



**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE
BANGALORE**

**ENGLISH NEWS PAPER
CLIPPINGS**

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Active cases: State records nearly 67% rise in one month

City continues to be the epicentre with nearly 96% of active COVID-19 cases

AFSHAN YASMEEN
BENGALURU

With a rise in new COVID-19 cases, the number of active cases in Karnataka have shot up by nearly 67% in the last one month. From 1,666 cases on May 20, active cases increased to 5,035 on June 19. However, the proportion of hospitalisations and deaths continues to remain low so far.

Bengaluru Urban continues to be the epicentre of COVID-19 in Karnataka. Nearly 96% of the total active cases are from the State capital. In the last one month, the daily incidence of new cases in Bengaluru Urban has risen from 89 (on May 20) to 588 on June 19.

Accordingly, active cases too shot up from 1,591 on May 20 to 4,833 on June 19. On June 20, active cases reduced marginally to 4,928 in the State, of which 4,723 are from Bengaluru Urban.

The number of active COVID-19 cases in the third wave in Karnataka fell below the 50,000 mark on February 11 and further below the 20,000 mark on February 17 after hitting a peak of 3,62,487 cases on January 24. From March 20, active cases fell below 2,000 and were hovering around 1,800 till April 4 when the number further plummeted to 1,500.

Subsequently, active cases started rising but remained within 2,000 till May 30. With new cases also seeing a jump from within 200 till May end to above 600 now, active cases are increasing by the day.

As of Monday, 42 patients were admitted in hospitals and all of them are in Bengaluru. Except for nine pa-

tients (five in ICU and four in high dependency units in Bengaluru), all have occupied general wards in government hospitals. In the last one month, seven deaths have been reported in the State of which three are from Bengaluru.

State Health Commissioner Randeep D. said the rise in active cases is in proportion to the average rise in daily new cases. "However, as the percentage of hospitalised patients to active cases is very low, the situation is not alarming and there is no reason to panic," he said.

The Commissioner said he has already written to the Medical Education Secretary to earmark beds in Victoria Hospital and Bowring and Lady Curzon Medical College Hospital and Research Institution.

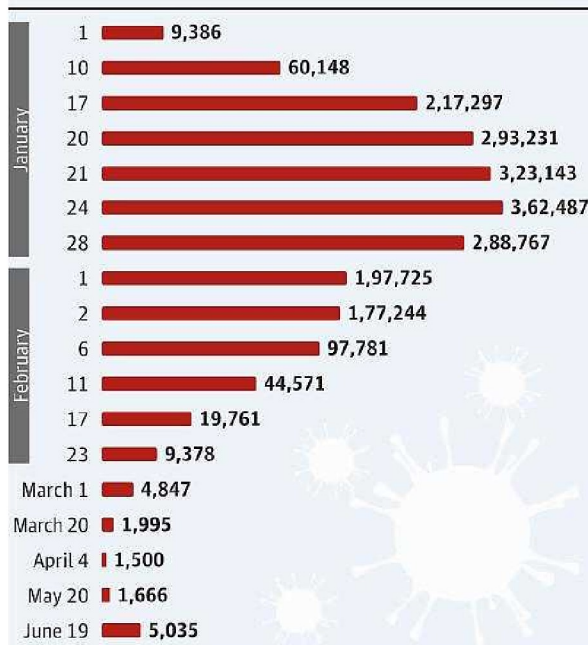
M.K. Sudarshan, chairman of the State's COVID-19 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), said all prevailing conditions are conducive for a wave. "With resumption of international and domestic air/rail and road transport and all other commercial activities, movement of people is unhindered. However, people have become complacent and are not following protocols, including the basic wearing masks," he said.

C.N. Manjunath, member of the State's Clinical Experts Committee, said the situation is still not alarming as the doubling rate of new COVID-19 cases is low.

"It is important that people do not become complacent now. Masking up is essential. But it is unfortunate that people are not wearing masks even in public rallies," he added.



Rise and fall of active cases in third wave



| | Total cases | Active cases |
|---|-------------|--------------|
| First wave active case peak on October 10, 2020 | 7,00,786 | 1,20,270 |
| Second wave active case peak on May 15, 2021 | 21,71,931 | 6,05,494 |
| Third wave active case peak on January 24, 2022 | 35,64,108 | 3,62,487 |

State reports 530 new cases

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

BENGALURU

Karnataka on Monday saw 530 new infections taking the total number of cases to 39,61,361. With this the day's Test Positivity Rate (TPR) rose to 3.59% and the weekly TPR touched 3.07%.

Of the new cases, 494 have been reported from Bengaluru Urban alone.

With zero deaths, the State's toll remained 40,071. Besides, 42 deaths of patients due to non-COVID-19 reasons have also been recorded. As many as 637 persons were discharged on Monday taking the total recoveries to 39,16,320. Active cases that rose to 5,035 on Sunday marginally reduced to 4,928 on Monday.

As many as 14,753 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours, including 11,759 RT-PCR tests.

We will complete suburban rail project in 40 months: PM

'Bengaluru is city of dreams for youth and an inspiration for Atma Nirbhar Bharat'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Hailing Bengaluru as the "city of dreams" for lakhs of youngsters from across the country, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday assured people of the city that he would strive to complete in 40 months the suburban railway project that had seen "just discussion" for the last 40 years.

"The project got stuck in files for 16 years. If it had been completed 40 years ago, the congestion in Bengaluru would not have increased," Mr. Modi said, while addressing a public programme at Kommaghatta ground in Kengeri here after laying the foundation stone for the suburban rail project and various other rail and national highway and ring road projects, worth a total of about ₹33,000 crore.

"Now, the opportunity has been given to me to implement the project that has been inordinately delayed. I will not waste time," Mr. Mo-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Governor Thawarchand Gehlot and Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai at a public programme on Kommaghatta Grounds near Kengeri in Bengaluru on Monday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

di told the audience. The suburban rail project would help in increasing the infrastructural capacity of Bengaluru and reduce the compulsion to stay in the city for those travelling from other areas, he observed.

"Bengaluru is a city of dreams for lakhs of youth. It is also the reflection of the spirit of *Ek bharat shresht Bharat*. Evolution of Bengaluru is also evolution of lakhs of dreams. Hence the Centre is trying continuously to improve the infrastructural capacity of Bengaluru in the last eight years," he said, while remarking that "the life of those trying to turn their dreams into reality should be free from hassles and their travel time should reduce."




The Prime Minister repeat-

edly used the phrase "double engine government" (with Centre and State being BJP-ruled) as aiding the people of Karnataka, in an effort to reply to the Opposition in the State that has been ridiculing it using the same phrase.

"The double engine government is constantly working to free Bengaluru from traffic jams. In this context we are trying to provide all modes of transport, including rail, road, metro, underpass, fly-over. We are committed to linking suburban areas with proper transport connectivity. I am happy that the double engine government is working towards improving the lives of people of Karnataka," he said.

CONTINUED ON ► PAGE 6



| | |
|---|--|
|  | Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project ₹15,767 crore |
|  | Redevelopment of Bengaluru Cantonment station ₹470 crore |
|  | Redevelopment of the Yeshwantpur station ₹400 crore |

THE HINDU

NHA projects estimated to cost **₹ 7,300 crore**

| | |
|--|--|
| Bengaluru Satellite Town Ring Road Project | Six-lane widening of Nelamangala-Tumakuru stretch of NH 48 |
| Upgrade of Madhugiri-Gauribidanur-Chickballipur section of NH 69 | Multi Modal logistic park ₹1,800 crore |
| Punjalkatte to Charmadi section of NH 73 | Bagchi-Parthasarathy Hospital at IISc, Bengaluru ₹425 crore |

Projects that were inaugurated

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Electrification of Konkan Railway ₹1,287 crore | Sir M Visvesvaraya Railway Terminus Balyappaiahalli ₹314 crore | Doubling of Arsikere-Tumakuru track ₹758 crore | Doubling of Yelahanka-Penukonda track ₹1,104 crore |
| Babasaheb Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Economics University campus ₹201 crore | Centre for Brain Research at IISc Bengaluru ₹280 crore | | |

Will complete suburban rail project in 40 months: PM

At Mysuru too, he took a dig at the previous UPA government at the Centre and the successive Congress governments in the State. He said that development works had been fast tracked in Karnataka under the "double engine" government of BJP. He claimed that after 2014, the government not only fast tracked the projects but also delivery mechanism.

Inspiration for others

At the Bengaluru public rally, the Prime Minister showered rich praises on the city, and said "Bengaluru's success story has inspired 21st century India to become Atma Nirbhar Bharat. This city has shown to what level youth and private sector can impact the society and take the country if given an opportunity to show their potential in entrepreneurship and innovation."

He said during the pandemic, youth sitting in Bengaluru had helped the entire world. "Bengaluru is a city of dreams. Behind these dreams, there is innovation, entrepreneurship and proper utilisation of private sector along with public sector," he observed.

BDA scraps tender for PRR, decides to float fresh one

Investors want more clarity on land acquisition cost

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

The tender process for the Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) has been scrapped by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA), which has decided to issue a fresh one.

The move comes in the backdrop of investors, who took part in the tender process, asking for more clarity on the land acquisition cost.

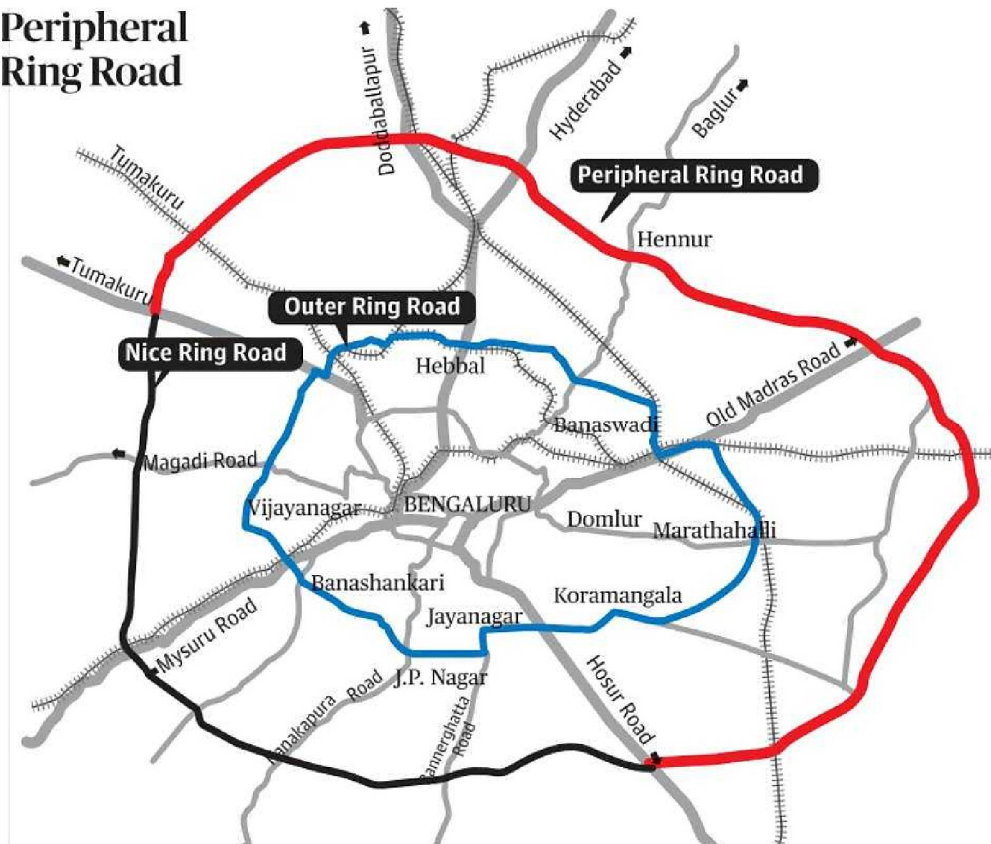
BDA officials, citing a Supreme Court order, have been maintaining that the BDA Act applies for the land acquisition and not the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013, as demanded by the farmers.

Last year, the BDA estimated that if the compensation package was fixed as per 2013 Act, the acquisition cost would require more than ₹14,000 crore.

The 74-km project requires 2,560 acres of land and will connect Tumakuru Road with Hosur Road. Over 15 years ago, the BDA notified 1,810 acres of land.

An official of the BDA said, "During the pre-bidding meeting, the investors had raised queries concerning

Peripheral Ring Road



land acquisition. They wanted to know how much land acquisition would cost and who would bear the cost. Earlier, two compensation packages were proposed: one is compensation for the land cost that prevailed when the notification was issued with the 12% interest per year, and another one is fixing cost as per the recent guidance value. If we fix the compensation based on the land cost that was there when notification was is-

sued, it would come around ₹3,000 crore. Farmers will not agree to this as it is too low. Fixing the compensation as per the existing guidance value is likely to cost over ₹4,500 crore".

The official said that the BDA has already written to the State government seeking guidance on fixing compensation. "The next tender will be floated after getting clearance from a committee headed by the Chief Secretary," said the official.

The official added that for the previous tender, eight companies had shown interest. This included two foreign and six Indian companies, such as Nagarjuna, IRB, Adani, L&T and others.

The BDA is planning to construct eight-lane roads and integrate them with the existing NICE Road.

The project will be taken up under PPP model along the lines of design, build, finance, operate, transfer (DBFOT) model.

Suburban rail for B'luru in 40 months: Modi

AKRAM MOHAMMED
BENGALURU, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday promised to deliver suburban rail to Bengaluru in 40 months, as he laid the foundation stone for the long-pending project that had been in discussion for "40 years".

Praising the tech hub as "a city of dreams" for lakhs of youths, Modi said the "double engine government is exploring every possible way to free Bengaluru from its traffic jams through rail, road, metro, un-

CM: Aiming for \$1.2 trillion economy

Vowing to contribute a large share in India's growth story, CM Bommai said Monday that Karnataka will work towards becoming a \$1.25 trillion economy.

areas...40 years were lost in discussion. In 40 months, we will try to fulfil your dreams," Modi said, referring to the Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project (BSRP) at a public meeting in Kommaghatta. "The project was stuck in files for 16 years," he added.

With a total length of 148.17 km, the BSRP will cost an estimated Rs 15,767 crore. Around 10 lakh passengers are likely to travel in suburban trains by 2026, easing the stress on the city's creaking transport infrastructure.

Suburban rail, Page 5

derpass and flyover."

"There has been discussion from the 1980s to connect Bengaluru to sub-urban



Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicates road and rail projects in Bengaluru on Monday. CM Basavaraj Bommai is also seen. DH PHOTO/SK DINESH

State to work towards becoming \$1.25 trillion economy: CM

Modi promises Centre's help for rapid development

BENGALURU, DHNS

Vowing to contribute a large share to India's growth story, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said Monday that Karnataka will work towards becoming a \$1.25 trillion economy.

"It is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream to turn India into a \$5 trillion economy. It is our dream to make Karnataka a \$1.25 trillion economy," Bommai said at the Kommaghatta event where Modi inaugurated several developmental projects. The projects inaugurated and to which foundation stones were laid will help raise Karnataka's GDP by two percentage points, Bommai said.

"The suburban rail project was ignored for several years. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave the green signal. This will connect four parts of Bengaluru," Bommai said.

Listing out the contributions of the central government to the state, Bommai said that Karnataka is following Modi's development

guidelines. "A politician has an eye on the next election. But a statesman has an eye on the next generation. Here, we have a statesman of a lifetime who is working to improve the next generation," the chief minister said, lauding Modi.

'Full support to Basavaraj govt'

PM Modi said his government will work "shoulder-to-shoulder" with Karnataka.

"For our Karnataka to move forward speedily under Basavaraj's leadership, the Government of India is standing with you to work shoulder-to-shoulder," he said.

At least on two occasions, Modi addressed the CM as simply Basavaraj without uttering his surname Bommai.

Modi began his address in Kannada to loud cheers from the crowd. "The double engine government has given you an assurance of rapid development in Karnataka," he said.

Citing the example of the Nelamangala-Tumakuru stretch of the national high-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi waves at the students at the inauguration of Babasaheb Ambedkar School of Economics in Bengaluru on Monday.

way, which is being upgraded to six lanes, Modi said that this would reduce traffic density and help economic activity in the industry-dense region.

Modi met the parents and brother of Naveen Gyanagoudar, a medical student who was killed during Russian shelling at Kharkiv in war-hit Ukraine in March.

Naveen hailed from Chalageri in Haveri and Bommai knows the family personally.

Siddu's posers to Modi

Timed for Modi's two-day visit, leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah threw a volley of questions at him on issues concerning corruption, farmers and so on. Siddaramaiah billed the questions as #AnswerMadiModi. He

asked Modi, if he would order an investigation into the '40% commission' allegation levelled by the Karnataka state contractors' association. He asked the PM about the "delay" in granting approval to the Mekedatu project.

After several delays, Kundalahalli underpass opens on trial basis

Bomma likely to inaugurate newly built grade separator in a week or two

BENGALURU, DHNS

After missing several deadlines, the underpass at Kundalahalli junction, which is an important link to the IT hub, was open to traffic on Monday.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai is likely to inaugurate the newly built grade separator in a week or two, officials said. The four-lane underpass is expected to provide relief to motorists.

The grade separator is part of the signal-free corridor project proposed on the Old Airport Road, which connects central parts of Bengaluru with the IT hub.

Although the project was conceptualised almost a decade ago, the work began only in November 2019 due to the delay in the acquisition of



The walls of the four-lane underpass were repainted by 'The Ugly Indian' as part of a CSR project. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

properties. The BBMP spent Rs 19.5 crore to build the 281-metre-long underpass, comprising of a 7.5-metre-wide service road on both sides.

The cost of acquiring 28 properties came up to Rs 45 crore, it is learnt.

With the underpass opened for traffic on a trial basis, vehicles heading to Marathahalli and Varthur do not have to wait for the signal at the Kundalahalli underpass.

The waiting time at the junction will also come down drastically for the traffic moving towards EPIP Zone (Whitefield) from Old Airport Road.

Art work

The retaining walls of the underpass have been painted by The Ugly Indian as part of a CSR project.

“The art work with painted storks or saras is in recognition of Mahadevapura, known as the ‘Land of Lakes’. Mahadevapura has the highest number of lakes by count and also by area. The lake rejuvenation projects in Mahadevapura are already bringing the migratory birds back to our neighbourhood,” said Clement Jayakumar, secretary of the Mahadevapura Task Force-Mobility.



PRETTY PICTURE

BBMP may repair subways, but bad reputation harder to fix

Home guards manning them being asked for help to cross the roads

RAIMA BHAUMIK & AISHWARYA NAMBIAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

As the government smartened up 20 pedestrian subways that were dirty, unsafe and a hub for anti-socials, their past record continues to linger.

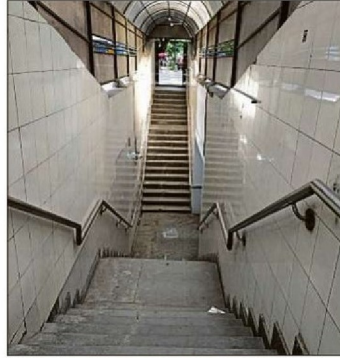
Located in KR Market, Majestic, Dharmambudhi Road, Sujatha Talkies, Sheshadri Road, KR Circle, Nrupathunga Road, Century Club, Raj Bhavan Road, Chalukya Circle,

Hebbal, Anand Nagar (Ballari Road), Sampige Road, Chord Road, NR Road and Dr Rajkumar Samadhi (Nandini Layout), these subways have now been renovated and are well lit, and manned by home guards.

A spot visit to some of them, however, showed that they are still viewed as unsafe by pedestrians.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) road infrastructure division has installed a panic button and fixed CCTV cameras linked to the police commissioner's office. The home guards are manning the subways in two shifts. The BBMP has appointed an agency for the subways' regular upkeep.

The credit for the restoration of the subways must go to former Chief Secretary P Ravi Kumar, who instructed the BBMP to spruce up the subways during a high-powered



A renovated subway at Nrupathunga Road.

meeting held in February last year.

"The subways are cleaned twice a day," a home guard staffing the pedestrian facility in KR Circle said. "When there is an unusual activity,

we immediately alert our higher-ups," she added.

Not hoping that the subways could ever become better, pedestrians continue to cross the busy roads with considerable risk to their lives. "It is not clean," said a pedestrian, when asked why he was not using the subways, adding that using the subways is also time consuming.

Divya, another pedestrian, felt the subways are not safe to use after sunset.

Ironically, they seek a home guard's help to cross the road, despite assurances that they could walk through the subways safely. "Though it is harder for children and women wearing a sari to jump over the divider, they prefer crossing the road," a home guard lamented. "They care more about saving time without worrying about saving their lives."



Yoga at Idgah Maidan: BBMP declines request

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has declined permission to observe International Yoga Day at the Chamarajpet Idgah Maidan on Tuesday after the Karnataka State Board of Auqaf submitted documents to the civic body, claiming ownership of the 2.10-acre property. The BBMP is yet to decide on requests by two organisations to hoist the National Flag on August 14 and 15.

Srinivasa, BBMP Joint Commissioner, West division, said the documents submitted by the Waqf Board will be sent to the legal section for scrutiny.

“We will decide on giving permissions once the dispute related to property ownership is settled,” he said.

At least three pro-Hindu organisations, including Sri Ram Sene and Vishwa Sanatan Parishad, had sought permission from the BBMP to hold programmes at the Idgah Maidan a day after the civic body said the property belonged to it.

The Central Muslim Association of Karnataka and the Waqf Board have been quick to rebut the statement, citing the 1964 Supreme Court judgment that was not in favour of the corporation.

Meanwhile, some organisations have threatened to approach the court if the BBMP does not give permission to hold programmes.

S Bhaskaran, president of Vishwa Sanatan Parishad, said he is preparing to file a writ petition in the High Court soon if the BBMP does not give approval.

PM sets 40-month deadline to ease Bengaluru traffic

Bengaluru: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday set a 40-month deadline for the BJP's 'double engine' governments (state and Centre) to decongest Bengaluru's traffic by taking up key infrastructure projects, reports **BV Shivashankar**.

After inaugurating and laying foundation stones for various projects worth Rs 27,000 crore here, PM Modi said both Centre and state government are working on every possible means to improve connectivity by undertaking Metro, rail, underpass, flyover and road projects to make Bengaluru free of traffic jams. He said these projects would help in realising ease of living and ease of doing business.



PM Narendra Modi was presented a traditional Mysuru peta; (right) Modi at Sri Chamundeshwari temple on Monday evening

► **Cong ignored city's devpt, says PM, P 2**


Cong ignored city's devt, says PM

► Continued from page 1

Modi accused the Congress of ignoring the city's development during its 40-year rule in the country, while claiming that the BJP's double-engine government has come up with new ideas and approaches to urban governance in the past few years.

He stated that discussions about providing suburban rail links to parts of Bengaluru have been going on since the 1980s, but no efforts have been made to implement it. "About 40 years have passed by only in discussions, and you will be surprised to know that this project was stuck in files for 16 years. But I will promise the people of Bengaluru that I will work hard to complete these projects in 40 months and fulfil their dreams," said Modi.

PROJECTS LAUNCHED TO DECONGEST CITY

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>₹15,767 cr Bengaluru suburban rail project</p> | <p>Inauguration of Sir M Visvesvaraya railway terminal at cost of ₹314 cr</p> | <p>• Five national highway projects, including a satellite ring road that links Tumakuru to Old Madras Road and a bypass at Tumakuru for heavy industrial traffic</p> |
| <p>Multi-modal logistic park at an estimated cost of ₹7,231 cr</p> | <p>100% electrification of the Konkan railway line</p> |  |

He said he had got the opportunity to complete the project, which was hanging fire, adding had the project been implemented 40 years ago, then Bengaluru city would have been better and stronger.

Modi said Bengaluru is the city of dreams for lakhs of young people in the country. "It is a reflection of the spirit of 'Ek Bharat, Shresht Bharat'. The development of Bengaluru

is the nurturing of lakhs of dreams. That's why in the past eight years, the Centre has been relentlessly working to augment the capabilities of Bengaluru," he added.

Speaking about the startup ecosystem of Bengaluru, the PM said the city was a success story of the 21st century that inspired Atmanirbhar Bharat. "This city has shown the ability of youth, entrepreneurship,

innovation, and private-sector involvement. It teaches people to change their mindset about the private sector and its contribution to economic development," he said, adding in the past eight years, more than 100 billion-dollar companies have been created, and new ones are being added every month.

Earlier, CM Basavaraj Bommai said the projects launched by Modi will see Karnataka's GSDP (gross state domestic product) going up by 2%. "Today is the day that deserves to be written in golden letters in the development history of the state. The suburban rail project was in limbo for long and the PM has turned it into reality. It would provide connectivity for people from the heart of the city to various areas on the outskirts," Bommai said.

3 friends team up to beautify wall with murals

Sanika Athavale
@timesgroup.com

Bengaluru: Three IT employees and their friends teamed up recently to reclaim and beautify the wall bordering CV Raman Hospital. They painted the greyscale panels lining the hospital with murals of local and national legends, who have contributed to the country's growth.

The project was conceptualised in mid-April when Dushyant Dubey, Sameer Kulkarni, and Satyajit Indramohan were travelling along CV Raman Road and discussing the grim condition of the road frequented by thousands daily.

As residents of the area, they wished to do something to make the space more vi-



NEW HUES: The group has covered 400ft of wall with 36 personalities

brant. They approached local MLA S Raghu and discussed their idea of painting a small part of the wall. He not only gave them permission to do so, but also requested that they cover more area than

originally planned.

The trio brought together a team of 19 people, including eight painters and eight illustrators, and set about the task in May. The core group aside, the others were hired

and the finances to procure materials and artists were provided by the MLA.

Dubey, creative director of the project, told TOI his friends conceptualised it and he looked after the illustration part. "The artwork is entirely original. It isn't an inspired replica of anything you will find on Google. Our illustrators came from Colombia, Italy, India and many other parts of the world. We call the redone wall the 'Freedom Wall'. The idea was to commemorate freedom fighters, famous rulers, scientists, environmentalists, etc. We have covered 400ft of the wall and painted 36 Indian personalities on it."

A unique feature of the murals is each one of them has a portrait and a recreated scene of a popular story asso-

ciated with the person. Each segment has a QR code that can be scanned to retrieve more information on the personality, as the trio has linked encyclopaedic websites to each part of the wall.

"Going ahead, we would also like to record a narration about the scene with audio of the characters. This will allow people to scan the code and listen to the story on their phone," Dubey explained.

Since their phone numbers have been painted in a corner of the redone wall, the team has been getting a lot of calls from people either appreciating their work or offering them other projects. The team is currently considering an offer from the Gujarat government to create a freedom wall in Ahmedabad.

Nod for high-density corridor project; BBMP to execute it

Bengaluru: On the backburner for a few months, the big-ticket infrastructure project that seeks to upgrade 12 Bengaluru roads into high-density corridors has finally won the approval of the Karnataka government, reports **Niranjan Kaggere**.

The project will now be executed by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, and not Karnataka Road Development Corporation, a subsidiary of the public works department that was aggressively pursuing the project initially. Sources confirmed to **TOI** that BBMP's road infrastructure wing will implement the project in consultation with the department of urban land transport. An official order is expected soon.

► **Estimates, drawings shared: KRDCL, P 4**

Estimates, drawings of high-density corridor project shared with Palike: KRDCL officer

► **Continued from page 1**

Earlier, KRDCL had proposed to develop 191km of major road corridors at an eye-popping Rs 1,116 crore. However, the proposal ran into rough weather as 90km of these roads was recently devel-

oped and 50km white-topped. Later, KRDCL pruned the project cost to Rs 594 crore and a second tender was put on hold.

After verification and field inspection, KRDCL officials said they were getting only a few kilometers in patches to develop and it

would be economically impractical to take it up.

"The project had two parts: Initial improvement and regular maintenance of roads. Of the 191km, a major portion had been developed by BBMP as these areas were within the city limits. Hence, we reduced

the project cost. Besides, BBMP was maintaining roads every day. BMRCL had written to BBMP about their work on a few stretches as part of their phase 3A project along Outer Ring Road. If you ignore these developed parts, we were left with only a few stretches that

are not even continuous and working on them was not feasible for us. Therefore, we communicated to the urban development department that BBMP can be entrusted with the work," explained R Prasad, chief engineer, KRDCL.

The state government

agreed with this view and asked KRDCL to hand over the project details to BBMP. "We've shared the details, including estimates and drawings," Prasad clarified. BS Prahlad, chief engineer (road infrastructure), BBMP, said the project is with BBMP now.

Modi lauds students' dream of making India a strong economy

Inaugurates 150 Industrial Training Institutes Upgraded As Tech Hubs

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pics: TOI, ANI

Bengaluru: Dedicating the newly built campus of Dr BR Ambedkar School of Economics University to the nation on Monday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was impressed by its students who told him they want to make India a strong economy.

He interacted with students for about 10 minutes. "The Prime Minister asked students what they're studying and asked about their career dreams. When they said they want to work for the country and make India a strong economy, he thanked them and wished them the best," a senior official of the higher education department at the event told TOI.

Modi unveiled the bronze statue of Dr BR Ambedkar on the campus. Later, higher education minister CN Ashwath Narayan and BASE University vice-chancellor Prof NR Bhanumurthy and others presented him a replica of the statue. When students wanted to take a photograph with him at the administrative building, he reportedly suggested they do it in front of the faculty block.

Later, he inaugurated 150 Industrial Training Institutes that were upgraded as technology hubs training youngsters in modern technology, including electric vehicles, industrial robotics and the Internet of Things.

Earlier, he was received by governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot, chief minister Basavaraj Bommai, former CM BS Yediyurappa and others at the IAF Yelahanka airbase. Kick-starting his two-day tour of Karnataka, he laid the foundation stone for the 800-bed



Modi interacted with students of Dr BR Ambedkar School of Economics University for about 10 minutes. He asked them what they're studying and about their career dreams, said an official from the higher education department. The PM unveiled the bronze statue of Ambedkar on the campus

PM LAYS FOUNDATION STONE FOR SUBURBAN RAIL

Modi laid the foundation stone for the 148-km Bengaluru suburban rail project worth Rs 15,767 crore and redevelopment of Bengaluru Cantonment and Yeshwantpur railway stations at a cost of around Rs 500 crore and Rs 375 crore, respectively.

He dedicated to the nation the country's first AC railway station, Sir M Visvesvaraya terminal at Byappanahalli, and



100% electrification of the Konkan railway line (740km) from Roha (Maharashtra) to Thokur (Karnataka) by flagging off electric trains from Udupi,

Madgaon and Ratnagiri. The electrification has been done at a cost of over Rs 1,280 crore. He also dedicated to the nation two railway line-doubling projects — Arsikere to Tumakuru (96km) and Yelahanka to Penukonda (120km) by flagging off passenger trains and Memu service. They have been developed at over Rs 750 crore and Rs 1,100 crore, respectively.

Bagchi-Parthasarathy Multi-speciality Hospital at the Indian Institute of Science campus. It will offer an integrated MD-PhD programme for students who will pursue careers in clinical research and will

be trained in the hospital and science and engineering laboratories.

Modi also inaugurated the Centre for Brain Research, an autonomous, non-profit research organisation at IISc

which is a gift from Infosys co-founder Kris Gopalakrishnan and his wife Sudha.

The initiative will facilitate research on the ageing brain and age-associated brain disorders.

INFRA THRUST:

The PM laid the foundation stone for the 800-bed Bagchi-Parthasarathy Multispeciality Hospital at IISc campus. He inaugurated the Centre for Brain Research, which is a gift from Infosys co-founder Kris Gopalakrishnan (also seen in picture)

Reforms may feel unfair now, but will benefit India in long run: PM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said many decisions and reforms may seem unfair and unpleasant initially, but over time, the country will benefit from them.

"The path of reforms will eventually take us to new milestones," he said while addressing a rally in Bengaluru, referring to reforms in the IT sector, especially startups.

He said of late, there has been a lot of discussion about India's startup ecosystem, of which Bengaluru is a major hub.

"The path for startups and innovation isn't easy, and to ensure the country moved in this direction wasn't smooth in the past eight years. Several decisions and reforms could appear unpleasant in the short run, but their benefits will be experienced with time. The path of reforms leads us to newer goals. From space to defence, we've opened up all sectors that for decades saw only the government operate," he added.

The Prime Minister had made similar remarks a day earlier as well, when he hit out at the opposition after inaugurating parts of the Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor in Delhi.

"It is the country's misfortune that many good things brought with good intentions get trapped in politics," he said, without mentioning the Agnipath scheme. **TNN**

After many delays, underpass opened

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Bengaluru: In a relief to those going to Whitefield, Mahadevapura and other parts of east Bengaluru, the much-delayed Kundalahalli underpass was informally thrown open to the public on Monday.

After missing seven deadlines since 2019, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) came under inten-

@ KUNDALAHALLI

se criticism for the slow pace of work on the underpass, including land acquisition for the project. Senior BBMP officials told **TOI** that barring a few minor works, the underpass is now ready for official inauguration.

M Lokesh, chief engineer (projects), BBMP, said: "We have sought dates for inauguration from the CM's office and once they are confirmed, we will inaugurate the underpass. Currently, traffic is allowed on a trial basis."

Another engineer said all the work, including asphaltting of road, has been done fully. "Works such as marking lanes, medians and painting of curb area are pending. We'll complete them in a day or two."

Raman Iyer, a frequent



RELIEF FOR COMMUTERS

user of the road, said the underpass will benefit a lot of people. "Because of congestion, almost all motorists commuting to Whitefield or other parts were wasting 2-3 hours in traffic. This used to result in the choking of arterial roads and kilometers-long traffic snarls on a daily basis. But all of that can now be resolved with the successful commissioning of the underpass."

Girish K, an engineer who works with a leading aeronautical firm, said: "More than the use of the structure, we must all thank BBMP for finally completing the work. The slow pace of it, resulting in dusty conditions, had affected several motorists. During rainy days, it was even more problematic. But now this will all be a thing of the past."

Officials said on Saturday traffic was allowed on one side, and on Monday on both sides on a trial basis.

Full report: toi.in

Sputnik Light vax booster safe, say trial investigators

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Pune: Trial investigators, undertaking Phase 3 trials on immunogenicity and safety of a precaution dose of Sputnik Light vaccine in those who have received two doses of either Covishield or Covaxin, told TOI on Monday that a majority of volunteers experienced no side effects after taking the booster.

The study participants were adult beneficiaries (including those at high risk or with comorbid conditions) who were fully vaccinated against Covid with either Covaxin or Covishield and had received the last dose of primary vaccination six-seven months prior to screening for the trial.

A trial investigator from a Pune-based hospital told TOI, "We recruited an equal number of Covaxin and Covishield volunteers. No major side effects were reported by the volunteers. There were only some minor effects such as pain in the injection site. We did not see other minor side effects such as fever and swelling on the injection site in most volunteers who received the booster."

Dr Anil Kumar Pandey, trial investigator from Fari-



Sputnik Light booster vaccine generated good cell-mediated immunity, said experts

dabad's ESIC Medical College and Hospital, told TOI, "We had recruited 75 volunteers at our site. We did not come across any major or minor side effects, though fever, pain at the local site and inflammation are quite common in any vaccine trial. During the telephonic follow-ups with the participants, none reported any adverse effects of the heterologous booster regime."

He said the Sputnik Light booster generated good cell-mediated immunity, comparable to some other vaccines approved in India. ESIC Medical College and Hospital site has so far been part of seven

al vaccine trials, including one on the heterologous Corbevax booster and another on the intranasal vaccine by Bharat Biotech.

"We have a fairly good idea about the immune response generated by different vaccines, as well as some heterologous boosters. Based on preliminary results from our site, we can say that the Sputnik Light booster generated a robust immune response, which was at par with other vaccines approved by the government of India. This is, however, based on observations from our site and a clearer picture will emerge when data is collated from all sites," he said.

The trial investigator at another site in Kolkata said, "Minor side effects included pain at injection site and mild fever lasting a day. No patient needed admission after dosing. We followed up with the participants for up to six weeks after the booster was administered. None of them reported any long term adverse effects also." As per Clinical Trials Registry, India (CTRI), nearly 590 volunteers had enrolled for the trial conducted at eight sites in India. Four of these sites are in Maharashtra.

Cold-like illness due to BA.2.38 hints at Covid-19 endemicity

Expert: Herd Immunity Due To Vax Drive

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Pune: Omicron sub-variant BA.2's offspring, BA.2.38, may be causing a spike in Maharashtra and other parts of India, but the illness it is causing is self-limiting and almost comparable with common cold-like illness, indicating SARS-CoV-2's journey towards endemicity, reveals a first-of-its-kind clinical study of 116 patients found infected with BA.2.38 in India.

Doctors attached to Pune-based B J Medical College and Sassoon General Hospital, a state-run tertiary care referral unit, carried out the study and assessed the illness patterns of BA.2.38-infected patients this month.



Omicron sub-variant is causing only mild illness, said health experts

“The fact that the share of infection caused by BA.2.38 is rising is known. But what it actually means in terms of its disease-causing potential has been assessed for the first time in India. The study found it is only causing mild disease,” said a senior scientist from Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG), the forum set up under the health and family welfare ministry to study and monitor genome sequencing and virus variation of circulating strains of Covid in the country.

Dr Rajesh Karyakarte, lead investigator of the study, said, “Those infected with it (BA.2.38) predominantly had fever, cough, body ache, sore throat and headache — mainly upper respiratory tract symptoms mimicking common cold-like illness. A few also had diarrhoea.”

A total of 73% infected patients of BA.2.38 had fever, followed by cough (23%), body ache (17%), sore throat (15%), headache (13%) and cold (11%).

A few patients of BA.2.38 also experienced gastro-intes-

tinal symptoms like diarrhoea (10%), which was also seen among 25% of the Omicron-infected patients during the third wave of the pandemic, along with vomiting (2%) and stomach ache (1%), Dr Karyakarte said.

Infectious disease specialist Dr Bharat Purandare, who has been tracking the SARS-CoV-2's illness profile from the beginning of the pandemic, said, “This study underscores the same findings as observed in earlier studies of Omicron-linked disease patterns. BA.2.38 is causing mild illness. Fever and upper respiratory symptoms are predominant. The self-limited nature of illness in most cases is indicative of the endemicity of SARS-CoV-2.”

He said, “Over the past few months, due to repeated surges of the Covid-19 pandemic and the vaccination drive, there is a reasonable herd immunity. I believe that Covid-19 is likely to become an endemic illness.”

Covid cases surge in the US, but deaths stay near lows

For two years, the coronavirus killed Americans on a brutal, predictable schedule: A few weeks after infections climbed so did deaths, cutting an unforgiving path across the country.

But that pattern appears to have changed. Nearly three months since an ultra-contagious set of new omicron variants launched a springtime resurgence of cases, people are nonetheless dying from Covid at a rate close to the lowest of the pandemic.

The spread of the virus and the number of deaths in



Because so many Americans have now been vaccinated or infected or both, public health researchers said, the number of people whose immune systems are entirely unprepared for the virus has significantly dwindled

its wake, two measures that were once yoked together, have diverged more than ever before, public health researchers

said. Deaths have ticked up slowly in the northeastern US, where the latest wave began, and are likely to do the same nationally as the surge pushes across the South and West. But the country remains better fortified against Covid deaths than earlier in the pandemic, scientists said.

Because so many Americans have now been vaccinated or infected or both, they said, the number of people whose immune systems are entirely unprepared for the virus has significantly dwindled.

Older people make up a

larger share of Covid deaths than they did last year.

The virus continues to kill unvaccinated people at much higher rates than vaccinated people.

Covid is still killing an average of 314 people daily, one-tenth the number who were dying every day in January 2021. At that rate, the virus is killing more than twice as many Americans every day as are suicides or car crashes. And many of those who survive the virus are debilitated, some even long after the infections. NYT

Iconic hanging bridge, a milestone in city's infra, posing danger to vehicles passing by and vendors on footpath underneath

KR PURAM HANGOVER

Concrete railings damaged 3 years ago not repaired yet

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Once this hanging bridge was considered as a milestone of infrastructure in Bengaluru. Now it has become an unsafe stretch for unwary motorists in the city.

Uneven surface of the flyover is giving motorists, especially two-wheeler riders, a back-breaking ride. The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) is not doing anything to keep it in a good condition except deputing a few pourakarnikas once in a while to clear the dust accumulated on the flyover.

For instance, a portion of concrete railings on the flyover was damaged three years ago. The authorities concerned have not done anything to repair the damaged railings till date. KR Puram traffic police barricaded the damaged concrete railings with two metal barricades.

"It is very dangerous for vendors on the footpath under the flyover if any speeding vehicle falls from the flyover. It will be prudent to repair the damaged concrete railings without any delay.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 >>



“I do not know whether maintenance of the hanging bridge comes under BBMP. I will try my best to fix this problem.”

— Satish, assistant engineer, BBMP (road infrastructure)

A bridge over crumbling infra

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

There is a real possibility of the concrete railings falling onto the footpath," said social activist Balaji Raghatham.

The metal barricades put up by traffic police are blocking the footpath on the flyover. Though not many pedestrians use the footpath on the flyover, one has to get down from the footpath and walk on the flyover thus risking their life from speeding vehicles coming from the city towards KR Puram.

"Two concrete slabs have been lying on the footpath of the service road along the flyover for the last three years. The impact was such that concrete slabs on the drain along the footpath broke when the concrete railings fell on them. Neither the BBMP nor the traffic police took measures to remove the concrete railings all these years," said



Metal barricades have been put up at the broken flyover

Purushotham N, a resident of Dooravani Nagar.

Motorists, especially two-wheeler riders, have complained about potholes on the flyover too, especially on the half portion of the flyover from KR Puram to Tin Factory. "The surface of the flyover is bumpy. It seems the flyover is not immune to potholes. It will be better if the authorities asphalt

this stretch before the potholes become craters," said Naveen S, a two-wheeler rider from KR Puram.

Meanwhile, BBMP assistant engineer (road infrastructure) Satish said the flyover was not handed over to the BBMP. "I do not know whether the maintenance of the hanging bridge (flyover) comes under the BBMP. I will try my best to fix this problem. As of now, the BBMP is keeping the flyover clean," said Satish.

When contacted, Jeevitha of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) said the BBMP is responsible for the maintenance of the hanging bridge.

KR Puram traffic police inspector has assured to visit the spot soon. "No one has informed me about the missing or damaged concrete railings on the flyover. I will visit the spot and try my best to fix this problem," said the traffic police inspector.



KAUSHIK J N

Skywalk, in style

After BM reported about the issues faced by pedestrians while crossing the road at Kadubeesanahalli Junction on June 16, BBMP took swift action and partially allowed pedestrians to use the skywalk.

The unfinished skywalk and non-functional pelican traffic signal was forcing pedestrians to use the road amid heavy traffic. BBMP Executive Engineer, Savitha Padmati told BM, "Happy to know that pedestrians are using the skywalk temporarily which is yet to be finished. We are planning to finish construction by the month-end



BM's report on June 16



complete with fully functional elevator and lights. It will be fully open for the public to use within 15 days." Tanvi Shah, working at an MNC, said, "I am glad BM brought the authorities attention towards the issue; this will help us commute easily between office and home." Another reader, Seema Sharma, living in Bellandur, added that it was good to see the skywalk is partially open for use before the official inauguration.

— Kaushik JN

Jam mix: VVIP movement & protests

With city's traffic returning to pre-covid level, the recent VVIP movements and protests are taking a toll. Many motorists were struck in traffic on Monday as the PM toured many places. The city police had blocked many roads and asked the motorists to take alternative roads. However, as many of the blocked roads were key arterial roads, the motorists had no other choice but to wait till the PM's convoy moved on.

"I stay close to Mehkri circle and wanted to travel to work towards the CBD. So, for the last two days, I have an eye on the PM's itinerary so that I can leave home early and not get stuck in the traffic," said Sindhu Rao, a



businesswoman. Kavita R, who works in a private firm said, the city's traffic has gone from bad to worse in the last one week. "We had the President visiting the City and there were restrictions. The roads are blocked not just for the VVIPs but also when the CM and

Governor who go to receive or send off the VVIPs. Besides this, there were a number of protests in the City which resulted in heavy traffic jams." Kushal R, a college student, had a suggestion: VVIPs use choppers and not the road.

A few also want to invite VVIPs to their area to fix the infrastructure. "In the last few weeks we have seen, many roads in the city are getting a facelift where the VVIP movement was there. In a way, it is good for as at least for the sake of VVIPs the BBMP wakes up and asphalts the road stretches. So, periodically, VVIPs should choose the areas where the road infrastructure is bad so the roads can be fixed," said Seshadri S, a businessman. —Sridhar Vivan

Traffic-free B'loru

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said that the Union and State Governments were working on every possible means to improve connectivity and to make Bengaluru free from traffic jams. At a gathering, he said, "To make Bengaluru free from traffic jams, the double-engine government is working on every possible means including rail, road, metro and construction of the underpass, flyover. I have got the opportunity to complete the works which should have been done 40 years ago."

Attention! PM in town

Movement curtailed around Kommaghatta BDA ground, epicentre of activity

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Though the instant infrastructure to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bengaluru's Kommaghatta BDA ground impressed the residents and commuters, a majority of them were peeved on Monday when the PM visited, as massive security arrangements stalled their movement through the day.

The entire 5-km stretch from the Kengeri Satellite Town till the Kommaghatta BDA ground was barricaded on both the sides. "Even the cut-roads and the by-lanes were blocked by iron barricades and cordoning tapes and the police were not allowing anyone to access the road route that the PM's convoy would take," said a resident. Residents felt like they had been marooned, unable to even head to the ground where the PM would address a rally.

Many residents called up their offices to take a day's off as they could not move out. "There are hundreds of employees working for a car company and several buses from the company come to pick them up. They were all seen stranded near their houses as the police did not allow any vehicles to enter the PM's convoy route," said Nagaraju, a resident of Bandemutt.

The PM's convoy route towards the Kommaghatta BDA grounds had policemen and women deployed at every metre. The policemen were issued special ID cards which were displayed on them.

PM Modi's helicopter touched down at the Kommaghatta helipad around 1.30 pm after he had a brief event at the IISc. The police started restricting traffic movement and pedestrians on the road leading to Kommaghatta BDA ground as early as from 10 am. Residents of Bandemutt, near Kengeri Club and Kengeri Satellite town had to take a detour of around 6 km through the



Public seen waiting for police clearance to leave venue after Prime Minister Narendra Modi left the venue; CM greets PM with a Mysore petha (inset)



KHB Lay-out to access railway station, bus station or Metro. Shops and commercial establishments throughout the convoy route remained closed. "We were instructed by the police to shut our shops in the morning and remain closed until the PM's visit concludes," Shankar Rao, a shop owner, said. More than 100 footpath vendors were cleared from both sides of the route.

After landing at the makeshift helipad around 1.30 pm, the PM's convoy, via road, went to Jnanabharathi's Bangalore University for unveiling a statue of Dr BR Ambedkar after which he returned to the Kommaghatta Grounds to dedicate many projects and to address a huge public event. Thousands of BJP party workers and residents from nearby areas were seen walking in groups heading towards the ground.

Projects galore

Suburban rail project: The project envisages four corridors with a total route length of over 148 km. The PM also laid the foundation stone of the redevelopment of Bengaluru Cantonment and Yeshwantpur Junction railway stations

- **Ring Road:** The PM also laid the foundation stone of two sections of the Bengaluru Ring Road project and of various other road projects—six laning of Nelamangala-Tumkur section of NH-48; widening of Punjalkatte-Charjadi section of NH-73;

rehabilitation and upgradation of a section of NH-69

- **Multi Modal Logistics Park:** Is being developed at Muddaliganahalli
- **Centre for Brain Research:** PM inaugurated the centre and laid foundation stone for a multispecialty hospital here
- **BR Ambedkar School of Economics campus:** PM also unveiled a statue of the architect of Indian Constitution Dr BR Ambedkar at the campus. At the event, he also unveiled 150 'Technology Hubs'

As the PM's convoy had to head to Jnanabharathi and back to Kommaghatta, traffic movement was held up near Kengeri Satellite Town and Mysore Road for almost one hour where police did not allow

even pedestrians to take the road. "Due to security concerns, we have to stop the vehicle and pedestrian movement, and hence we had to enforce the order," said a senior traffic police officer.

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Problems in your area?

Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

**No way home
Kammanahalli Road**



Street vendors have been occupying space and blocking a foot-path making it difficult to walk

**Once upon a shelter
Whitefield**



Bus shelter is used by road side food cart vendor leaving less space for commuters near Manipal Hospital, opposite Shantiniketan Mall.

**Garbage trouble
Sultanpalya**



Despite complaints, no action has been taken by the BBMP for clearing accumulated garbage at 8th cross, Hanumanthappa Layout.

The nightmare has passed

And finally, Kundalahalli Junction underpass is ready; long-awaited four-lane underpass that will make 10-km stretch signal-free to be open to public soon

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After two years of missed deadlines, the Kundalahalli Junction underpass work is finally on the verge of completion and will be inaugurated by the end of the week.

This long-awaited four lane and two way underpass stretch of 281.47 mts will be open to commuters soon.

Kundalahalli junction is an IT corridor and the route connects to arterial highways. It is the major junction that connects many IT companies, hospitals and schools. Residents always had trouble crossing this junction due to long traffic jams waiting for the diversion. Kundalahalli junction was the only signal on a 10-km stretch from Yemalur to Varthur -- with this underpass the stretch becomes signal-free.

This underpass is likely to help commuters to reach places quickly without any traffic congestion or a signal.

Fateh Ahmed, BBMP executive engineer, told Bangalore Mirror, "The Kundalahalli Junction always had a lot of traffic issues so this underpass will solve many of the traffic problems in and around Whitefield. Almost 90% of the work is completed and the underpass will be officially inaugurated by the end of this week, the day it is open for commuters."

This underpass comes as a relief to the residents and commuters of the area. Uday Menon, a resident of Kundalahalli, said, "For commuters, this creates a signal free stretch from Yemalur to Varthur. Traffic should be smooth after the completion of underpass work, as this is the main junction to go to Graphite junction, ITPL, EPIP area and Vydehi hospital. This underpass is definitely benefit-



On Monday, we spotted workers putting finishing touches to the 281.47-m-long Kundalahalli Junction flyover

“Kundalahalli junction always had a lot of traffic issues so this underpass will solve many of the traffic problems in and around Whitefield. 90% of the work is over”

—Fateh Ahmed, BBMP EE

ing commuters and hoping all the traffic issues will be solved.”

Rekha M, another resident of Kundalahalli said for now it is a trial run so not many people know about it. “People should know the traffic

rules and the routes on this junction which BBMP and Traffic Police are trying to work out. Once the underpass is open to the public, there will surely be a smooth traffic movement.”

THE HORRORS THAT RAINS DRAGGED IN

Sewage, trash and even carcasses of strays – terrifying remains of rain

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A little over a month ago, the residents of Rajarajeshwari Layout were at the receiving end after a pre-monsoon shower inundated their streets and houses. Many homes were flooded, and water sumps were contaminated by sewage from stormwater drains in the area. For the residents, this weekend's downpour turned out to be yet another nightmare.

After the city received heavy showers over the last two days, yet again, many houses in the layout were flooded. Residents say the water is not only gushing into the streets and destroying their vehicles and valuable household items but also entering their water sumps. This time around, it also carried washed-up bodies of street dogs.

Ruben Harry, a resident of the third cross of Rajarajeshwari Layout said that the house owners are left with no option but to pump out water for the entire night.

"It rained heavily on Friday night between 11.30 pm and 2.30 am. All the residents on our street were awake, trying to pump water out of their houses. In case that was not possible, we were using sticks to keep garbage and other waste out of the water that had already entered our campuses," said Harry.

After BM reported the plight of the residents a month ago, a few officials had reached out to the layout, however, locals say it turned out to be a token visit.

"Some engineers and officials did visit the layout to come up with a solution, but no action was taken. The water is not just flooding our streets and houses, but entering our



“ The rajakaluve had been diverted many years ago to avoid demolition of the illegal houses on the stormwater drains in the area



Rajarajeshwari Layout is a fine mess, thanks to recent rain. This time around, residents are planning to approach authorities for some action

water sumps, contaminating the water we use for cooking and sometimes drinking purposes too. This weekend, we noticed a dead street dog being washed up into our street," said Omesh Kiran, another resident of the layout.

According to the inhabitants, the flooding issue is due to a stormwater drain that was diverted into the layout years ago. "The rajakaluve had been diverted many years ago to avoid demolition of the illegal houses on the stormwater drains in the area.

While recently, the Palike has been talking about cleaning the

SWDs by razing these houses on the drains, nothing has happened in our area," rued another resident.

A handful of residents have now decided to reach out to the top brass of agencies such as BBMP and BWSSB along with their local elected representative.

"We are meeting our area MLA this week to discuss the issue. We will also reach out to BBMP and BWSSB top officials. They should come up with some solution to our problem. The flow of water should be reduced by creating an outlet from the stormwater drain," said Harry.

Rejuvenation work was just a breach of trust

Superficial lake job

BBMP restored Hoodi Lake without desilting it, so its water storage capacity has shrunk, say residents



A concrete waste weir was constructed at Hoodi Lake to arrest the overflowing water, but it is ineffective

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The Hoodi Lake was rejuvenated at an estimated cost of Rs 2.50 crore around two years ago. One important thing the authorities completely forgot to do -- desilt the lake. As a result of this, the water storage capacity of the lake has drastically reduced.

Residents who visit the lake for morning and evening walks, complained about the wastage of water from the lake. "Whenever it rains, water overflows from the lake as it has no storage capacity due to the silt. I think water storage capacity of the lake is reduced to some extent due to the silt in the lake," said V Ramprasad, co-founder of Friends of Lakes.

The residents informed that the BBMP Lakes Department had provided a concrete pipe to facilitate water flow from the lake when it is filled to the brim. Later a concrete waste weir was constructed at the

“Whenever it rains, water overflows from the lake as it has no storage capacity due to the silt. I think the lake’s water storage capacity is reduced

—V Ramprasad, Friends of Lakes

same place. But soil on both sides of the waste weir is eroded whenever water overflows from the lake.

"A few walkers fell down while crossing the waste weir and climbing the pathway. I suggested BBMP authorities to raise the height of the waste weir by one or two feet to increase water storage in the lake. I also want the BBMP authorities to construct a foot over bridge on the waste weir for the benefit of walkers, especially senior citizens," said Vishwanath HM, a resident.

Mahesh Ainapure, a resident, appreciated BBMP for fencing the lake

and diverting sewage. "I have also suggested the BBMP authorities construct a foot over bridge on the waste weir. I hope the BBMP authorities will fix this problem as early as possible," said Mahesh Ainapure.

Blaming the BBMP authorities for lacking foresight while rejuvenating Hoodi Lake, Balaji Raghotham, a lake activist, said, "Initially, concrete pipes were placed to facilitate flow of excess water into the nearby storm water drain. The waste weir with concrete pipes was damaged due to heavy rain. Later, they constructed the waste weir without concrete pipes. Now, soil erosion is taking place on both sides of the waste weir. The lake bund may get breached if it rains heavily. I want the BBMP to construct a foot over bridge without any delay."

Meanwhile, BBMP (Lakes) assistant executive engineer Bhuprada has said that she has sent a proposal to construct the foot over bridge to higher authorities. "As of now, we have no funds to take up the construction of the foot over bridge. We are waiting for funds," she said.

Muddy waters, all over again

Dirty, untreated water from stormwater drain enters Rampura Lake; residents say it is filled with waste that is killing fish

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Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike officials trying to rejuvenate Rampura Lake in east Bengaluru have to start work from scratch again. As heavy rain lashed the city, the lake in Mahadevpura which was being rejuvenated has become contaminated once more due to the dirty water from the upstream rajakaluve (stormwater drain).

The rejuvenation work of the lake started in 2019. As per BBMP's plan, the lake was supposed to be desilted, bund restored, with embankment slopes, walking tracks and sewage diverted from the waterbody. However, the work has not been completed. The lake's boundary was made with mud, and due to the heavy downpour, a part of it was washed away. Mithun Muralidhar, a project manager working in Bengaluru, said, "A few metres away from the lake, there is a rajakaluve which carries water from the upstream Kalkere Lake. It (Kalkere Lake) was so flooded that the water had almost reached the top of the rajakaluve and as a result, it started to enter Rampura Lake. Now, the latter is extremely dirty."

The residents complain that the water from the rajakaluve is dirty. They also say that the water has not been treated properly because when it enters Rampura Lake, the water in the lake turns frothy. The water also contains plastic waste and chemical waste which hampers the lake water's quality and kills the fishes.

Mithun added that because of this, all the effort that was being put into rejuvenating the lake has gone into vain because the lake is again filthy. He said that even after informing the authorities about the condition of the lake, no one has visited the spot to take action. "If this is happening after only one day of rain, then what would happen when it rains heavily for a longer period?" asked Mithun.

The residents living near the area say that the migratory birds which had stopped coming were spotted



Rampura Lake is contaminated again after heavy rain

“If this is happening after only one day of rain, then what would happen when it rains heavily for a longer period?”

—Mithun Muralidhar, resident of area near the lake

again recently. But, they fear that because of the dirty water, these birds will stop visiting the area again. Roshni Nair, a resident of the area, said, "This lake is one of the best in the city; it is so beautiful. However, it is sad to see that the lake is deteriorating gradually, and nothing is being done to prevent it. These are just some half-hearted efforts being made by the authorities. The rejuvenation work has not yet been completed and already the vicinity of the lake is getting dirty. After a very long time, we spotted migratory birds; if this continues, then very soon, the lake will have nothing left."

However, BBMP officials said that no dirty water was entering the lake. A BBMP official working in the Lake Department, said, "We have diverted the direction of the water from the rajakaluve towards the lower stream."

BBMP rids city of illegal banners

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

@ Bengaluru

BBMP officials removed several illegal banners in and around the city on Sunday night. The officials used GPS cameras to identify illegal holdings. A team of 200 staff headed by joint commissioners of eight zones conducted a special drive and removed more than 5,000 banners.

Deepak RL, special commissioner BBMP (Revenue) said, "We had received many complaints of illegal banners on roads including a banner

on International Yoga Day. Some of the organisers had put up banners on main roads including Kanakadasa Circle opposite CM Basavaraj Bommai's residence. We used GPS cameras and instructed the deputy commissioners of all zones and removed them in four hours."

A week ago, Deepak had come heavily on mushrooming flex and banners across the city despite HC orders. He had warned that the Palike will take action against those

putting up banners in public places especially those welcoming the political leaders.

Raghavendra Gowda, the organiser of Akshar Yoga, hosting International Yoga Day said, "We had paid 3,500 to BBMP to put up banners in Hebbal constituency I was shocked when

I came to know that BBMP officials removed them. I saw thousands of banners welcoming PM Narendra Modi on Ballari Road. Why did BBMP not take action against them?" he asked.



A GATE TO BUMPY RIDE

With just 20 days into the monsoon, the condition of roads has gone from bad to worse. Here, a stretch near Kudlu Gate cries for attention | **SHRIRAM BN**



Yoga mats rolled out in front of Mysuru Palace ahead of the event | SUDAYSHANKAR

Yoga Day to be showcased at 75 heritage sites

Bengaluru: Karnataka will be the focus of International Yoga Day, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the show at Mysuru Palace on Tuesday. Yoga Day events have also been organised at 75 heritage sites across 30 districts. With 'Yoga for Humanity' as the theme, this year's event lays stress on inclusivity, people from various walks of life will join the showcase event at Mysuru Palace. Among the 12,000 enthusiasts will be 123 specially-abled people, 50 students from Ladakh and Northeast, and 14 transgenders, sources in the Ayush department said. In Bengaluru Urban, events are being held at Palace Grounds, Freedom Park, Lalbagh and Hesaraghatta, while in Bengaluru Rural, they will be hosted at Kote and Ghati Subramanya temples. In Davanagere, yoga will be performed at Pushkarani of Sri Harihareshwara Temple. The other major spots are Hampi Virupaksheshwara Temple, Lotus Mahal in Vijayanagar district, Kempegowda Fort and Ramadevarabetta in Ramanagara district, Chitradurga fort, Sulthan Bathari, Saavira Kambada Basadi in Dakshina Kannada district, Srikshehra Kaiwaara in Chikkaballapura district, Anantharaganga Betta in Kolar district. **SHILPA**

No Yoga Day event in Idgah Maidan: BBMP

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

HINDU outfits, who wanted to organise International Yoga Day event at the Chamarajpet Idgah Maidan, were crestfallen as the BBMP denied them permission.

Vanda Mataram Seva Samajam, Vishwa Sanathana Parishat, Srirama Sene and others had submitted a representation to the BBMP Joint Commissioner SM Srinivasa seeking permission to hold events on Yoga Day, Independence Day, Ganesha Utsav, but due to lack of clarity from the BBMP legal department, permission was denied.

"We met the West Zone Joint Commissioner SM Srinivasa two days ago. He told us that with the BBMP claiming the land as its property, the Wakf Board also has submitted documents claiming its their property. BBMP told they need two weeks' time to verify it, and permission was

denied," said Chandrashekar, Srirama Sene's Bengaluru president.

Last week, the Palike ordered a status quo following the controversy. Earlier, Hindu Janajagruthi Samithi had said it has sourced the proceeding copy of peace committee attended by MLA BZ Zameer Ahmed Khan, BJP leader Premila Nesargi, MLA RV Devaraj and ACP of the jurisdiction. It was agreed that the ground be allowed for others to be used, and said BBMP records from 1972 shows the 2.5 acres land as its property.

The Central Muslim Association, which claims to be the custodian of the Wakf land, said that in its internal meeting, they rejected the proposal.

BBMP West Zone Commissioner told TNIE, "BBMP has not given permission for International Yoga Day event as the documents regarding the issue needs to be examined."

| DURATION OF PANDEMIC | CASES REPORTED | DEATHS | DISCHARGES | Districts | | | | |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 2 YEARS, 104 DAYS | 530 | 0 1 | 637 412 | B'luu Urban: 494 | Chamarajanagar: 0 | Dharwad: 1 | Kolara: 0 | Shivamogga: 1 |
| | 623 | POSITIVITY RATE | MORTALITY RATE | B'luu Rural: 0 | Chikkaballapur: 0 | Gadag: 1 | Koppal: 0 | Tumakuru: 1 |
| TALLY | | 5.93% 5.93% | 1.01% 1.01% | Bagalkot: 1 | Chikkamagaluru: 0 | Hassan: 0 | Mandya: 0 | Udupi: 2 |
| TODAY | 39,61,361 | ACTIVE CASES | RECOVERY RATE | Ballari: 3 | Chitradurga: 0 | Haveri: 0 | Mysuru: 6 | Ukannada: 3 |
| YESTERDAY | 39,60,831 | 4,928 | 98.86% | Belagavi: 3 | D.Kannada: 5 | Kalaburagi: 5 | Raidur: 0 | Vijayapura: 1 |
| | | 5,035 | 98.86% | Bidar: 0 | Devanagere: 0 | Kodagu: 0 | Ramanagara: 3 | Yadgi: 0 |

RV College hostel turns into Covid cluster, sealed

With this, B'luu now home to 27 clusters

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE hostel of RV College of Architecture and Engineering, in Srinivasanagar, Rajarajeshwari Nagar, was sealed after a Covid cluster of 13 cases was reported here. With this, clusters in Bengaluru jumped to 27.

While four students are from RV College of Architecture, nine are from RV College of Engineering. All are in the age group of 18 to 22 years. Most of the students are asymptomatic, and are under home isolation, BBMP health officials said.

“There was an exhibition at the college last week, and students from other colleges also participated in it. After that, a few students reported Covid symptoms, including fever and cold. When symptomatic students and their primary con-

tacts were tested, 13 reports came positive. Their samples have been sent for genome sequencing and reports are awaited,” officials said.

Among 27 clusters in Bengaluru, 21 are in apartments in Mahadevapura zone, one apartment and one hostel in RR Nagar zone, two apartments in Yelahanka zone, and two schools in Dasanapura.

The day's positivity rate touched 3.8 per cent on Sunday, with 588 cases. BBMP is testing an average of 17,000 samples a day. Bengaluru has the third highest number of positive cases (4,833) after Mumbai and New Delhi, and the highest number of cases in the state.

Ten wards reporting a high number of cases are Bellandur, Doddanekundi, Kadugodi, Varthur, Hagadur, Hudi, Horamavu, HSR Layout, Vijnana Nagar and Garudacharpalya.



Modi visit will have an impact on BBMP, 2023 Assembly elections

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI
@Bengaluru

PM Narendra Modi on Monday gave a much-needed impetus for infrastructure development in Karnataka by launching projects worth over Rs 33,000 crore. Modi's visit, after a gap of almost one-and-half years, and ahead of a series of elections, is likely to have its own impact on state politics.

With BBMP elections expected in September-October, and the 2023 Assembly polls less than a year away, Modi's visit is likely to boost the morale of the ruling BJP. It also appears to have helped keep the party's rank and file united, which is paramount ahead



PM Modi flags off various infra projects in Bengaluru | VINODKUMAR.T

of elections. Bengaluru city has 28 assembly seats, and the development projects launched by Modi are likely to be part of the party's poll plank. Some party leaders, including Chikkaballapura LS member B N Bache Gowda, whose son Sharath has iden-

tified with the Congress, took part in a rally for Modi at Kommaghatta. Housing minister V Somanna, who has allegedly held a round of talks with some Congress leaders, also took an active part.

The rally near Kengeri, which comes under Cooperation Minister S T Somashekar's Yeshwanthpur assembly constituency, saw an overwhelming response from thousands of BJP workers and staunch supporters of Modi. Slogans hailing the Prime Minister bore shades of an election rally. Ahead of the 2018 assembly polls, Modi had launched the BJP's campaign at Kommaghatta which turned out to be lucky for the party.

OPTIMISM PREVAILS AS MODI AND BOMMAI TALK PROJECTS AND PROGRESS

Reforms may Seem Unpleasant, but Beneficial Over Time: PM

Modi says Bengaluru's success story inspired 21st century India to become aatmanirbhar

Our Bureau

Bengaluru: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that some reforms might seem unpleasant at the beginning, but the country would gain from those over time.

The comment came in the backdrop of the protests in parts of the country against the Agnipath scheme for the recruitment of youth into the armed forces. But in his speech in Bengaluru and later in Mysuru, Modi made no reference to the scheme or the criticism against it.

He instead spoke on how various development programmes over the past eight years have brought about a transformational change in the country.

"The 21st century India is an India of wealth creators, job creators and innovators. As the youngest nation of the world, this is India's wealth and strength," Modi said at a public event in the Karnataka capital, after kicking off work on rail and road projects worth ₹28,000 crore.

The PM referred to the phenomenal growth of the startup sector and said one could only count on fingers how many billion-dollar companies



Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for a host of projects in the city on Monday. He is flanked here by Karnataka governor Thaarwar Chand Gehlot (left) and CM Basavaraj Bommai – N Narasimha Murthy

were created in earlier decades.

In the past eight years, however, more than 100 billion-dollar companies had emerged, and new ones are getting added every month. It took 800 days after 2014 for the first 10,000 startups to take shape, but as many got added in just 200 days later: The unicorns that emerged in the past eight years are worth about Rs 12 lakh crore, Modi said.

A company, whether it is govern-

ment or private, is the asset of the country, Modi said, calling for a level playing field for every player.

He invited the youth to make use of the opportunities the government was providing to set up their ventures and test their ideas, and said Bengaluru had shown what Indian youth could do if the government provided facilities and minimised interference in the lives of citizens. "Bengaluru is the dream city of the

youth of the country and behind it is entrepreneurship, innovation, proper utility of public as well as private sector," he said.

Bengaluru's success story inspired 21st century India to become aatmanirbhar. "Bengaluru is a lesson for those who still disrespect the spirit of private enterprise of India," Modi said. The PM referred to the MSME sector and said with the change in the definition of SMEs, their growth had become easier now. As a mark of confidence in Aatmanirbhar Bharat, India has done away with foreign participation in contracts up to ₹200 crore. Government departments are buying up to a fourth of their requirement from MSMEs, and the government's e-marketplace portal has been a great enabler for the MSMEs, he said.

NARENDRA MODI
Prime Minister



Bengaluru is a lesson for those who still disrespect the spirit of private enterprise of India

'Genome Sequencing has Not Found any New Covid Variant'

INSACOG FINDING BA.2 sub-lineage of Omicron continues to be dominant in the country

Teena.Thacker
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New Delhi: The latest genome sequencing data of SARS-CoV-2 in the country has not shown emergence of any new variant and BA.2 sub lineage of Omicron continues to be dominant, people in the know told ET.

At the review meeting on Friday by the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (Insa-cog), experts found that BA.2 and its sub lineages are dominant in India having detected in 85% of the sequenced samples, the same people said. Other sublineages including BA.4 and BA.5 have been seen in less than 10% of samples and sublineage BA2.38 has been found in 30% of the samples in India.

"The good news is that no new variant has been seen to be circulating in the country, even as the number of Covid cases continues to rise," added the person.

The Insa-cog, which has been involved in genome sequencing of the coronavirus, held a meeting on Friday to review its strategy as some parts of the country see an uptick in the number of cases again. India has been seeing a rise in the number of cases. Monday logged 12,781 fresh Covid-19 cases that pushed its infection tally to 4,33,09,473, while the daily positivity rate went past 4% after 130 days, according to Union health ministry data.

The death count climbed to 5,24,873 with 18 new fatalities. The number of active cases increased to 76,700.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at 4.32% and the weekly positivity rate at 2.62%, the ministry said.

K Srinath Reddy, president, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) said that the numbers are going up because high mobility of people is coinciding with a phase of waning immunity among some of them alongside the emergence of more Omicron sub-variants. "Laxity in observing Covid appropriate behaviour gives the virus free access to susceptible human bodies," he said.

The INSACOG meeting, which included scientific advisory committee members, head of the



Numbers Speak

BA.2 and its sub-lineages found in **85%** of the sequenced samples

BA.4 and BA.5 seen in less than **10%** samples

Sub lineage BA2.38 found in **30%** of the samples

Covid cases going up because of high mobility, waning immunity levels and new Omicron sub variants, say experts

laboratories involved in genome sequencing, reviewed the genome sequencing data.

"Intense contact tracing to look for the spread of infection and occurrence of severe cases is going on. So far, we have not seen any unusual pattern, clustering in the places where cases have begun to rise," said a senior government official. The experts also took stock of the situation and discussed the roadmap ahead.

Sanjith Saseedharan, consultant & head, critical care, SL Raheja Hospital, Mahim-A Fortis Associate, said a slight uptick in the number of hospitalisation has been seen too.

"There is a rise in the number of patients seeking help over a phone call for consults with respect to Covid-19.

On an average I am receiving at least three to four calls for consultation, in a day. This is also coupled with a slight uptick on the number of patients getting admitted to the hospital. However, the majority of them have mild symptoms, also most of these patients are people who have comorbidities and who have missed out on their booster doses. As the trajectory of the cases cannot be predicted, it is imperative that we all continue masking and keep following Covid-19 appropriate behaviour which includes taking booster dose," he said.



CASES ON MONDAY 5,194[^]

ACTIVE CASES 78,703 (+1,414)^o

Recovered 42.71 m (+3,770)

Deaths 524,886 (+10)

TOTAL CASES 43,316,987

Source: State bulletins, PTI; [^]13 states/UTs (excl. Kerala, Karnataka, UP, Telangana, Rajasthan & Punjab) as of 8:10 PM; ^onet of recoveries/deaths (Change since 12am, 20 Jun)

| 4 Main Metros | CASES ON MON | ACTIVE CASES |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mumbai | 1310 | 14089 |
| Delhi | 1060 | 5375 |
| B'luru Urban* | 588 | 4833 |
| Chennai | 294 | 1883 |

Source: State bulletins; *Sun

VACCINE DOSES ADMINISTERED IN INDIA 1963.46 M (+1.23 m)

1st dose... **1014.87 m (93.61%)**

2nd dose **906.70 m (83.63%)**

(% 12yr+ population)

BOOSTER DOSES TOTAL 41.89 m

Source: dashboard.cowin.gov.in, 08:10 PM

GLOBAL COUNT

Total Cases 544.40 M

Deaths 6,341,031

Recovered 519.75 M

Vaccine Doses Administered 12025.82 Million
(204 countries/areas)

Source: worldometers.info, 08:10 PM

NEW INFECTIONS IN 5 WORST-HIT COUNTRIES*

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Taiwan | 50623 |
| Italy | 30526 |
| Australia | 22123 |
| North Korea | 19320 |
| US | 17928 |

*as of Sun