka, parts of Basavana-gudi, Jayanagar and Mysuru Road received light showers.

The BBMP said it didn't

receive any complaint of tree fall or casualty, although social media was flooded with complaints of the "gloomy" weather.

A cloudy, rainy sky has been forecast for Friday, too, although the minimum temperature may rise from 17°C to 19°C. The IMD hasn't yet lifted the yellow alert for Bengaluru.

# BBMP delimitation aimed at favouring BJP: Opposition

## RSS leaders deciding new wards, says Ramalinga Reddy

BENGALURU, DHNS

A political row has erupted over the delimitation of Bengaluru's municipal wards, with the Opposition parties claiming that the exercise was just gerrymandering to benefit the ruling BJP ahead of the BBMP polls.

Speaking to *DH*, senior Congress MLA Ramalinga Reddy who represents BTM Layout accused the BJP of delimiting wards as per their electoral

convenience, a practice he said was observed when the BJP government increased the number of BBMP wards to 198 in 2010.

"The delimitation exercise should be taken up by the four-member committee, which has the BBMP Commissioner and Bengaluru Urban Deputy Commissioner as members. But, as per our information, BJP and RSS leaders are sitting together and deciding new wards for Bengaluru



city," he said.

Former JD(S) corporator Prakash said that a few of the newly-formed wards had a lion's share of public amenities, while others were deprived.

Citing Kaveripura in the Govindarajanagar Assembly constituency as an example, he said that the ward is be-

ing divided in such a manner that not even one of the seven parks previously in the ward remained. "It will all now be part of Maranahalli and the proposed Dasahalli wards," he said.

Prakash claimed that the absence of specific guidelines for delimitation has allowed the wards to be divided at will. Influential politicians are also exerting pressure to divide wards in their constituency to strengthen their core vote base, while making sure that their political opponents had little ground, he alleged.

BJP legislators maintain that the four-member committee formed by the government was delimiting wards as per norms.

BJP's CV Raman Nagar legislator S Raghu, who headed

the joint legislative committee that recommended the delimitation, said: "How will increasing the number of wards from 198 to 243 help the BJP? They are making these claims as they have no other issues to talk about."

### 'Baseless' talks

BBMP Commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad said the allegations are baseless.

"We have six months to finish delimitation and we have not even started the work. We can only start work once the state government issues terms of reference for delimitation," he said. Everything was dependent on the High Court order regarding elections to the BBMP, he said, adding that the court has reserved its order.

# Confusion over research institutes in vaccine priority list

**SURAKSHA P**  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**hough scientists and researchers feature among the nine health workers' category list provided by Government of India to the states to draw up a Covid vaccination priority list, it is unclear as to which agency would take their details.

The lack of clarity is largely owing to the research institutes' autonomous status.

The BBMP has sent the template to gather health workers' details to hospitals, with its commissioner Manjunatha Prasad saying that scientists and researchers attached to the institutions have been included in the list. In reality, no researcher is attached to city hospitals.

While premier institutions like the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have handled Covid samples, only the lab staff from the Department of Microbiology at the hospitals doing Covid testing seem to have been included in the list.

The Centre for Infectious Disease Research (CIDR) at IISc started testing Covid samples on April 28 and its two dozen lab staff have handled 35,000 virus samples so far. "The BBMP has not reached out to CIDR," said Dr Shashank Tripathi, Assistant Professor, Microbiology & Cell Biology

## 'Some are not interested'

The National Institute of Traditional Medicine (NITM), Belagavi, a Regional Medical Research Centre of the ICMR, started testing Covid samples in April. Its director Dr Debprasad Chattopadhyay said the ICMR had enquired about cold chain facilities at NITM two days ago.

"There are seven scientists, including the director and eight research students. Three are techni-

cal officers and nine office staff. We have sent details of 29 staffers to the ICMR," Dr Chattopadhyay said. "But some of the 17 contractual staff are not interested and they are young," he said. The Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysuru, is another research lab that comes under the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, which started testing Covid samples in August.

Department, CIDR.

"The Department of Biotechnology (DBT), on the other hand, has been reaching out to institutions under it for researchers' list for priority vaccination. Most of the diagnostic centres under research institutions come under DBT, but IISc is autonomous. We don't know which government channel will contact us."

IISc comes under the Ministry of Education, though it is not sure if they would contact CIDR. The National Centre for Biological Sciences on the GKVK campus on Ballari Road is a DBT institution.

## 'Centre must clarify'

Dr Rajani Nagesh Rao, Deputy Director, Immunisation, Department of Health and Family

Welfare, said the Government of India will collect data of its staff.

When pointed out that no government channel contacted IISc, she said clarification needed to be sought from the Centre on the issue.

Dr C N Manjunath, state nodal officer for Covid-19 testing, said the state government should not leave out Central institutions on the assumption that the Central government will collect their data.

"Institutions like IISc and NCBS contributed a great deal to fight Covid, especially in the initial stages of the pandemic when not many testing labs were available," he said, adding that he was instrumental in getting approvals for the institutes to do Covid testing.

# 'Waste management council will empower mafia'

BENGALURU, DHNS

The government has effectively abdicated its administrative responsibility and handed over the reins to the garbage mafia by setting up an autonomous waste management council, the AAP has said.

Aam Aadmi Party's Shanthala Dhamle said garbage management has an annual budget of Rs 1,200 crore and has become a fertile ground for the mafia.

She said the move will only make the BBMP weaker as it loses control over a key issue.

"Water supply, asset management, schools, hospital management and many other duties have been taken away from the BBMP," she said, adding that the Palike will be reduced to a grievance cell.

AAP said the autonomous council will end people's

right to question, while their elected representatives wash their hands of the sanitisation responsibility and become hand-in-glove with the mafia. Recently, the government sought the BBMP's opinion on setting up a separate agency to oversee waste processing.

P3

## Multi-year project, non-profits aim to improve lives of ragpickers; move critical for waste management

BENGALURU, DHNS

Even those concerned about waste management in the city rarely recognise the contributions of ragpickers in keeping the city clean.

The informal workers are harassed, discriminated and stigmatised, forcing them to become invisible.

These points from a report by BBC Media Action on Bengaluru's informal waste pickers were highlighted on Monday during the launch of Saamuhika Shakti, a multi-year project to improve the lives of the city's waste workers.

Several local and international organisations such as BBC Media Action, CARE, Hasiru Dala, LabourNet, Save the Children, Social Alpha, WaterAid and The/Nudge Foundation are joining forces to



**BBMP says the city will soon have a large network of dry waste collection mostly run by waste pickers and NGOs.** DH FILE

improve income levels, social security, working conditions, education, sanitation and recognition of the critical role waste pickers play in the city's waste management efforts.

Funded by Swedish NGO H&M Foundation, the initiative follows the model where different groups commit to a

cause and work together in a structured manner to have a common agenda to solve a social issue.

H&M Foundation has committed \$11 million for the project for the first three years with the scope to expand it for three more years.

Randeep D, special commis-

sioner for solid waste management, BBMP, said the city will soon have a large network of dry waste collection mostly run by waste pickers and NGOs. He added that the civic body will assist them with requisite technology and infrastructure.

"In six to eight years, waste pickers will not be picking waste on the streets in the way that they do today. Children of waste pickers will have the opportunity to choose their livelihood," said Nalini Shekhar, co-founder and executive director, Hasiru Dala.

"Through Saamuhika Shakti, we hope to provide prospects that can lead to better outcomes, and in an equitable manner for waste pickers and their families," said Lakshmi Pattabi Raman, executive director, Saamuhika Shakti, The/Nudge Foundation.

P3



## BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE

Head Office, N.R. Square, Bengaluru-560002

# PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

## SAHAAYA 2.0 APPLICATION WORKFLOW DETAILS

Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, is pleased to introduce 'SAHAAYA 2.0' a unified grievance application, available in Namma Bengaluru Web and Mobile Application, enabling citizens of Bengaluru City in Getting their grievances addressed.

**This SAHAAYA 2.0 application is updated with 'new features' and 'more user friendly', viz.,**



1. Citizens can lodge unified grievance through various modes like; 'Namma Bengaluru Mobile application', 'Web Portal', 'BBMP 24/7 Call Centre - 080-22660000', 'What's App No. +91 94806 85700' and also through Social Media like: 'Facebook', 'Twitter'.
2. Once the grievance is registered in SAHAAYA 2.0, the citizens will receive a message through SMS viz., through SAHAAYA 2.0, Web application, disclosing grievance's number, category of work, name of the officer/official, his/her mobile number informing that, the complainant can view his complaint details. The citizens can track his complaint status in Namma Bengaluru Portal.
3. Once the unified grievance is registered, the concerned officers can identify the exact location mentioned in the complaint, with the help of Google Map along with complainants details in the Unique Portal.
4. The officer is bound with the timeline period, for each type of complaint. On his failure to attend the grievance the unified grievance viz., complaint will have an 'auto escalation' to the next level officer and the consequential information will be sent to the complainant through SMS.
5. The complaint viz., unified grievance would be moved to the 'long-term solution', where the funds and / or the time is required. SMS will be sent to the complainant that, your complaint is moved to 'long-term solution'.
6. Once the complaint is resolved by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, the complainant will receive consequential information through SMS. The complainant can also provide feed back on the resolution.
7. There is a provision to both the officers as well as the complaint to upload the photographs related to the grievances before and after resolving.
8. Citizens can register grievance relating to 'Pot-holes', 'Foot-paths', 'Street-Lights', 'Garbage', etc., (related complaints are available in 'Namma Bengaluru SAHAAYA 2.0 application).
9. The citizens can download 'Namma Bengaluru App through Play Store 'namma bengaluru'.

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.



Wear Mask



6 Feet  
Follow Physical  
Distancing



Maintain  
Hand  
Hygiene

Sd/- Commissioner, BBMP

# BBMP promises e-khata sans tears

**Its new digital records management system, e-Aasthi, aims to make it easy for owners to get and store their property documents. Good initiative, and make it work, say citizens' groups**

NINA C. GEORGE  
TEAM METROLIFE

**W**ith a new digital records management system, the BBMP promises to make it easier for citizens to get their property papers. Called e-Aasthi, the system is already operational as part of a pilot in three wards—Shanthalanagar, Neelasandra and Shantinagar.

It will be extended to 100 wards within two weeks, BBMP Commissioner N Manjunatha Prasad told *Metrolife*.

Litigation is rife around property because of fraudulent documents, and the new system will fix the problem, he says.

"Citizens have a tough time getting their khata and face harassment as some BBMP officials demand bribes. This technology will help us put an end to the corruption," explains Manjunatha Prasad.

Every property holder with an Aadhaar card can now get a digi locker in which digital property documents can be stored.

"You can open the locker with the help of a code given only to you. It costs just Rs 125 to get a digitised khata with a digital signature."



A khata counter at the BBMP office on Sampige Road, Seshadripuram. e-Aasthi is aimed at eliminating physical visits to BBMP offices. DH PHOTO BY B K JANARDHAN.

"We will do away with physical signatures by BBMP officials. The digital signature is linked to the Aadhaar card of the official, so there's no way they can cheat," he says. This is a good move, but implementation is key, say citizens' groups. Dr A Ravindra, former chief secretary, government of Karnataka, wonders how prepared the BBMP is in terms of the accuracy of records.

"Getting a khata also means that you will have to overrule any objections and claims on the property, and ensure that there is no litigation trailing it," he says.

While the digital process may work in the case of BDA properties, agricultural land converted and used for housing may



pose challenges. Murali Govindarajulu, ward committee member, Hagaduru, Mahadevapura, says Whitefield is a neighbourhood that could pose challenges.

"It remained under a village panchayat and came into the City Municipal Council fold only in 2001. Khatas issued by the village panchayat were not automatically brought into CMC records. When the

## FEATURES OF E-AASTHI

- Digital property records can be created from the current khata database.
- Covers all properties, including those inherited and gifted.
- Digitally signed records issued as and when citizens demand them.
- Digi-lockers given to property owners to store their documents.
- Easy access to loans as authenticity of documents is not in question.

## HOW IT IS EXPECTED TO WORK

- Verification of documents is not a challenge any more.
- Photo of the owner printed on the property document so no impersonation.
- Banks can lend confidently as fake documents are eliminated.
- Documents can be checked quickly for authenticity as they are bar coded.

₹125 Fee for e-khata



Residents of Whitefield at a Khata Mela in Mahadevapura zone.

CMC was absorbed into the BBMP, the papers were again not incorporated. Digitisation of village panchayat records is important," he says.

Assistant revenue officers who controlled village panchayat khatas would enter names in a hardbound register with an older date and issue a khata only against a bribe which went up to Rs 1 lakh for a 30x40 ft plot. Citizens have suffered badly because of the lack of transparency, Murali says. If village land records are brought into the system, the issue of fake khatas will also come to an end, he believes.

Srinivas Alavilli of Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy and co-founder, Citizens for Bengaluru, says

the issue of khata has been a problem for decades.

"Digitisation will bring in transparency, but government departments must work together and not as independent entities, as they do now."

"They must link their databases so that citizens benefit. This will eliminate ambiguity and make this system a success," he says. Leo Saldanha coordinator, Environment Support Group, says decades of corruption in the BBMP will be wiped out if this new system is run effectively.

"Khata is a fundamental right but the BBMP has made it a nightmarish experience for citizens. It must be made simple," he says.

P3A

# As street pups proliferate, volunteers look for homes

**Animal lovers are organising adoption camps and selling merchandise to raise money for street dogs**

ANILA KURIAN  
TEAM METROLIFE

**A**nimal activists and shelters are doing their bit to help find parents for dogs, and raise money to help them medically.

## CHARLIE'S ANIMAL RESCUE CENTRE (CARE)

The animal shelter is hosting a sale at Heads Up for Tails, near Garuda Mall, on Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm, where



From an earlier adoption drive conducted by Kez Klein and Divya Vinod.

people can buy calendars, T-shirts, and hoodies.

It is also hosting an adoption drive on December 6, 11 am to 3 pm, at CARE,

Yelahanka. "There's been a huge outbreak of puppies and the adoptions have come down drastically in the last two months. We have 12 to

15 puppies, all healthy and vaccinated, available for adoption. There are also senior dogs to take home," says co-founder Sudha Narayanan.

## CV RAMAN NAGAR GROUP

Lawyer and animal lover Debjani Aich is planning to make merchandise in time for Christmas.

"We have a close-knit community in CV Raman Nagar to help dogs. We plan to sell mugs and badges to raise money for the neutering, sterilising and care of streeties in our neighbourhood," she says.

She hopes the merchandise will be picked up by those playing Secret Santa.

## ADOPTION DRIVE

Kez Klein and Divya Vinod are animal rescuers active in the pet community. On Sunday, they are hosting an adoption drive at The Hub, above Safina Plaza, between 11 am and 1.30 pm. "We conducted a drive at Urban Solace in September where eight of 20 pups were adopted. This time, we have 40 pups looking for permanent homes," says Klein. The two have a small space of their own for rescued pups. They work with foster parents till they find permanent homes. For details, call 98453 94872 or 98809 23309.

## FRAZER TOWN GROUP

Stray Matters in Richards Town is an active pet group of the area. Sunita Vaznaik,

clinical psychologist and member, says, "We used to randomly get pets neutered and vaccinated. But since 2019, we have a systematic group."

"We have been giving mugs and badges to those who donate. We use the money to feed streeties and take care of their medical needs," she adds.

## VIRTUAL PET PARKIE

The volunteers of Cubbon Park is asking animal lovers to donate for the care of the 100-odd dogs living in the park.

Animal lovers can be virtual parents, get updates on their dogs, and donate for their medical needs.

For details, log on to bit.ly/Vppform

P3A

# Covid-19 vaccine to be administered in booths

The government is drafting standard operating procedures for election-style vaccination booths

THERES SUDEEP  
TEAM METROLIFE

**B**engaluru is preparing to administer the coronavirus vaccine, expected in early 2021, to large numbers of citizens.

Many questions remain about the vaccine and its storage, but the government is now drafting a standard operating procedure, according to Dr K Sudhakar, health and medical education minister.

“Multiple vaccine candidates are in different stages of development. We don’t know who will get a licence, as meeting scientific and regulatory requirements is a must,” he told *Metrolife*.

## Who gets it first?

Protecting the health system and reducing deaths is the primary goal of vaccination, he says.

“As WHO says, frontline workers in health care settings, people over 65, and people under 65 with underlying conditions that put them at higher risk are the tiers of priority, and in that order,” says Sudhakar.



A vaccine van parked outside BBMP Dasappa Hospital near Town Hall. Preparations are afoot for storage and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines. The hospital is one of the many vaccine storage centres in Bengaluru.

## IN EACH BOOTH

Vaccination booths will be like election booths. Each booth will have two vaccinators, one assistant for maintaining data and records, one assistant for logistics, and two or three people for crowd management, according to Dr K Sudhakar, health minister.

According to a provisional plan for Phase 1, the central government is looking at vaccinating 30 crore people (600 million doses), including one crore healthcare workers, two crore frontline workers, and 26 crore citizens.

Not everyone may need

a vaccine, which means it may not be mandatory. Even the length of protection is uncertain and a booster dose may be required after some time, he adds.

## Election experience

Sudhakar says the vaccine

roll-out might take a year or more.

“We will utilise the experience of elections and universal immunisation programmes and ensure people’s participation,” he says.

The central health ministry, in consultation with state governments, has already assessed the additional requirement of chain cold storage, he says.

He hopes a made-in-India, safe, effective and affordable vaccine will soon be a reality.