



# Society and Economy of Karnataka in News



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## AGRICULTURE

# Garlic prices skyrocket to ₹500 a kg in Bengaluru

According to some traders, since there was a delay in the sowing of crops and as garlic has not reached the harvesting phase yet, this has resulted in a supply crunch in the market

**Rohith D.S.**  
BENGALURU

A delay in the sowing-harvesting cycle has led to the price of garlic skyrocketing in markets in Bengaluru. At the Agricultural Produce and Livestock Marketing Committee (APMC) yard in Yeshwanthpur, garlic was selling at ₹350 per kg on Friday, while in retail markets, the price had touched ₹500 per kg.

Prior to the hike, the selling price per kg of garlic was around ₹100-₹250 in wholesale markets and ₹200-₹350 in retail markets. According to some traders, as there was a delay in the sowing of crops, garlic has not come to harvest yet, which has resulted in a supply crunch in the market.

### Supply shortage

Jignesh Patel, a wholesaler at the APMC, said that the garlic supply to the market majorly comes from Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Rajasthan. "Currently, there is no production in



Prior to the hike, the selling price per kg of garlic was around ₹100-₹250 in wholesale markets and ₹200-₹350 in retail markets. ROHITH D.S.

Gujarat and Rajasthan, and we are getting garlic only from Madhya Pradesh. This has led to the price surge, and this is one of the highest ever prices for garlic in history," he said.

The retail vendors, on the other hand, have not

iced a drop in garlic buyers. Rajanna, a vegetable vendor in Vijayanagar, said, "I started purchasing lesser quantities of garlic from the wholesale market as the demand has reduced due to the hiked price. These hiked prices bring no profit

to vegetable vendors," he complained.

The rates are expected to gradually come down as the supply is expected to increase in the upcoming weeks. "We saw a sudden increase of ₹60-₹70 per kg in the last few days. Within

a few weeks, it might go back to normal prices when new crops hit the market by the first week of March," said Bhavani Sona, another wholesale trader at APMC.

### Consumers upset

The rising prices of one commodity after the other have left consumers frustrated.

"These price hikes have become a regular thing now. First, it was tomato, then it was onion, and now it is garlic's turn. We always reduce the consumption of the vegetable that starts costing more, but the government should do something to address these fluctuations," said Divya Rao, a customer in Mudalapalya market.

With garlic being one of the essentials in the kitchen, hotels also have been affected by the price rise. "For now, they are managing by using processed garlic paste, which is available in the market, but we are hoping that the price will reduce soon," said P.C. Rao, president, Bruhat Bengaluru Hoteliers Association.

**Source: The Hindu, p. 2, Feb. 11, 2024**



# Supply shortage, piggery closure inflate pork prices

**Darshan Devaiah B.P.**  
BENGALURU

Pork prices have been steadily increasing in various parts of Karnataka over the past few months, primarily due to a shortage of supply in the market.

Pork prices have surged to ₹500 per kg in Karnataka, particularly in Bengaluru, Kodagu, Dakshina Kanada and Udupi, where consumption is higher.

Industry insiders said that an ongoing supply shortage amid heightened demand during the current wedding season is a major contributing factor. They anticipate further increase in prices in the coming months if supply continues to be insufficient. The scarcity of pork meat in Bengaluru is linked to the closure of piggeries within the city by authorities.

Manoj Kumar, a piggery owner from north Bengaluru, explained, "Several pig farms operating within the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) limits have been shut down due to concerns raised by local residents. Over the past year, authorities have directed many piggeries to relocate outside the city. However, those who don't have land to establish pig farms have discontinued



The rise is expected to have repercussions on the catering and food industries. FILE PHOTO

their businesses, resulting in a shortage of meat in the market."

Yosephu, a pork meat trader with a shop in Koramangala, said, "We no longer get meat from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Traders there attribute this to local municipal authorities implementing a ban on pig breeding under the Swachh Bharat Mission, aimed at maintaining cleanliness in the city. In some areas there, pigs roam freely in towns. As a result, authorities there have taken action against owners of pigs, which led to a halt in the supply of pork meat to the market here."

In Mangaluru, traders have attributed the scarcity of meat in the market to a shortage of Duroc, a popularly consumed pig breed.

Joel Pinto, a piggery owner in Mangaluru, said, "The primary cause is that certain piggery owners, concerned about diseases,

opted to sell their stock to wholesalers. They sold their entire pig stock to wholesalers, who subsequently sold it to the north-eastern States. Apart from this, the rise in fuel costs, and expenses in piggery farming contribute to the increase in prices."

In Kodagu, where pork is considered a delicacy, the price of pork has doubled in the last three months. Traders from Kodagu attribute the price increase to a shortage of pork meat supply. Muthappa B.N., a pork shop owner in Virajpet, said, "Previously, many people in Kodagu used to breed pigs at home, with two to four pigs in each households. However, this practice has now been discontinued, leading to a reduction in meat supply to the market."

The rise is expected to have repercussions on the catering and food industries, potentially resulting in higher rates for food orders that could directly affect weddings and other events in Kodagu. Pandi Curry, a renowned delicacy in Kodagu, is often served at various occasions, including weddings, engagement ceremonies, gatherings at ainmanes (ancestral homes), naming ceremonies, and other festivities.

**Source: The Hindu, p. 2, Feb. 11, 2024**



# Those elusive drops of life's elixir in an agonisingly arid year

Water rationing for agriculture, industries likely as summer progresses

N B HOMBAL  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**W**ith the onset of summer, the state is likely to face severe water scarcity in the days to come.

The water storage is under 23% in the reservoirs of the Cauvery basin, while that in the reservoirs of the Krishna basin is recorded at 26%.

The severe dip in storage levels of reservoirs has forced the government to resort to steps like regulating release of water for industrial and agriculture needs till monsoon sets in.

The government has already declared 195 of the 236 taluks in the state as drought-hit.

## No soil moisture

The drought is so severe that there is hardly any moisture in soil in the entire north-Karnataka region, leading to crop failure. It goes without saying that the region will face a severe shortage of drinking water in the days to come.

A senior bureaucrat in the water resources department told *DH* that water in some of these reservoirs is just above dead storage.

## TN situation better

The situation in Tamil Nadu is fairly better as water level in the reservoirs there are just 10% less than that of last year. In Karnataka's dams, the water level is nearly 30% below last year's storage. The Central Water Commission (CWC), in its latest report, (February 8) on reservoir levels highlights the grimness of the situation in southern states.

## Grim dam levels

According to the report, the total live storage in these reservoirs is 17.377 billion cubic meters (BCM) or 33% of total live storage capacity.

There are 42 reservoirs under CWC's watch in the southern states with a total live storage capacity of 53.334 BCM.

The report says that in these 42 reservoirs, storage in the corresponding period last year was 56%. The average storage in the corresponding period of the last 10 years was 46% of live storage capacity in these reservoirs.

Last week, Industries Minister M B Patil and IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge held a meeting to take stock of the situation in the industrial areas of the state. The meeting was told that the



A farmer couple retrieves whatever they can after losing their maize crop to severe drought, at Jamapur village in Davangere taluk. *DH* FILE PHOTO

## WOES BRIM OVER

| Reservoir      | Feb '23 (tmcft) | Feb '24 (tmcft) |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| KRS            | 43.696          | 17.051          |
| Harangi        | 3.29            | 3.42            |
| Hemavathi      | 22              | 14              |
| Kabini         | 13.2            | 13.2            |
| Tungabhadra    | 47.128          | 9.539           |
| Almatti        | 69.158          | 51.48           |
| Ghataprabha    | 28.41           | 33.64           |
| Malaprabha     | 15.83           | 9.51            |
| VV Sagar       | 28.415          | 20.59           |
| Amarja         | 1.197           | 0.413           |
| Bhima          | 1.544           | 0.112           |
| Supa           | 82.22           | 63.80           |
| Karanja        | 5.950           | 5.400           |
| Chandrapalli   | 0.626           | 0.455           |
| Gandorinala    | 1.375           | 1.259           |
| Mullamari (LB) | 1.306           | 1.105           |
| Mullamari (UB) | 0.412           | 0.362           |
| Bennithora     | 3.140           | 3.744           |

industrial areas require 290 million litres per day, to meet drinking water needs in these areas.

## Industrial areas

Industrial areas of Bengaluru Urban, Bengaluru Rural, Chikkaballapur, Tumakuru, Kolar, Dharwad, Vijayapura, Kalaburagi, Ballari and Raichur districts are already facing a drinking water crisis.

The revenue department has estimated that 6,097 villages and 1,186 wards in urban centers are likely to face acute shortage of drinking water.

## Private borewells

As part of the contingency plan, the government has signed a memorandum of understanding with owners of 2,404 private borewells to use their water. It is in the process of identifying more borewells to draw water.

Prof H S Shivaramu, former head of agro-meteorology of the University of Agriculture Sciences, said this year's drought is one of the worst drought in the last decade in the state.

## Huge crop loss

"The drought is so severe that of the 73 lakh hectares of sown area, we have lost crops in 43 lakh hectares. With average rain deficiency of 25%-30%, dam levels have dipped considerably. The government is left with no choice but to ration water for agriculture and industrial needs," he said.

Shivaramu said only the south interior Karnataka districts generally receive summer showers from April to May.

"Though this rain will not help increase dam levels, it will increase moisture in the soil," he said.

## N-K worse off

Prof Kamlesh Gandolkar, technical officer of Bagalkot horticulture university, told *DH* that the situation in north Karnataka region is worse because water storage in Krishna basin reservoirs is much less compared to the requirements.

"We have to keep evaporation of water also in mind as this region is hotter than the rest of Karnataka in summer. The government has to adopt measures like rationing of water to mitigate the crisis," he said.

Source: Deccan Herald, p.4B, Feb, 11, 2024

# 'Anti-farmer' Land Reforms Act will be amended: CM



Women farmers during a convention organised by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha in Bengaluru on Saturday. K. MURALI KUMAR

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Assuring that his government is serious about the welfare and rights of farmers, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Saturday announced that the "anti-farmer" Land Reforms Act, 2020, enacted by the previous BJP government, would be amended.

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) has been urging the State government to revoke the amendments and laws on land reforms and Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) introduced by the previous BJP government, on the grounds that they are detrimental to farmers and have been holding agitations.

The Chief Minister made the assurance while speaking after inaugurating a farmers' convention organised by the KRRS to mark the 88th birth anniversary of farmer leader M.D. Nanjundaswamy.

## 'A motivation'

Accepting the demands seeking a pro-farmer Budget submitted by KRRS members, the Chief Minister recalled his association with Nanjundaswamy and said his farmers' movement that was in favour of socialist aspirations became a beacon for solving the problems of farmers. "His struggle is a political motivation for me," the Chief Minister said.

"While I was a law student, Nanjundaswamy was a law college professor. He used to hold discussions with students who were in-



While I was a law student, M.D. Nanjundaswamy was a law college professor. He used to hold discussions with students who were interested in politics. These discussions inspired me into politics.

**SIDDARAMAIAH,**  
Chief Minister

terested in politics. These discussions inspired me into politics. He is the reason behind my political career and I became a Chief Minister twice," Mr. Siddaramaiah said.

"The study circle organised by the farmers' leader gave insight into many issues. It gave clarity about socialist economy and socialist politics. Many lecturers, professors, and writers used to come to this study circle. It was beneficial for me to meet and interact with them," he said.

"Nanjundaswamy was active on behalf of farmers till his end. Participating in farmers' struggle and farmers' conventions is also a matter of great pleasure and pride for me. Nanjundaswamy and farmers' struggle have affected society and governments," he said.

The Chief Minister assured the farmers that their issues would be incorporated and addressed in the coming Budget. "I appreciate your stand against communalism and the spirit of struggle. Our government is with you," he added.

**Source: The Hindu, p. 7, Feb. 11, 2024**







# ಬರ ಭೀಕರ ಬತ್ತಿದ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ

ಮಳೆ ಕೊರತೆ ಪರಿಣಾಮ | 200 ತಾಲೂಕಲ್ಲಿ ಬರಿದಾದ ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್

■ ನದೀನ್ ಬಿಲ್ಲುಣಿ ತಿರಮೋಗ್ಗ  
ಪ್ರಸಕ್ತ ವರ್ಷ ಮುಂಗಾರು ಮತ್ತು ಹಿಂಗಾರು ಮಳೆ ಕೊರತೆಯಿಂದ ರಾಜ್ಯಾದ್ಯಂತ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲಮಟ್ಟ ಗಣನೀಯವಾಗಿ ಕುಸಿಯುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಪರಿಣಾಮ 200ಕ್ಕೂ ಅಧಿಕ ತಾಲೂಕುಗಳ ಗಾವಿರಾರು ಕೊಳೆಯೊಳಿಗುವ ವರ್ಷಾರಂಭದಲ್ಲೇ ಬತ್ತಲಾರಂಭಿಸಿವೆ. ಬರದ ನಡುವೆ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಮಟ್ಟ ಕುಸಿತವೂ ಅನ್ವಯಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದು ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಅತಂಕಕ್ಕೆ ದೂರಿದ್ದು, ಕರುನಾಡಿಗೆ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಅಭಾತ ಎದುರಾಗಿದೆ. ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ 2023-24ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನಲ್ಲಿ 31.18 ಮುಂಗಾರು ಮತ್ತು 31.36 ಹಿಂಗಾರು ಮಳೆ ಕೊರೆತೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. 2023ರ ಅಂತ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಮುನ್ನದೇ ಕೆರೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿಗಳು, ನದಿ, ಹಳ್ಳ-ಕೊಳ್ಳಗಳೆಲ್ಲ ನೀರಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಬರಿದಾಗಿದ್ದವು. ಇದು ಸಹಜವಾಗಿಯೇ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಕುಸಿತಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ರಾಜ್ಯದ 236 ತಾಲೂಕುಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ 215ಕ್ಕೂ ತಾಲೂಕುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಪಾತಾಳ ಕಂಡಿರುವುದು ಅಭಾತಕಾರಿಯಾಗಿದೆ.



**ವಿ**ಯಾಲಿಟ್ ಚೆಕ್

ಮುಂಗಾರು ಕೈಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದರಂತೆ ರೈತರು ಮಳೆಗಾಲದಲ್ಲೂ ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್‌ಗಳನ್ನೇ ಆಶ್ರಯಿಸುವಂತಾಯಿತು. ಮಲೆನಾಡು ಪರ್ವತಗಳ ಸಹಿತ ಅತಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮಳೆ ಬೀಳುವ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಈ ಬಾರಿ ಭತ್ತ ಬೆಳೆಯುವುದಕ್ಕೂ ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್‌ಗಳನ್ನೇ ಆಶ್ರಯಿಸುವಂತಾಯಿತು. ಬಳಿಕ ಹಿಂಗಾರು ಮಳೆ 31.36 ಕೊರತೆ ಆಗಿದ್ದು, ಗಾಯದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬರೆ ಎಳೆದಿದೆ. ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್‌ಗಳು ತ್ರೀವೇಣಿ ಪವರ್ ಇದ್ದಷ್ಟು ಸಮಯ ನೀರನ್ನು ಕೆಲಸ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು ಇದಿಗೇ ಬೇಸಿಗೆ ಅರಂಭಗೊಳ್ಳುವ ಹೊತ್ತಿಗೆ ಕೈಕೊಡಲಾರಂಭಿಸಿವೆ.

ರಾಜ್ಯ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ನಿರ್ದೇಶನಾಲಯವು 236 ತಾಲೂಕುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 1,764 ಅಧ್ಯಯನ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳನ್ನು (ಕೆಂಡ್ರ) ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದು ಅವುಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರತಿ ತಿಂಗಳೂ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಮಟ್ಟವನ್ನು ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯಗೊಳಿಸಿದೆ. ಈ ಎಲ್ಲ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳ ಸರಾಸರಿ ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಅಭಾತ ನಷ್ಟಂಟು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. **■ವುಟ 4B**

## 7082 ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಕಷ್ಟ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು: ರಾಜ್ಯದ 7,082 ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳು, ಸಾಗರ-ಪಟ್ಟಣಗಳ 1,193 ವಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೀರಿನ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಎದುರಾಗುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಯಿದ್ದು, ಮುನ್ನೆಲ್ಲರಿಗೆ ವಹಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಕಂದಾಯ ಸಚಿವ ಕೃಷ್ಣ ಭೈರೇಗೌಡ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಬರವಿಡಿತ ಎಂದು ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಫೋಪ್ಪಣೆಗೊಂಡಿರುವ 223 ತಾಲೂಕುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು, ಮೇವು ಪೂರೈಕೆಯಂತಹ ಕ್ರಮ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಜೂನ್‌ವರೆಗೂ ಸಂಕಷ್ಟ ನಿವಾರಣೆಯ ಸಂದರ್ಭವಾಗಿರುವಂತೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸೂಚನೆ ನೀಡಿದೆ. ಸಮನ್ವಿತ ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳು, ವಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೀರು ಸಾಗಣೆಗೆ ಟ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ರಾಗಿ ತಾಲೂಕು ಮಟ್ಟದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆದು ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಪಡೆಯಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. 2,654 ಖಾಲಿ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಪಡೆದರೆ ಸಾಕು ಸುಗಮವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮೇವಿನ ಕೊರತೆ ನೀಗಲು ಎಳುಲಕ್ಷ ಟೆಂಕ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಉಚಿತವಾಗಿ ವಿತರಿಸಲು ನಿರ್ಧರಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಅವರು ಮಾಹಿತಿ ನೀಡಿದರು. **■ವಿವರ ಪುಟ 9**

ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಎಲ್ಲಿ, ಎಷ್ಟು ಕುಸಿತ?  
■ ಮಂಡ್ಯ.....800 ಅಡಿ  
■ ಕೊಡಗು.....1.93 ಮೀ.  
■ ಹಾಸನ.....3.51 ಮೀ.  
■ ವಿಜಯನಗರ.....700 ಅಡಿ  
■ ರಾಯಚೂರು.....500 ಅಡಿ  
■ ಕೊಪ್ಪಳ.....400 ಅಡಿ  
■ ಕೆಲಬುರಗಿ.....23.71 ಮೀ.  
■ ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ.....44.34 ಮೀ.  
■ ಧಾರವಾಡ.....10.04 ಮೀ.  
■ ವಿಜಯಪುರ.....15.90 ಮೀ.  
■ ಬಾಗಲಕೋಟೆ.....21.68 ಮೀ.  
■ ಪಾವೇರಿ.....8.98 ಮೀ.

## ಕುಡಿಯಲು ನೀರು ಸಿಗದು

2024ರ ಏಪ್ರಿಲ್ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೀಲು ಮಳೆ, ಮುಂಗಾರು ಪೂರ್ವ, ತರುವಾಯ ಮುಂಗಾರು ಮಳೆಯಾಗದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಬೀಶರ ಕ್ಷಮ ಉಂಟಾಗಲಿದೆ, ಜನ-ಜಾನುವಾರುಗಳಿಗೆ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು ಸಿಗುವ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗಲಿದೆ. ನೀರಿಗಾಗಿ ಅಲೆದಾಡುವ, ಗುಳಿ ಹೋಗುವ ವಾತಾವರಣ ಕೆಲ ಪರ್ವತಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಯಾಗಲಿದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ತಜ್ಞರ ಅತಂಕ.

ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಮಟ್ಟ ಕುಸಿಯುತ್ತಿದೆ. 700 ಅಡಿ ಕೊರೆತೆಯೂ ನೀರು ಸಿಗುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ಮಳೆ ಕೊರತೆಯಿಂದ ಕೆರೆಕಟ್ಟಿಗಳು ಬರಿದಾಗಿದೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಮಟ್ಟ ಕಡಿಮೆ ಆಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಕೆಲವು ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್ ಕೊರೆತೆಯಿಂದ ಅನುಮತಿ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಿದೆ. **■ ನಿರ್ಮಲಾ** ಹಿರಿಯ ಭೂವಿಜ್ಞಾನಿ, ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ

## ಏನೆಲ್ಲ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ?

- ಬೇಸಿಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಜನ-ಜಾನುವಾರುಗಳಿಗೆ ನೀರಿನ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ
- ಕೃಷಿ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗಳು ಕುಂಠಿತ, ರೈತರಿಗೆ ನಷ್ಟ
- ಕೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ ಬೆಳೆಗಳನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಹೆದರಾಡುವ

## ಐದು ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಗಂಭೀರ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ

ಮುಂದಿನ 4 ತಿಂಗಳು ಬಿಸಿಲಿನ ತಾಪ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಲಿದೆ ಎಂಬ ವರದಿ ಬೆನ್ನಲ್ಲೇ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಮಟ್ಟವನ್ನು ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಕುಸಿಯುವಂತೆ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಸವಾಲು ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಮುಂದಿದೆ. ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಐವತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ 8 ರಿಂದ 13 ಅಡಿಯಷ್ಟು ಕುಸಿತ ಕಂಡಿದೆ. 2022ಕ್ಕೆ ಹೋಲಿಸಿದರೆ 2023ರಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಭಾರಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಕುಸಿದಿದೆ. ಹಾಗಾಗಿ ಬೇಸಿಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಕುಸಿಯುವ ಅತಂಕ ವ್ಯಕ್ತವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಐದು ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬೋರ್‌ವೆಲ್‌ಗಳು ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಬರಿದಾಗಲಿದ್ದು ಅನ್ವಯಾತರ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಮತ್ತಷ್ಟು ಸಂಕಷ್ಟಗೊಳಿಸುವುದು ನಿಶ್ಚಿತವೆನಿಸಿದೆ.

Reported by: K. S. Srinivas  
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Source: Vijayavani, p.01, Feb.12, 2024

# CM holds pre-Budget talks with farmers

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Sunday met leaders from farmers' organisations as part of pre-budgetary consultation exercise.

Leaders who attended the meeting expressed happiness at the guarantee schemes being implemented in the State. Among about a hundred demands that came from farmers during the meeting were to



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with leaders of farmers' organisations during the pre-Budget consultation meeting in Bengaluru on Sunday.

increase nutrition among the farming community, lake development, upgrad-

ing of skills of agriculture officers to meet current needs, and programmes in

the Budget to raise hope among youth from the farming community.

**Source: The Hindu, p.4, Feb. 12, 2024**

## ವಿಜಯವಾಣಿ ಸಂ 1

### ಹವಾಮಾನ ವೈಪರೀತ್ಯದಿಂದ ದಿಢೀರ್ ವರ್ಷಧಾರೆ | ಕಮರಿ ಬೀಳುತ್ತಿರುವ ಹೂವುಗಳು | ಇಳುವರಿ ಕುಸಿತ ಆತಂಕ ಮಾವಿನ ಹೂವಿಗೆ ಅಕಾಲಿಕ ಮಳೆ ಕಂಟಕ ರೈತರಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿದ ಸಂಕಟ

■ ಗಿರಿಶ ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆ ಹಾನಗಲ್ಲ/ ಕೋಲಾರ  
ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಸರಿಯಾಗಿ ಸುರಿಯದೆ ರೈತರನ್ನು ಕಂಗಡಿಸಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರ ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದ್ದ ಮಳೆ, ಇದಿಗ ಅಕಾಲಿಕವಾಗಿ ಸುರಿದು ಮಾವು ಬೆಳೆಗಾರರನ್ನು ಕಂಗಡಿಸಿದೆ.

ಈ ಹೊತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮಾವಿನ ಗಿಡಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೂವಿನ ಗೊನೆಗಳು ಹೊಡೆಯಬೇಕಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಈ ವರ್ಷ 15 ದಿನ ತಡವಾಗಿ ಹೂವು ಕಾಣಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಶೇ. 10-15 ರಷ್ಟು ಹೂ ಬಿಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಹವಾಮಾನ ವೈಪರೀತ್ಯದಿಂದಾಗಿ ಸುರಿಯುತ್ತಿರುವ ಮಳೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಮಾವಿನ ಹೂವು ಉದುರುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ ಹೂವಿನೊಳಗೆ ನೀರು ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡು ಅದರಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಅಂಟು ಇಲ್ಲದಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಜೀನು ನೋಣಗಳ ಪರಾಗಪುಷ್ಪ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಗೂ ತೊಂದರೆಯುಂಟಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ.

ಈ ಹಿಂದೆ ಕಾಲಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಮಳೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಇಳುವರಿ ಆಹಾರಾಯಕವಾಗಿರುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಫಸಲು ಸಮರ್ಪಕವಾಗಿದ್ದರೂ, ದರ ಕುಸಿತವಾಗಿ ರೈತ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಂಕಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೀಡಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದ. ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗೆ ಶೀತಲಗಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ, ದರ ಬಂದಾಗ ಮಾರಾಟ ಮಾಡುವ ಅವಕಾಶ ಹಾಗೂ ಹೊರದೇಶಗಳಿಗೆ ರಫ್ತು ಮಾಡುವುದರಿಂದ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಒಂದುಪ್ಪು ಲಾಭ ದೊರಕುತ್ತಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ ಅಕಾಲಿಕ ಮಳೆಯಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಮಾವಿನ ಫಸಲು ಬಾರದಂತಾಗುವ ಆತಂಕದಲ್ಲಿ ರೈತರಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕಳೆದ ವರ್ಷ ಮುಂಗಾರು ಹಂಗಾಮಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಳೆ ಕೈಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಅಂತರ್ಜಲ ಮಟ್ಟ ಕುಸಿತಗೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಮುಂಬರುವ ಬೇಸಿಗೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾವಿನ ಗಿಡಗಳಿಗೆ ನೀರುಹೆಸಲು



ಹಾನಗಲ್ಲ ತಾಲೂಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹೂ ಬಿಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಮಾವಿನ ಗಿಡಗಳು.

ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗದ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ದಿನಂಟುರ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂಡಣ ಗಾಳಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಬೆಳೆಯ ವಾತಾವರಣದಿಂದ ಉತ್ಪನ್ನವಾಗಿ ಅರಳಿದ್ದ ಹೂವುಗಳು ಜನವರಿ ಮೊದಲ ವಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿದ್ದ ಅಕಾಲಿಕ ಮಳೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಕಮರುತ್ತಿವೆ.

**ಮಾವು ಕೈಗೆ ಸಂಕಷ್ಟ:** ಹಲವು ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ಮಾವಿನ ಮರಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಂಗಡವಾಗಿ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಔಷಧ ಸಿಂಪಡಿಸಿ, ಕೀಟಬಾಧೆಯಿಂದ ಕಾಯಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಂರಕ್ಷಿಸಿ, ಫಸಲು ಮಾರುವ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ನಡೆದುಬಂದಿದೆ. ಈ ವರ್ಷ ಹೂವುಗಳನ್ನು



ಇತ್ತೀಚಿನ ವರ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಲಾಭ ಬರುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲವಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಮಾವಿನ ಗಿಡಗಳನ್ನು ತೆಗೆದು ಬೇರೆ ಬೆಳೆಯುವ ಚಿಂತನೆಯಲ್ಲಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಮಾವಿನ ಗಿಡಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಮಧ್ಯಂತರ ಬೆಳೆ ಬೆಳೆದರೆ ರೋಗ ಬಾಧೆ

ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗುವುದರಿಂದ ಮಾವು ತೆಗೆದುಹಾಕಿ ಪರ್ಯಾಯ ಮಾರ್ಗ ಕಂಡುಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯತೆಯಿದೆ.

**! ಶಂಭುಗೌಡ ಪಾಟೀಲ** ಮಾವು ಬೆಳೆಗಾರ, ಹಾವಣಾಗಿ

ಗಮನಿಸಿದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ವ್ಯವಹಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಂದಾಗುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. 2020-21ರಲ್ಲಿ ಕೋವಿಡ್ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ, 2021-22ರಲ್ಲಿ ಅತಿವೃಷ್ಟಿ, 2023-24ರ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ವರ್ಷದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರಗಾಲ ಎದುರಾಗಿದ್ದು ಒಟ್ಟಾರೆಯಾಗಿ ಮಾವು ಬೆಳೆಗಾರ ಮಾವಿನಿಂದ ಲಾಭದ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ ಹೊಂದದಂಥ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ.

**ಬೇಕಿದ ಉತ್ಪೇಜನ:** ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಕೆಲವೇ ಕೆಲವು ನಿಮಿಷ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಮಾವು ಬೆಳೆಯಲು ಸಮರ್ಪಕ ವಾತಾವರಣ ಇದೆ. ಬೆಳೆಯನ್ನು ಮುಂಬರುವ ದಿನಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುವ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಂದ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ವಿಶೇಷ ಆದ್ಯತೆಯಡಿ ಬೆಳೆಗಾರರಿಗೆ ಪ್ಯಾಕೇಜ್ ಫೋಷಿಸಿ ಉತ್ಪೇಜನ ನೀಡಿದರೆ ಮಾವು ಕೈಗೆಟುಕಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಮದು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಎದುರಾದರೂ ಆಶ್ಚರ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ.



ಹವಾಮಾನ ಕಾಲ-ಕಾಲಕ್ಕೆ ಬದಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಮಾವಿನ ಫಸಲಿಗೆ ಲಾಭದಾಯಕ ದರ ನಿಗುವ ವಿಶ್ವಾಸವಿದೆ. ಆತುರಕ್ಕೆ ಒಳಗಾಗಿ ಗಿಡಗಳನ್ನು ಕಡಿಯುವ ದುಸ್ವಾಭವಕ್ಕೆ

ಹೋಗಬಾರದು.

**! ಮಂಜುನಾಥ ಬಣಕಾರ** ಹಿರಿಯ ಕೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಹಾನಗಲ್ಲ

**ಅವರೆ ಫಸಲಿಗೂ ಹಾನಿ**  
ಕೋಲಾರ: ಜಿಲ್ಲಾದ್ಯಂತ ಸೋಮವಾರ ಬೆಳಗ್ಗೆ ಬಿದ್ದ ಅಕಾಲಿಕ ಮಳೆ ಮತ್ತು ಶೀತ ಗಾಳಿಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಅವರೆ ಫಸಲಿಗೆ ಹಾನಿ ಉಂಟಾಗುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆಯಿದೆ. ಜಡಿಮಳೆ ಜತೆಗೆ ಶೀತಗಾಳಿ ಬೀಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಹೂವು ಉದುರುವ ಭೀತಿ ಎದುರಾಗುವ ಜತೆಗೆ ಅವರೇಕಾಯಿ ಸೋಗದು ಕಳೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನೂ ಒಂದು ತಿಂಗಳು ಅವರೆ ಸುಗ್ಗ ಇರಲಿದೆ. ಎರಡು, ಮೂರು ದಿನ ಮಳೆ ಮುಂದುವರಿದರೆ ಫಸಲಿಗೆ ಭಾರೀ ನಷ್ಟ ಉಂಟಾಗಲಿದೆ.

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**Source: Vijayavani, p.07, Feb.13, 2024**





PETA India members dressed in red gowns and angel wings for distributing red roses to couples. K. MURALI KUMAR

# It's raining Roses

Bengaluru's excellent location, climate and soil condition greatly favour rose cultivation in and around the city

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

**R**ed roses have taken centre stage at the International Flower Auction Bangalore (IFAB) Limited, with heaps of that "eternal symbol of love" being sold ahead of Valentine's Day on February 14.

Demand for red roses always goes up around this time, agrees Veena A.M., Assistant General Manager IFAB, a joint venture company of public and private shareholders that seeks to create a trading platform for flowers.

According to her, the overall demand for roses, in general, has increased considerably since last year, when the daily maximum average volume of flowers sold was about 6.5-7 lakhs.

"We sold out around 9.2 lakhs of roses yesterday, of which 40-45% will be red roses," says Veena.

Bengaluru's excellent location, climate and soil conditions greatly favour rose cultivation in and around the city, making it one of the biggest exporters in India. In fact, as Veena points out, the growing area has been extended by almost 25-30% this year, with growers hailing from places like Kolar, Chikkaballapur, Anekal, Tumkur and Hosur attending the auctions daily. "Bangalore is a flower hub due to the flowers quality and shelf life. Because of that, they are preferred," she says, adding that the high volume has ensured that the average price of roses has come down considerably from last year.



Varieties of roses brought by farmers are being packed and kept for auction and distribution ahead of Valentine's Day. SUDHAKARA JAIN



**Source: The Hindu, p.7, Feb. 14, 2024**

# 2.9 crore rose stems transported through KIA for Valentine's Day

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Around 2.9 crore rose stems, weighing 12,22,860 kg have been transported through the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) in Bengaluru this Valentine's season.

The Bangalore International Airport Ltd. (BIAL) reported a 108% increase in the tonnage processed this year compared to the same period last year.

The airport witnessed exponential growth in both international and domestic rose shipments, with 90 lakh stems bound for international destinations, marking a 14% increase from last year and 2 crore stems shipped domestically, reflecting a 148% increase.

The top international destinations for roses from



A vendor arranges roses at a shop in K.R. Market in Bengaluru ahead of Valentine's Day. AFP

Bengaluru are Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), Singapore, Kuwait, Manila (The Philippines), and Sharjah (UAE), while top domestic cities are Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Guwahati, and Jaipur.

Maintaining quality, temperature control, and ensuring faster turnaround times are critical for perishable items like roses. KIA has invested in real-

**There is a 108% increase in tonnage processed this year compared to the same period last year**

time tracking to empower stakeholders to proactively address temperature excursions, ensuring the integrity of sensitive products.

Advanced monitoring at dedicated cold chain centres guarantees an unbroken cold chain, translating into faster handling, enhanced security, and sustainable practices.

KIA, with its partners WFS Bengaluru Private Limited and Menzies Aviation, is committed to expanding its cold chain capacity to approximately 80,000 tonnes per annum, and investing in the export of perishables.

**Source: The Hindu, p.1, Feb. 15, 2024**



# Select panel recommends undoing changes made to APMC law by previous BJP govt.

APMCs in Kolar, Shivamogga, and Raichur have welcomed the government move to amend the Act restoring the old provisions

## IN THE LEGISLATURE

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

**R**ecommending reforms to the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committees (APMCs) in the State, the select committee of the Legislative Council to which the Karnataka Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation and Development) (Amendment) Bill, 2023, was referred to, submitted its report to the House on Wednesday.

The submission of the report is expected to pave way for its introduction that will restore the APMC jurisdiction for transactions of agriculture pro-



The Bill, which seeks to undo changes brought in 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic, had been referred to the select committee by the Legislative Council. FILE PHOTO

duce and mandatory licensing for traders.

The Bill, which seeks to undo the changes that were brought by the BJP government in 2020 amid

the COVID-19 pandemic, had been referred to the select committee by the Legislative Council that had not passed it when it was placed in July 2023.

Earlier, the Bill had been introduced in the Legislative Assembly on July 5, 2023, that was passed on July 17. On July 18, the Legislative Council had referred the Bill to the select committee headed by APMC Minister Shivanand Patil.

### Protecting properties

"The committee has agreed with the restoration of the law prior to its amendment in 2020. We have also made 29 recommendations to reform the APMCs. One of the biggest concerns is to protect the properties of APMCs whose value is estimated to be about ₹15,000 crore," a member of the select committee told *The Hindu*. "The amendment is likely

to be moved during this session."

The report stated that of the four APMCs that the committee visited, the changes brought by BJP regime was supported in Kalaburagi APMC. The APMCs in Kolar, Shivamogga, and Raichur welcomed the government move to amend the Act restoring the old provisions.

While farmers' groups had protested the dilution of APMC Act by the BJP regime that meant the agriculture produce could be sold anywhere, the Congress had promised to revert to the earlier APMC regime in the election manifesto. Though the farmers had opposed the changes brought to the Act by BJP, they had also point-

ed out at glaring problems in the APMC yard that required reforms.

### Recommendations

Among the 29 recommendations made by the committee are introduction of online facility in the market yard to bring quick and transparent transactions, revival of defunct APMC yards that have seen transactions decline due to changes in crop pattern or being old, keeping 5% of the total APMC transactions to strengthen financially weak APMCs and integrating financially weaker APMCs with stronger ones, renting out warehouses on APMC premises to farmers at a discount, and simplification of licensing procedure.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 15, 2024**

# Kisans: North-South Divide

Why do Punjab farmers protest while their southern cousins don't? Answer lies in differing aspirations

Narendar Pani



As farmers' protests return to Delhi it is not certain protesters and policy makers are talking about the same thing. Policy makers – cutting across governments – see demands of farmers in purely economic terms and lean towards letting market decide prices to be paid to them.

For farmers, their demands are expression of the severe challenges they face from multiple transformations they've experienced. With governments, and several experts, choosing to throw economic textbooks at a drowning community calling for help, there is a distinct possibility of India's food security being compromised.

Farmers' protests must be seen in the context of at least three major transformations.

**To better income** | First is declining share of agriculture in GDP. In line with worldwide development process, earnings from non-agricultural sectors have been growing much more rapidly than agricultural income.

Productivity of land in India is not comparable to the best in the world, but even if that gap were bridged agricultural income would not be anywhere near rapidly growing sectors like infotech. With these differences reflected in consumption patterns, farmers aspire for comparable incomes.

**For raised aspirations** | Response to these aspirations is determined by production patterns generated in an older transformation, Green Revolution. As is now widely known, irrigated areas benefited much more from Green Revolution than dry land areas. This created a clear divide between regions with high levels of irrigation providing high productivity and regions left behind.

In Green Revolution regions, raised aspirations generate a demand for greater returns from agriculture. In regions that Green Revolution left behind, aspirations are sought to be realised outside agriculture. Farmer protests are thus largely led by Green Revolution regions while other regions have thrown in the towel.

**Global warming** | Punjab's leading role in these protests can be traced to a third transformation: global impact of climate change. Global warming is expected to reduce frost in large areas of northern hemisphere thereby increasing potential for agriculture. A Government of Canada website speaks of opportunities to grow

warmer weather crops taking advantage of longer growing seasons and fewer extreme cold events.

This has, arguably, contributed to Canada becoming more open to immigration of farming communities. Farmers of Punjab, having demonstrated their agricultural prowess in Green Revolution, are an obvious target group. Their aspirations are influenced by what their friends and relatives earn in Canada.

**Markets no answer** | Economists would have the market decide the response to cumulative effects of the three transformations. While this approach is academically appealing, especially when fortified with mathematical models, it does not take great insight to identify its extreme risks.

The market could take agricultural production in a

felt. Existence of production cycles can lead to spurts in prices of foodgrains. The frequency of these spurts could increase if the per capita net production of food does not grow rapidly. And there are some signs that the per capita net production of wheat could be tapering off.

**For free food** | To expect governments to stick religiously to market logic on issues like food prices is clearly unrealistic. In a political economy which has place for distribution of free food to 800 million people, no government can be expected to ignore sharp spurts in food prices.

Much to the chagrin of market-friendly economists, governments periodically curb exports as a response to spurts in prices. This meets short-term requirements of a polity that cannot afford food shocks, but only serves to further alienate farmers.



**Incentivise farming** | With a free hand for the market being outside the realm of practical politics, the only way forward is to focus on long-term food security.

Since it is difficult to see any government going back on the current norm of free food for 800 million people, there is value in being realistic and treating this as policy goal. Target of an agricultural policy must then be to supply this food as well as ensure that basic food for the rest of the population is reasonably priced.

This goal would prioritise production of sufficient food, ideally from most productive lands. Farmers who achieve high levels of productivity and quality would be entitled to higher prices and possibly other support.

direction far away from food security. In agriculturally less developed regions, growth in food output would be further constrained as the market demands workers move from agriculture to more lucrative opportunities.

**Migration no solution** | In agriculturally advanced regions, international migration, especially to countries like Canada where migration-enabling networks already exist, becomes even more attractive.

Negative effects of this movement out of agriculture on food production would be further enhanced if government follows advice of economists and encourages farmers to move to more lucrative non-food crops.

**Think food security** | Impact of these trends on food security may not seem particularly significant when seen in terms of average availability of food, but there are some complexities that can make their presence

**Fix sick farms** | At the same time government could encourage setting up farm management cooperatives that would manage, for a fee and without having any rights to the land, large numbers of farms that are currently less productive. These farms would benefit from economies of scale and their owners would have the option of seeking non-farm work. Government could even help smoothen the process of movement out of agriculture.

**Look out for farmers** | Task of ensuring long-term food security while protecting interests of individual farmers is by no means an easy one. But it is important to recognise the way forward rather than simply sitting in judgment over farmers who are facing the risks, and opportunities, of multiple transformations.

*The writer is dean of social sciences, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru*

**Source: The Times of India, p.18, Feb. 15, 2024**



# Drought and food inflation drive grocery bill upwards

Traders say the failed monsoon in 2023 and the resultant drought are the reasons for higher food prices and that the trend is likely to continue till after the monsoon

**K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj**  
BENGALURU

**S**hruthi H., a homemaker from South Bengaluru, said her monthly grocery bill had ballooned by at least 20-25% over the last three months and this has affected the monthly budget. "We have to cut down on some non-essentials in the grocery list and also cut down our expenses elsewhere," she said.

Many customers are cutting down many items of their monthly grocery bills, say multiple retailers in the city.

"I have a set of households to which I supply groceries every month. Many have begun to cut down on some items. One of the main drivers of the rally in food prices is rice, which most households cannot avoid," said Rajash-ekhar, who runs a supermarket in Sahakar Nagar, North Bengaluru.

A kilo of Sona Masuri rice that was being sold in the range of ₹55 to ₹60 at the beginning of the year has now shot up to ₹78. A kilo of Rajamudi rice has crossed the ₹100 a kg mark.

## Cereals and pulses

The prices of most other cereals and pulses have also seen a sharp rise. Naturally, the prices of derivative products like flattened rice (avalakki) and ravas have also shot up.

Owing to a fresh harvest of tur crop in the Kalaburagi region in December 2023, the prices of tur dal that had crossed the ₹200 mark has come down despite the harvest being al-

## Rising price graph

|                           | Wholesale price today (in ₹/kg) | Retail price today (in ₹/kg) | Retail price as of Jan 1, 2024 (in ₹/kg) |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Sona masuri rice          | 60 - 62                         | 68 - 78                      | 55                                       |
| Rajamudi rice             | 85                              | 100 - 110                    | 60 - 70                                  |
| Wheat                     | 35 - 44                         | 50                           | 40                                       |
| Ragi                      | 40                              | 45                           | 35                                       |
| Tur dal                   | 140 - 160                       | 180                          | 210                                      |
| Urad dal                  | 120 - 140                       | 140 - 150                    | 160 - 165                                |
| Bengal gram               | 100 - 110                       | 140                          | 110 - 120                                |
| Moong dal                 | 100 - 110                       | 140                          | 110                                      |
| Groundnuts                | 180 - 185                       | 200                          | 160                                      |
| Sooji (Rava)              | 55 - 65                         | 65 - 70                      | 50 - 55                                  |
| Flattened rice (avalakki) | 70                              | 80                           | 60                                       |
| Groundnut oil             | 175 - 190                       | 200 - 210                    | 220 - 235                                |
| Sunflower oil             | 100 - 110                       | 125                          | 165                                      |



The prices of most other cereals and pulses have also seen a sharp rise. Derivative products like flattened rice (avalakki) and ravas have also become costlier in Bengaluru. FILE PHOTO

most less than half of a normal year, sources said.

The only other food items whose prices have come down are edible oils. Shailesh Laddha, a leading oil merchant in the city, said that the edible oils market had stabilised after the initial disturbance of the Ukraine war and prices had come down due to a combination of factors in the international market, including currency fluctuations.

## Drought impact

Foodgrain merchant and president of Federation of

Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI) Ramesh Chandra Lahoti said there was no good crop anywhere in Karnataka or elsewhere in India.

"It is essentially the failed monsoon in 2023 and the resultant drought that is driving food prices upwards. For instance, there is no water even for the standing crop of paddy. Drinking water needs have to obviously be prioritised," he said, cautioning consumers that they have to bear with high food prices till after this monsoon,

when new crops start coming in by September.

Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda has recently announced that 223 of 240 taluks in the State have been declared drought affected. The State government has also told farmers that drinking water needs will be prioritised and no water will be released for irrigation, especially in the Cauvery basin. An exception to this was made to save the standing chilli crop in North Karnataka and 2.75 tmcft of water was released from Krishna reservoirs.

Sources in the Bangalore Wholesale Food Grains and Pulses Merchants' Association predict the prices are set to go up further as the summer heats up. "The next crop is only expected after monsoon this year. As we use up the stocks we have, the prices are only likely to rise. We foresee a hike of at least ₹4-₹5 per kg in pulses and around ₹2-₹3 in cereals every month," a trader said.

**Source: The Hindu, p.4, Feb. 16, 2024**



# Shepherding: Adding to the informal farm economy of North Karnataka

These communities have their own unique economy which is facing many challenges as the demand and supply equations are undergoing transformation

**Rishikesh Bahadur Desai**  
BELAGAVI

A group of young men are crossing a grassland with a small herd of sheep in Khavarevasti near Nippanti on the Karnataka-Maharashtra border. They are coming from Balu Mama temple in Adamapur near Kolhapur. They decide to rest for a while. They let the sheep graze while they set up a stone stove under a tree. Lunch is rice and a sambar made from onion and brinjal, chilli and fresh sheep milk.

The milk is added just when the vegetables are boiled and taken off the stove. "If you cook even for one more minute, the milk gets spoilt," explains Mallappa, who is in charge.

The flock is considered sacred by Mallappa and his clan as they include two "descendants" of the 15 sheep that were reared by Sant Balu Mama, a saint who lived in the late 19th century to early 20th century. Volunteers maintain the about 60,000 "Balu Mama sheep" that are constantly moving. The temple trust gives away male sheep but keeps the females. The keepers claim that they have been maintaining the gene pool of the Dakhani sheep intact for the next generations. A shepherd's herd, like that of Mallappa, may have one or two sheep from this line, which the shepherd regards "auspicious" and "lucky".

These herds are a common sight for travellers between Karnataka and Maharashtra. Devotees of Balu Mama travel from as far as Andhra and walk to the temple, along with their sheep. Born in Akkol near Chikkodi, Balu Mama lived in Adamapur where his Samadhi was built. The saint who lived in the British era is supposed to have practised native medicine that cured sheep. He has innumerable devotees, who do not object even if the Balu Mama sheep flock enters standing crops in their fields and eats them.

Similar devotion is seen in Bommagonda, a shepherd in the Bidar district, who is believed to have lobbied with the Behmani Kings who made sheep and wool trade tax-free in the 15th century. Statues and images of Bommagonda with two sheep and a dog, are found across the districts of Bidar and Kalaburagi.

The stories of these saints are distinct from those of saint poet Kanaka Dasa of Haveri district or Sharana Gollaleshwara of Vijayapura district, from the Kuruba community, who are known for their spiritual pursuits.

## How many in North Karnataka

There are over an estimated 90 lakh sheep in northern Karnataka. "The live stock: A study" by the Food and Agriculture Organisation in 2004 put the figure at 76 lakhs.

It is estimated that over 7.5 lakh families in the Deccan region depend on sheep rearing. But not all of them are Kurubas. They can belong to castes and ethnic groups like Gollas, Kurmas, Lambadas and Dalits in Andhra Pradesh; Kurubas, Kadu gollas, Lamanis, Bedars, Gollas and Dalits in Karnataka; Dhanghars, Kurubas and Dalits in Maharashtra; and Kurubas in Tamil Nadu. Some of these groups are traditional sheep rearers while others have taken up sheep-raising more recently.

"Poverty and landlessness makes people enter shepherding, and prosperity makes them leave it," says G. Gopi Krishna, one of the authors of the FAO study. He is also involved in organising and training shepherding groups, mentoring designers and master trainers and helping groups get markets in India and overseas.

Kurubas are the traditional sheep keepers in the northern Karnataka districts of Belgaum, Bagalkot, Koppal, Dharwar and Haveri and others. They are semi-nomadic, moving with their flocks for between three to nine months a year. They may also take on lease some land for part of the year to grow crops such as sorghum, wheat, maize, oil seeds, minor millets and cotton. However, in some places, due to increasing



Gopi Krishna and Neelkanth Mama, activists working for the empowerment of shepherding communities in North Karnataka. P.K. BADIGER



Women involved in carding and spinning wool at a centre run by SHGs in Kadoli village. P.K. BADIGER

prosperity, they are joining the class of landed gentry. Many of the sheep rearers are also members of village cooperative societies. There are an estimated 5,000 such societies in the Deccan, most of them in Maharashtra and Karnataka. Most are into collecting deposits and lending. But there are a few unique institutions like the Belagavi-based Jagruti Kurubara Kuri Mattu Unne Utpadakara Sangha that has been involved in training and awareness campaigns like vaccination, nutrition, value addition for wool products and women's empowerment. The society was started in 1990 after the rinderpest epidemic of 1989.

Neelkanth Mama of Uchagaon, who founded the JKKMUS society along with nine others, says he is not very happy with the cooperative movement. "Over 90% of the societies are involved in money lending. We had expected them to graduate to institutions that took all round care of shepherds," he said. "A state level federation of sheep producers societies established a few years ago is yet to function effectively," a member of a local society in Bagalkot said.

## What is produced

The sheep of the Deccan produce a range of products and services. The most important, but least regarded is manure and tillage. Farmers welcome shepherds and their flocks onto their fields during the fallow period, as the sheep eat weeds and other vegetation, and leave behind manure and urine that fertilizes the soil. This process is called penning. The animals' hooves also break up clods of earth and help prepare the soil for planting. Farmers pay up to rupees three per sheep per day for penning. Rarely, it works on barter when shepherds collect grains after harvest. During the monsoon from July to September, the shepherds move their animals to an area with lower rainfall and pen them in fields, where they collect manure to sell.

The shepherds sell male lambs aged 3-6 months at a weight of 10-18 kg in weekly livestock markets. An animal may cost between ₹3,000 to ₹6,000 depending on the weight and build of the animal. Shepherds sell the females after around 10 lambing cycles.

Sheep are sheared twice a year, before winter (in October or November) and before the monsoon (in April or May). A sheep may produce



A farmer takes his sheep for penning in a field near Saundatti in Belagavi district. P.K. BADIGER



250-500 grams of coarse wool. Men shear while women sort in two grades: lamb wool and adult wool. About one-quarter of the fleece is fine, good quality wool whose fibre is suitable for spinning. Another quarter of the fleece is very coarse which is used for making kambhis and caps.

The Dakhani sheep is famed for its wool. In fact, it is the only naturally evolved animal with wool that can be sheared in an economically feasible manner. Contrary to popular perception, wool comes in seven natural colours- shades of white, black and brown. Most shepherds shear their own animals using scissors, though some work is outsourced to a sub community called Katrigars. The shepherds milk their animals and make buttermilk and butter, mostly for use in the breeder's family. These products are usually not sold, but given to lactating mothers, infants and the sick, free of cost.

## How market works

The demand for meat and hence the price, has increased exponentially. But the price of other materials has remained steady for over a decade. The prime reason for this is the beef ban imposed in some states like Karnataka.

"The increasing market for meat, the hard work involved in shearing, and the low prices for wool and penning, have forced farmers to shift to towards wool-less sheep. This has led to a disproportionately high demand for lambs. Earlier, shepherding families sold lambs after six months of birth. Now, they are selling after 2-3 months. It has affected the yielding cycle. Earlier a mother sheep conceived once every year. But now they are littering 3-4 lambs in two years. These are bound to be weaker and leaner," said Neelkanth Mama.

Other problems include hybridisation that has altered the character of native sheep, and allowing imports of shoddy wool, the fibre recovered from waste blankets and jackets from U.S.A. and Europe. Some state governments are also promoting breeds like the Red Nellore, Yelgu and Madgilyal aimed at producing meat rather

than wool. As a result of these trends, the pure bred Dakhani has been in decline.

## Hand holding by NGOs

The Shramik Abhivrudhi Sangh (SAS), an NGO that has been working in the area since the 1990s recognised the need to conserve the Dakhani breed. SAS project that began in 1996 helped local women produce and market bags and other handicrafts made of jute and cotton fibre. The women were trained in modern product design by a team of designers headed by Varsha Rani, a design faculty from JD Institute of fashion and Rashmi Shivakumar.

Future Greens, a Bagalkot-based NGO, has been promoting farmer producing organisations among shepherding groups. A team led by veterinarian Balu Athani has promoted 26 FPOs in a decade. "We are working with small and marginal farmers, shepherds and goat keepers in rural areas to form producer companies to initiate them into collective businesses," said Dr. Athani who has worked in the Veterinary college Bidar and Karnataka Milk Federation earlier. "The group now has four brands available in Bengaluru, Mumbai and other cities- Simply Satvik, Nutriswad and Living Lite. We are launching the meat brand Nomadic Bytes soon," he said.

## Demands of shepherds

The shepherds community says its demands are long pending as successive governments at the centre and state have neglected them. The demands include comprehensive insurance cover for sheep and shepherds, establishment of veterinary hospitals in villages and remote areas, universal vaccination and health care services, formal markets for non-meat products and a subsidy for penning as farmers are unable to pay higher prices. They also demand policy changes in the import policy. "While Marino sheep imports can be regulated by higher taxation, import of used fabric and shoddy wool should be completely curbed," said Neelkanth Mama.

He also opposes indiscriminate hybridisation as it affects native breeds. "A few decades ago, some Indian universities and NGOs began promoting the NARI Suravara breed that has the Fecundity-B gene that can produce twins, thinking it will help farmers increase their income. But we had a very bad experience as the mother is unable to feed two at once, due to scarcity of green grass," Gopi Krishna adds that the army and central and state police should go back to using native wool blankets, rugs, jackets and gloves instead of using imported woollen goods.

"Till the 1980s, farmers shipped to Panipat, over 10 goods trains full of local wool from the Hubballi railway station. But the centre allowed import of Marino wool and shoddy wool."

**Source: The Hindu, p.12, Feb. 16, 2024**

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## Decentralisation

# BBMP seeks property tax dues from BMRCL, issues 50 notices

'Differences Of Opinion' Between Agencies On Issue

Santosh Kumar RB  
& Suchith Kidiyoor | TNN

**Bengaluru:** Desperate to improve its revenues, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has sent more than 50 notices to the Namma Metro operator, demanding clearance of tax dues on its establishments, including operational Metro stations.

Namma Metro, run by Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited, has an operational network of 74km with 65 stations.

In one such notice, BBMP demanded property tax of over Rs 53.6 lakh from Cubbon Park Metro station, which the civic body said has been due since 2011-12. According to BMRCL estimates, the Palike expects Rs 39 crore in property tax dues from Namma Metro establishments.

A BMRCL official told TOI that tax demand notices were not frequent earlier "but in recent days, BBMP sent some 50-60 notices to us". The official maintained that as per a memorandum of understanding signed between agencies in 2020, BMRCL is liable to pay service charge (as a percentage of property tax) depending on the categories of properties owned by it. For example, for concourse areas of Metro stations excluding platforms, entry/exits, unpaid public movement areas and others, BMRCL should pay 25% of service charge instead of property tax. For depots, administrative buildings and training centres too, 25% of service charge should be paid. For shops, stalls, paid-parking spaces and

## Woman challenges tax notice, HC demands spot inspection report

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** The high court sought a spot inspection report on a petition filed by a Bengaluru resident challenging the revised property tax (including penalty with interest) demanded from her by BBMP.

Justice S Sunil Dutt Yadav passed the order recently after hearing a petition filed by Ropa B Rao, a resident of RMV Extension, Aramane Nagar.

The petitioner challenged the notices as well as orders issued by the civic body demanding payment of Rs 17,71,780, inclusive of Rs 4,82,652 differential value of property tax from 2016-17 till 2022-23, Rs 9,65,304 penalty for the same period, and Rs 3,23,824 as interest.

The petitioner claimed that according to Section 144(15) of the BBMP Act-2020, the chief commissioner or a person authorized by him should issue notice of re-assessment to the taxpayer followed by an order by the chief commissioner or authorized officer. "In the instant

buildings outside the station premises, BMRCL has to pay 100% of service charge.

However, in December 2023, it received a communication from the chief commissioner of BBMP, asking it to pay property tax in full for the period from the start of Metro operations till the signing of the MoU. "We had conveyed to BBMP... that BMRCL is not liable to pay any property tax.



BBMP'S ₹17L PAYMENT ORDER

case, the chief commissioner has not issued any show-cause notice or order before issuing the demand notice. The assistant revenue officer (ARO) has initiated proceedings though he is not an authorized officer under the Act," the petitioner said, seeking quashing of the SOP issued by the BBMP chief commissioner on Dec 6, 2023 wherein AROs were put in charge of assessment, recovery and management of property tax.

### 'Without jurisdiction'

According to the petitioner, the orders for the assessment years 2016-17, 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 are wholly without jurisdiction for the simple reason they

were issued on Dec 31, 2020 and Jan 4, 2021, after the new BBMP Act received the governor's assent on December 21, 2020.

Claiming that there are no rules brought into force vis-a-vis implementation of the BBMP Act, the petitioner said Section 144(15)(b) of the BBMP Act is liable to be struck down as it gives unguided as well as unbridled power on the executive to impose penalty over and above twice the tax without prescribing an upper limit. The power to impose penalty is quasi-criminal/ criminal in nature and cannot be conferred upon an officer who is not a judicial authority, she added.

With regard to her property, the petitioner asserted that the first floor was vacant since 2016 and it was wrong on the part of officials to report that the entire building was tenanted. Even the property, mentioned as being in B zone in the SAS return, has been shown to be in C zone in the ARO's report and still higher tax is demanded, sans any valid reason, she said.

The Namma Metro project, BMRCL had deposited Rs 61 crore for restoration of roads where Metro projects were implemented. However, BMRCL later took up restoration works on its own.

"In the past, we had asked BBMP to adjust Rs 5 crore to be paid by us as service charge with the fund. Future adjustments will also be done similarly," the Metro official said.

**Source: The Times of India, p.2, Feb. 10, 2024**



# With 10% unlettered, GP members take write way

**Move to make them 'functionally literate' shows promise**

**PAVAN KUMAR H**  
HUBBALLI, DHNS

A government initiative to make unlettered gram panchayat (GP) members "functionally literate" has generated enthusiasm and is showing results, helping address a key problem that has been hobbling governance at the grassroots.

The initiative was launched

after a survey conducted by the Rural Development & Panchayat Raj (RDPR) department in 2022 found that of the 94,000 GP members elected to 6,028 GPs in the state in 2021, 9,550 (10%) could not read or write.

This, according to sources in the RDPR department, has been causing several difficulties.

For example, unlettered GP members are dependent on others to understand the functioning of GPs and notifications issued by the department and to manage their duties.

There have been incidents where "non-elected representatives and junior-level officials" clear the files without

## How it unfolded

RDPR dept asks Abdul Nazeer Sab State Institute for Rural Development for an action plan to make illiterate GP members functionally literate

• ANSSIRD enrolls 4,078 members in 10 districts under the 'Sakshara Sanmana' programme

• GP members are provided 100 hours of "teaching" over 50 days; taught basic Kannada reading, writing along with identifying numbers

• Locals with experience in teaching conduct classes from a study kit prepared by ANSSIRD

• Each trainer is provided Rs 3,000 as an honorarium to teach GP members



My son used to read out notices and other documents for me. I used to give my thumb impression wherever he asked me to. Due to my inability to read, I used to feel insecure and dependent on others. Not anymore

**Nagamma Mulgi**,  
member of  
Kinnisultan GP

the knowledge of the president and the vice president.

Koppal (695) has the highest number of non-literate

GP members followed by Belagavi (681), Yadgir (670), Raichur (650) and Kalaburagi (640), while Kodagu has

the least (28).

To address the problem, the RDPR department leaned on the Abdul Nazeer Sab State Institute for Rural Development (ANSSIRD), Mysuru, and asked for an action plan to ensure that non-literate GP members become "functionally literate".

In the first phase, which started in 2022, ANSSIRD enrolled 4,078 members in 10 districts under the 'Sakshara Sanmana' programme to provide them 100 hours of "teaching" over 50 days. The members were taught basic Kannada reading and writing along with identifying numbers.

► **Gram panchayat, Page 5**

## The write way: GP members board literacy initiative

**Gram panchayat, from Page 1**

The department invited applications from locals who had experience in teaching to conduct classes from the study kit prepared by the ANSSIRD. Each trainer was provided Rs 3,000 as honorarium to teach these GP members.

"Nearly 3,011 GP members have voluntarily completed the course over the last year," said Hemambara, a faculty at ANSSIRD, adding they are not only able to read the documents and daily memos sent by the department but also able to sign the documents. Majority of the beneficiaries are women and senior citizens. ANSSIRD Director K Lakshmi Priya said the initiative

is having a positive effect on GP members and localities they are living in. "As per the scheme, the training programme was only for three months. However, many mentors, based on a request from GP members, have continued training elected representatives," she said.

Sheela Bai, a mentor at Kinnisultan village in Aland taluk of Kalaburagi district, said Nagamma Mulgi (63), a member of Kinnisultan GP, was very enthusiastic to learn. "Along with her, she brought four other senior citizens who were interested in learning. While the course ended in 45 days, we are continuing the learning process," she said. Nagamma said she could not

get a formal education earlier as there was no school in her village. "My son used to read out notices and other documents for me. I used to give my thumb impression wherever he asked me to. Due to my inability to read, I used to feel insecure and dependent on others. Not anymore," she said.

Dr Prakash Bhat, honorary professor and executive member at Karnataka State Rural Development and Panchayat Raj University, Gadag, said the ability to read and write will instil confidence among GP representatives. "Officials will not be able to cheat the GP members if they understand the content of government documents," he said.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.1&5, Feb, 12, 2024**



# BBMP seizes car, school buses to recover property tax

## Palike also rechecking property records

NAVEEN MENEZES  
BENGALURU, DHNS

For the first time, the BBMP has impounded movable properties such as cars and school buses for defaulting the property tax. The action comes just three months after the civic body came up with a standard operating procedure to seize as well as attach properties as a part of its plan to intensify tax recovery drive. Officials said all the four vehicles were seized in BBMP's Yelahanka division. "Hours

after the vehicles were seized, the property owners decided to pay 50% of the arrears and appeal against our notices," a senior BBMP official said. While the BBMP has sealed over 10,603 shops and commercial establishments in the last six months, the civic body had not impounded movable properties as it did not have a dedicated space to keep the seized vehicles. "Under the BBMP Act, there is a provision to seize either movable and immovable properties by issuing distress warrants. We

are not locking up any house for defaulting tax as we do not want to go hard on people," a senior revenue official told *DH*. Overall, the BBMP has issued notices to 46,318 properties between November and February this year. During the same period, the revenue officials have attached 7,203 properties for not paying the taxes even after sealing their premises. This is the first time the civic body has taken up large-scale action against the property tax defaulters who together owe more than Rs 500 crore to the BBMP. Besides going after the defaulters, the civic body has also started revisiting properties to re-verify the property as well as the records submitted under the self-assessment scheme (SAS).

While the initiative has helped in increasing BBMP's revenue by over Rs 550 crore, the move has also received criticism from some quarters. Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy is among the prominent leaders who opposed the BBMP's tax recovery drive. BBMP's Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath had earlier said the civic body is focusing on recovering tax from property owners who owe more than Rs 10 lakh to the civic body. "We are not targeting small defaulters."

## BJP MLAs oppose double penalty

A delegation of BJP leaders, including four MLAs submitted a memorandum to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), opposing the double penalty and interest levied on owners who have defaulted payment of property taxes. They pointed out that there is no provision in the law to penalise retrospectively and warned of city-wide protest if the BBMP continues to harass citizens.

Among the leaders, who submitted a petition to BBMP's chief commissioner Tushar Girinath, are MLAs Byrathi Basavaraj, SR Vishwanath, C K Ramamurthy and S Muniraju.



A delegation of BJP leaders submit an MoU to BBMP Commissioner Tushar Girinath. DH PHOTO BY K. JAYARATHAN

assessment scheme. There is no provision in the law to charge penalties retrospectively," the letter states.

The letter mentioned that the BBMP has issued notices to 76,000 property owners and has also locked shops and buildings, thereby destroying the livelihood of people.

Instead of "harassing" the citizens, they urged the BBMP to increase the property tax collection by bringing over six lakh properties that are left out in the tax net.

Among the demands put forth by the BJP leaders are: Withdrawal of notices issued to property tax defaulters, extension of time to pay from 30 days to 90 days.

In a three-page letter which was signed by all BJP MLAs from Bengaluru, they termed the BBMP's drive to collect property tax arrears as an extortion racket. "In the name of recovering property tax arrears, the BBMP has waged a war against the citizens. BBMP is imposing double penalty and interest by finding faults in the self-

Source: Deccan Herald, p.3, Feb, 13, 2024

# BBMP drafts new ad policy, aims to earn Rs 500 cr annually

## Move comes a year after HC ruled in favour of outdoor ads on pvt premises

BENGALURU, DHNS

Commercial hoardings are set to make a comeback in Bengaluru with the BBMP drafting a new policy to replace a six-year-old by-law that banned most outdoor advertisements.

The move comes nearly a year after the High Court of Karnataka ruled in favour of outdoor advertisements on private premises by imposing certain restrictions.

Sources said the Urban Development Department (UDD) was vetting a draft policy that overrules the historic resolution passed by the BBMP council in 2018. The government is likely to announce the same in the state budget.

As per the policy, the BBMP will tender out advertisement



A blatant misuse of permission to display hoardings had prompted the BBMP to ban outdoor advertisements in 2018. Many advertisers were also accused of not paying license fee to the civic body. PIC FOR REPRESENTATION ONLY

rights to the highest bidder. The fee as well as the size of the hoarding will be fixed based on the road width. While no hoarding will be allowed on footpaths, advertisers will have to negotiate with private property owners to erect the hoardings. The policy also allows illuminated boards but will likely ban moving films.

Senior officials expect the new advertisement policy to fetch the BBMP Rs 500 crore in annual revenue.

At present, only a few players have bagged advertisement rights in Bengaluru in exchange for building facilities

such as skywalks, public toilets and bus shelters. As all other forms of commercial ads are banned, these players are reportedly selling the hoardings for a premium.

A BBMP official said the civic body could build such infrastructure from its own funds if the new policy comes into force without undertaking public-private partnership (PPP) projects.

The very reason why the BBMP council decided to ban outdoor advertising in Bengaluru was the authorities' failure to collect licence fees from advertising agencies. An

internal report in 2018 showed that the civic body may have lost over Rs 2,000 crore in revenue by allowing illegal advertisements.

Following the ban, the Outdoor Advertising Association, Bengaluru, challenged the validity of the BBMP Outdoor Signage and Public Messaging Byelaws 2019. In March 2023, the high court ruled in favour of the association and directed the BBMP to permit outdoor advertisements on private properties by "imposing such restrictions to achieve the object and intent of the bye-laws 2018. The said exercise shall be concluded within three months from the date of uploading this order to the high court website."

"The new policy is being brought to accommodate hoardings. The BBMP council had decided to ban them. According to the 74th Amendment of the Constitution, Urban Local Bodies have the right to decide about the aesthetics of the city. The council resolution is sacrosanct," a BBMP official said. "Without the hoardings, Bengaluru looks cleaner and greener."

Source: Deccan Herald, p.2, Feb, 14, 2024



# BBMP shuts down Rockline Mall over property tax dues since 2011

Owners haven't responded to notices

BENGALURU, DHNS

Going hard on property tax defaulters, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) sealed down the Rockline Mall in Dasarahalli on Wednesday. The BBMP officials revealed that the mall owners had failed to pay property tax since the mall's inauguration in 2011. The dues have grown over the years and the mall now owes close to Rs 11.51 crore in property taxes, the BBMP officials said. "Even if they had made partial payments, the dues would have been lesser. However, they have not made any payment towards property tax, and the dues along with the interest has grown up to Rs 11.51 crore," a senior BBMP official from Dasarahalli zone said.

According to sources, the mall owners have not responded to



The sealed gates of Rockline Mall. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

multiple demand notices from BBMP and are planning to contest the move in the High Court. "Even after the closure, there has been no response to our notice. We were told that they are planning to get a stay order from the High Court. We will fight this legally," the official said.

The closure is a part of the ongoing drive against property tax evaders. Over the last few months, BBMP's revenue department has been sending notices to defaulters and the revenue officials have also been asked to follow up on the defaulters.

"Zonal level officials are closely monitoring the property tax

defaulters and issuing notices. We want to crack down on bigger defaulters first," said Munish Moudgil, Special Commissioner (Revenue), Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike.

Over the last six months, BBMP has sealed at least 10,603 shops and commercial establishments and close to 45,000 notices have been issued since November 2023.

With an aim to improve the revenue from property tax, BBMP is also serving notices to owners underpaying property tax. Recently, the officials also impounded movable properties such as cars and school buses for defaulting the property tax.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.2, Feb. 15, 2024**

## Panchayat institutions owe ₹9,000 crore to Escoms

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Panchayat Raj institutions across Karnataka together owe about ₹9,000 crore as power dues to energy supply companies.

This was disclosed by Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge in the Legisla-

tive Council on Wednesday. Participating in a debate on the functioning of the panchayat raj institutions, the Minister said efforts are on to use renewable energy sources to reduce the power bill. "Currently, ₹9,000 crore remain as power dues to Escoms," he said.

He said that normally

once in five to six years, Escoms and the RDPR Department arrive at a final settlement, which is a burden on all. "This is a legacy issue and we are trying to solve it. We will try solar energy to power street lights as a pilot project to reduce the energy bill," he said.

In a bid to reduce official

intervention in gram panchayat functions, he said that a handbook detailing duties and responsibilities of the gram panchayat president, members, and staff would be brought out. "The handbook will lay down a framework. It will be sent to all gram panchayats in the State in one month," he said.

Mr. Kharge also said that panchayat institutions are expected to see increased revenue collection this year as asset mapping has already yielded ₹700 crore more than last year. "Asset mapping has identified installation in panchayat limits and provision of POS machine has improved tax collection."

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 15, 2024**



# BBMP seeks double the funding in state budget

Besides Rs 6,000 cr, Palike asks for Rs 200 cr for running Indira canteens

NAVEEN MENEZES  
BENGALURU, DHNS

The BBMP has sought twice the amount of funds in the forthcoming state budget than what it received from the government last year. Citing proposals such as elevated corridor, tunnel road, sky deck (a tall tower to attract tourism) etc, which are in the pipeline, the civic body has asked the government to allocate a budgetary grant of Rs 6,000 crore to give a thrust to "Brand Bengaluru".

Other than Rs 6,000 crore, the BBMP has asked for an additional grant of Rs 200 crore for running Indira Canteens, which is a flagship project of Siddaramaiah govern-

ment. The Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Ltd (BSWML), which is an offshoot of BBMP, has requested for Rs 600 crore for the collection and disposal of garbage as it does not collect service free from the citizens.

A top BBMP official said the government is likely to be generous to Bengaluru in the state budget. "We expect funds for double decker projects, which involves building an elevated road along the new Metro corridors. The budget may also set aside funds for the tunnel roads proposed on a two-km stretch under trial basis. Skydeck is another ambitious project that will be funded by the government," he said.

During the recent presentation, the BBMP officials apprised CM Sid-



daramaiah and Dy CM DK Shivakumar about the various initiatives it has undertaken to reform the civic body. Among the works are: Digitization of 20 lakh property records, which will be completed in March, April 2024, introduction of e-khata as well as automated plan approval system for residential houses etc.

The state budget may also announce white-topping of roads although the state cabinet has already approved the plan at a total cost of Rs 1,700 crore. The government will only be providing Rs 800 crore while the remaining Rs 900 crore will be raised by the BBMP from its property tax collection.

The BBMP, sources said, has asked for an additional grant of Rs 200 crore for improving the buffer zone of storm water drains and building 100-km of new road by acquiring the private properties. Funds have also been sought improving another 75 junctions.

Urbanist Ashwin Mahesh said fast growing economies like Bengaluru should be given priority in funding and growth itself should pay for the growth. "The state government should earmark a certain percentage of GST for undertaking development projects not just in the BBMP limits but areas that fall outside its jurisdiction that are fast growing," he said.

Source: Deccan Herald, p.2, Feb, 15, 2024

## Karnataka Cabinet gives nod for granting B-Khata for constructions on unauthorised layouts under ULBs

The Hindu Bureau  
BENGALURU

The State Cabinet has reportedly approved a proposal to grant B-Khata for constructions that have come up on illegal layouts on non-government revenue lands in all the Urban Local Body (ULB) areas as well as buildings without building plan and collect property tax from them.

The recommendation by a Cabinet sub-committee constituted under the chairmanship of Forest Minister B. Eshwar Khandre to examine the

possibilities of extending the provisions under BBMP Act, 2020, Column 144 (6) and (21) to ULBs were accepted by the Cabinet which met on Thursday.

The Urban Local Bodies in the State account for a total of 54.91 lakh properties of which 34.35 lakh properties are unauthorised. Though these properties are getting civic amenities like drinking water, power and road, there was no provision under the existing law to collect property tax from them.

**The decision to allow collection of property tax from such constructions may yield a total annual revenue of ₹2,000 crore**

According to sources, the Cabinet's decision to allow collection of property tax from such constructions may yield a total annual revenue of ₹ 2,000 crore.

It is learnt that the Cabinet sub-committee has decided to fix the property tax for these properties in such a way that it would

not burden the poor and middle-class people.

### Deadline

The Cabinet sub-committee has also reportedly recommended fixing a final deadline beyond which unauthorised layouts in the state should not be regularised. If any unauthorised layouts come up beyond this date, provisions have been made to book criminal cases against developers in such cases. Also, provisions have been prescribed to initiate disciplinary action against officials who make way for development of

such unauthorised layouts. The provisions include slapping a penalty of ₹ one lakh on such officials. Sources said that the State Cabinet had given approval to such recommendations on stringent provisions to curb unauthorised layouts.

It is learnt that provisions have been made to ensure that the properties under all the layouts are registered only through e-AASTHI. Sources said that the Cauvery software related to registration of properties, there is no provision to register properties if it is unauthorised.

Source: The Hindu, p.13 Feb. 16, 2024





The city's civic body has 20.22 lakh buildings in the tax net. However, BBMP officials themselves concede that there are nearly 5 to 7 lakh properties still out of the tax net. K. MURALI KUMAR

# Bengaluru's property tax conundrum

In an effort to reduce its reliance on the State government for financial support, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike has set out to improve property tax collection. While it has served notices on defaulters to pay up, the owners are alleging harassment and saying the civic body too is at fault. **Shreyas H.S.** examines the multiple issues facing both the BBMP as well as property owners

**A**s Bengaluru's civic officials were in the process of sealing down a shop in the neighbourhood of R.T. Nagar in north Bengaluru over alleged property tax evasion, the 50-year-old property owner Shankar T. collapsed in shock. The civic officials, taken aback, returned the keys even as the man was grappling to arrange money to clear the dues and penalty. Although he was running a commercial establishment, he was paying property tax stipulated for a residential property.

Shankar, in his defence, said he had been paying residential property tax as prescribed without fail, as only a small portion of the residential building on the ground floor had been rented to a shop. "Now I have taken loans to pay the civic body. For many years now, nobody had raised any objections, and now all of a sudden they want us to pay arrears, interest on that, and a hefty penalty," he rued.

In another case, Ramesh Raj, who had rented out his property for a small hotel, is asked to pay ₹3.5 lakh tax with penalty and interest for not paying commercial property tax. He has to pay the commercial property tax for the last five years. The residential property tax is pegged at ₹600, while the commercial is fixed at ₹14,000

per year. "I have now paid half the sum and am now struggling to arrange the money," he said.

Commercial properties and residential properties rented out attract a higher property tax than self-occupied residential properties. The cash-strapped city civic body, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), now on a special drive to augment its revenues to reduce its dependence on the State government for grants, has served such demand notices on over 15,000 properties in the city over the last three months.

## Property owners cry foul

Many property owners who have received demand notices for arrears, interest, and penalty have been crying foul, alleging harassment by civic officials and pointing out that the civic body was also at fault.

In an election season, a delegation of the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party MLAs and MPs from the city termed the drive "a loot of the people" and demanded that the State government withdraw these notices for a hefty penalty. The BJP has also argued that under Section 144 (15) (8) of the BBMP Act 2020, the civic body cannot levy fines retrospectively.

Following similar petitions by property owners at a public grievance redressal meeting in the city on January 17, Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister D.K. Shivakumar said the State government was mulling over legal measures to cancel penalties levied on arrears. "The hefty penalty is being levied as per BBMP Act, 2020, which was brought by the BJP. We need to bring an amendment to withdraw these penalty notices. We are thinking along those lines," he said.

However, neither has there been any announcement of such an amendment Bill being in the pipeline in the ongoing Budget session of the Karnataka Legislature, nor has the BBMP let up to date.



There are lakhs of buildings outside the tax net in the city. This is the source of major corruption in the city. Without bringing these buildings into the tax net, the government is penalising taxpayers who may have not been completely honest but are at least paying some tax.

N.S. MUKUNDA  
Bengaluru Praja Vedic

## Target for every ARO

As part of a recent exercise of matching the property tax database of the city with the database of commercial power connections, the city's civic body uncovered a tax evasion of nearly ₹600 crore.

This is part of the nearly ₹1,300 crore total arrears identified now. Of the newly uncovered evasion of ₹600 crore, the civic body has already collected almost 25% of the arrears over the last three months, sources in the BBMP Revenue Department said.

For the recovery of these arrears, the BBMP is seizing movable properties and even attaching immovable properties.

It has sealed down more than 10,600 properties after senior IAS officer Munish Moudgil took charge as Special Commissioner (Revenue) of BBMP in October 2023 and launched this special drive. As of February 8, the civic body has already collected ₹3,548 crore in property tax and cesses against a revenue target of ₹4,790 crore.

## Govt. facing fund crunch

The ongoing special drive comes in the context where the State government faces a fund crunch as significant budgetary resources are being earmarked for implementing five guarantee schemes that were Congress's poll promises. In the Budget, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah is set to present on Friday (February 16), the guarantee schemes are expected to have an allocation of over ₹50,000 crore.

A source in the BBMP said the Assistant Revenue Officials (AROs) are directed to issue at least 25 notices per week and shut 20 shops per day. The officials are working under extreme pressure as they were warned of suspension for failing to reach the target set by the Revenue Department.

A senior BBMP official says this rigour is due to stern direction to improve tax revenue by Bengaluru Development Minister Shivakumar, who, shortly after taking over in May 2023, said the Self Assessment Scheme for property tax in the city had led to evasion as people were not honest and under-declared their properties.

The city's civic body brought in the SAS scheme for property tax in 2002, under which property owners self-declared the dimensions and nature of their property and paid the tax. The civic body has to verify the self-declaration of a random sample to ensure there is no tax evasion.

## BBMP's dependence on govt.

However, the civic body has been able to collect only a fraction of the potential for property tax in the city, making it heavily dependent on State government funds for not just capital expenditures but also operational expenditures.

For instance, the Economic Survey for the year 2016-17 presented by the Union government studied property tax collection and potential in Bengaluru and Jaipur, Rajasthan, using satellite imagery and actuals. "The estimate indicates Bengaluru has the potential to collect up to 4 to 7 times its current property tax revenue," the report said.

Seven years ago, in 2016-17, the Economic Survey estimated that considering the minimum Floor Space Index (FSI), the potential for property tax was ₹4,369 crore, and it goes up to ₹8,693 crore considering the maximum FSI and ₹6,526 crore at an average FSI. Seven years later, during which time, the city is sure to have added several properties, the BBMP is yet to even set a property tax target of average FSI value from seven years ago.

## Marginal progress

But it doesn't mean that there has been no progress on this front. As per a study by the Janagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, in 2016-17, the same year as the Economic Survey cited above, State government grants made up 53% of the city's civic budget, even as 47% of the budget came from the civic body's own revenues. In the estimates for 2023-24, the dependence on State government grants has reduced to 37% even as the share of the civic body's own revenues has shot up to 58%.

Srikanth Viswanathan, CEO of Janagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy, said BBMP had been moving in the right direction over the past few years by steadily increasing property tax collections. "Linking of property tax databases to stamp duties and registration charges databases and using power and water supply databases for big data analytics, and an 80-20 approach of focusing on high-value properties and others would further help better the performance," he said.

## Tax collection drive faces flak

However, some civic activists have taken strong objection to the ongoing special drive to augment property tax collection. N.S. Mukunda, of Bengaluru Praja Vedic, and one of the original proponents of SAS for property tax in the early 2000s, said the government was only penalising at least a "partially honest" taxpayer. "There are lakhs of buildings outside the tax net in the city. This is the source of major corruption in the city. Without bringing these buildings into the tax net, the government is penalising taxpayers who may have not been completely honest but are at least paying some tax," he said.

Presently, the city's civic body has 20.22 lakh buildings in the tax net. However, BBMP officials themselves concede that there are nearly 5 to 7 lakh properties still out of the tax net, which do not pay any tax. "The number of properties out of the tax net has always been over 5 lakh for over a decade now. Without this number coming down, there is no meaning or justification for penalising taxpayers, who may have underpaid," Mukunda argued.

Former Congress councillor Abdul Wajid said the ongoing special drive has led to harassment of small and mid-level property taxpayers. "Under the SAS, people may have understated the measurement, but what did the revenue officials do all these years? There is a fault on the BBMP's end, which should be taken into consideration before taking stringent action. He said on a daily basis, he is receiving calls from property owners seeking help to convince BBMP to provide flexibility," he said. He also said the civic body, which is chasing small defaulters, there were many big defaulters from whom the civic body has failed to collect dues.

## Making defaulters pay a big challenge

Even as property tax collection has improved over the years, tax evasion and pending dues are also mounting, which the civic body has failed to address successfully. The major challenge faced by the BBMP is recovering tax dues from large defaulters. Among the top 50 defaulters, some have pending dues, even to the tune of ₹150 crore.

"The defaulters approaching courts to secure a stay order is a major hurdle in the tax collection. Many violators and tax evaders are successfully obtaining stay orders. Over the years, the frail legal team failed to win these cases in the courts," Moudgil said, adding that the legal team had been revamped. BBMP will soon publish the names of top 50 defaulters.



**Source: The Hindu, p.8, Feb. 16, 2024**

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# Govt's committed expenditure increase offsets tax growth

BV.Shivashankar@timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** Although tax revenue has surged 12%, the positive trend is overshadowed by a similar surge in unproductive committed expenditure. This means chief minister Siddaramaiah may have to lean heavily on loans in his budget next week.

Tax revenue at the end of Jan stood at Rs 1.3 lakh crore, an increase from the Rs 1.1 lakh crore collected during the same period last year. Finance department officials attribute



this to tax buoyancy, although the state may narrowly fall short of its annual target of Rs 1.7 lakh crore.

But the rise of committed expenditure — interest payments, pensions, and salaries — is a worry. Interest payments amount to Rs 34,024 crore, pensions to Rs 25,116 crore, and salaries amount to about Rs 45,000 crore. They

account for about 75% of tax revenue.

This adds to revenue expenditure of Rs 2.5 lakh crore allocated to guarantee schemes, subsidies, and other welfare initiatives. So far, the government has spent Rs 1.8 lakh crore under the revenue expenditure head.

Because of this fiscal challenge, Siddaramaiah previously proposed a revenue deficit of Rs 12,523 crore (0.5% of GSDP) in the 2023-24 budget, but he is anticipated to present a revenue surplus budget next week.

Basavaraja Rayareddi, economic adviser to the CM, said, "The increase in committed expenditure means we will be left with little money for capital expenditure [developmental works]. We will have to minimize all kinds of unproductive spending."

Despite these hurdles, Sid-

daramaiah aims to increase the budget outlay for 2024-25 to Rs 3.8 lakh crore from the previous Rs 3.3 lakh crore. This will involve heightened borrowing. Tax devolution from the central pool will increase to Rs 44,000 crore for 2024-25 from Rs 37,252 crore in the current fiscal and will offer support.

BV Madhusudan Rao, senior research advisor, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies, said, "GSDP has increased from Rs 25.7 lakh crore to Rs 29.5 lakh crore. This has given the CM leeway to borrow more than Rs 1 lakh crore."

Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) norm caps total liability on the state at 3% of GSDP. The current liability stands at 5.7 lakh crore which means the state can borrow

up to Rs 1.2 lakh crore, but Siddaramaiah is likely to restrict it to Rs 1 lakh crore.

**Total expenditure for 2023-24**  
₹3,27,747cr

**Expenditure till 31 Jan**  
₹2,27,179cr

**Capital expenditure**  
₹46,136cr

**Revenue expenditure**  
₹1,81,042cr

**Tax revenue estimated**  
₹1,73,302cr

**Collected till 31 Jan**  
₹1,31,760cr

**Source: The Times of India, p.6, Feb. 10, 2024**

# State wipes slate clean, drafts new policy for electric vehicle sector

Sandeep.Moudgal  
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**Bengaluru:** Stung after losing investments from major electric vehicle (EV) manufacturing companies to neighbouring Tamil Nadu, which offers far more attractive subsidies, the Karnataka govt is gearing up to revamp its electric vehicle manufacturing policy under the banner 'Clean Mobility'.

This initiative aims to provide a renewed impetus to the EV sector in the state while also incorporating a futuristic approach.

The industries department has reportedly revised its incentives and subsidies to attract companies to establish their operations in Karnataka. A key highlight of the policy is its emphasis on fuel-agnostic technology, positioning Karnataka as a frontrunner in the clean energy automobile market.

Fuel-agnostic technology, believed to be the future of the automobile industry, allows engines to utilise low or zero carbon emission fuels such as natural gas or hydrogen.

S Selvakumar, additional chief secretary (industries), said the govt envisions a future where automobiles predominantly operate on clean energy, with a focus not limited to electric vehicles alone. He said stakeholders were included in discussions "to ensure comprehensive participation".

Sources within the industries department say the new policy may extend incentives to consumers as well, offering subsidies on purchase of clean energy automobiles to

## Fresh funding for B'luru suburban rail, launch deadline now moved to Dec '27

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** The state govt has said Bengaluru's suburban railway project (BSRP) will be ready for launch by Dec 2027 — an extension of the deadline — even as it took a big step on Friday towards becoming a reality.

In June 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had promised to ensure completion of the project in 40 months — by Dec 2025 — but little progress has been made on the ground.

Funding has been one of the biggest bugbears of the project and this has delayed commencement of work on Corridor-1 and Corridor-3. Funding comprises contributions from Karnataka govt, ministry of railways, and external borrowing.

However, in a significant milestone, the state govt on Thursday signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with KFW Development

mitigate the impact of the withdrawal of the FAME II subsidy by the central govt.

Minister MB Patil said the clean mobility policy has reached its final stages, and a draft policy has been forwarded to the finance department for approval. "We have crafted the policy with a long-term perspective for Karnataka's development and anticipate that it would be presented to the cabinet soon. We



**FUNDS INFUSION:** Minister MB Patil and other officials with the delegation from KFW Development Bank in Bengaluru on Friday

Bank of Germany to fund the project. Industries minister MB Patil on Friday said KFW Development Bank has committed Rs 4,561 crore — a 20-year loan at an annual interest rate of 4%. He said the infusion of funds from KFW Development Bank will help vault niggling hurdles.

N Manjula, managing director, K-RIDE (Rail Infra-

structure Development Company-Karnataka) — the special purpose vehicle to implement the project — emphasised the project's strategic alignment with Bengaluru's existing infrastructure and its potential to alleviate urban congestion.

She said BSRP is designed to "complement rather than compete" with the Metro Rail, chaired a meeting to chalk out a policy to promote green hydrogen in the state. Industries minister MB Patil was also in attendance.

**Green hydrogen policy**  
Energy minister KJ George

Green hydrogen is produced through electrolysis of water using renewable electricity. The objective of the policy is to produce at least 0.5 million tonnes per annum, catering to the domestic and export markets.

This entails attracting in-

vestments that qualify under the strategic interventions for green hydrogen transition (SIGHT) under the National Green Hydrogen Mission; to foster demand for green hydrogen and its derivatives among industry and mobility sectors through fiscal incentives; and to enable employment generation through skilling programmes, as well as to enable strategic tie-ups with industry and other stakeholders.

offering commuters greater flexibility and convenience.

Once complete, the railway network will span 148km and encompass 58 stations across four corridors, with a projected cost of Rs 15,767 crore. Phase one of Corridor-2 — Chikkabanavara-Yeshwantpur — is slated for completion by June 2025, and phase two — Yeshwantpur-Benniganahalli — by June 2026. Similarly, Corridor-4 segment from Benniganahalli-Rajanukunte is earmarked for completion by December 2026.

Corridor-1 has been divided into two parts. The Yelahanka-Devanahalli section is scheduled to be completed by December 2026, and the Bengaluru City-Yelahanka stretch by December 2027.

Patil reassured stakeholders of the govt's commitment to resolving lingering issues, including land acquisition concerns associated with Corridor-1 and Corridor-3.

**Source: The Times of India, p.6, Feb. 10, 2024**



# Banks may benefit from Paytm vacuum as merchants look for options

## Shop owners are adopting UPI offerings from traditional banks

ANJALI JAIN  
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Reserve Bank of India's decision last week to indefinitely halt operations of Paytm Payments Bank post-February 29 has emerged as an opportunity for not just rival payments providers, but the older brick and mortar banks that have been trying to get a foot in the burgeoning market after shunning it earlier.

Multiple merchants in Bengaluru told *DH* that banks they have accounts with approached them over the past week to pitch their own QR codes and alternatives to Paytm soundboxes. Point of sale (PoS) machines, popularised in India by Paytm, give audio confirmation for payment that merchants usually buy or pay a

monthly subscription fee for.

This even as Paytm is trying to improve regulatory compliance. The company will form an advisory committee on compliance and regulatory matters, which will be headed by former Securities and Exchange Board of India chairman M. Damodaran, it said on Friday.

"We have tied up with HDFC now after Pine Labs approached us last week. Our new QR Code and payment device will arrive in a couple of days," said the manager of Madurai Idly Shop, a prominent eatery in Indiranagar. A similar story was narrated by merchants in various neighbourhoods across the city.

Pine Labs provides PoS devices to merchants through banks including HDFC, which



has a payment application called PayZapp along with a merchant application – Smart Hub Vyapar. Both applications have been gaining significant traction in the past few days, HDFC's group head for payments, consumer finance and marketing, Parag Rao, recently revealed at a launch event.

Similar is the case with Yes Bank, which had last year launched a UPI based plug-in service called HyperUPI in collaboration with JusPay which allows customers to take payments directly on merchant apps without the need of a third-party like Paytm.

"I don't trust Paytm anymore. We don't know what will

happen. Even this news was so sudden. Yes Bank agents came and convinced me to shift to their QR code, which will send money directly to my current account," said a kirana shop owner in New Thippasandra. Both banks declined to comment when *DH* reached out to them.

"Paytm had a first mover advantage and innovative ideas like the soundbox which allowed it to capture a large market before other players came in. When it was entering the merchant payment space, banks neglected it to continue focusing on their traditional business, until it became too big to ignore," said Rakesh

Shinde, head of investor relations at financial services firm Aavas Financiers.

The UPI merchants payment market in India is growing at a very rapid pace and is expected to reach \$1 trillion by FY26 according to a report by Bain and Company. Big banks lost the initial momentum that was scooped up by new age players like Paytm, BharatPe and PhonePe because they underestimated the market potential.

But with growing demand, banks also want a piece of the pie. And the vacuum created by Paytm, and BharatPe, have given them the perfect opportunity, Shinde said.

"This is a good time for banks to market their UPI offerings and capture the market. Merchants would prefer trustworthy banks over new companies, especially due to their regulatory uncertainty. Banks' market share is likely to increase in the coming time and tech-focused ones like HDFC, Yes Bank, Kotak Mahindra and IDFC are likely to benefit from this," he opined.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.11, Feb, 10, 2024**

# 128 ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಂದ 33 ಸಾವಿರ ಮಂದಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ ₹6,407 ಕೋಟಿ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಗೆ ಅಸ್ತು

■ **ವಿಕ ಸುದ್ದಿಯೋಕ** ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ರಾಜ್ಯದ ನಾನಾ ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಉದ್ಭವ ಗಳನ್ನು ಆರಂಭಿಸುವ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಒಟ್ಟು 6,407 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ 128 ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಮೋದನೆ ದೊರಕಿದೆ.

ಕೈಗಾರಿಕೆ ಮತ್ತು ಮೂಲಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಸಚಿವ ಎಂ.ಬಿ.ಪಾಟೀಲ್ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದ 143ನೇ ಏಕಗವಾಕ್ಷಿ ಅನುಮೋದನಾ ಸಮಿತಿ ಸಭೆ ಈ ಹೂಡಿಕೆ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅನುಮೋದಿಸಿದ್ದು, ಈ ಯೋಜನೆ ಗಳಿಂದ ಸುಮಾರು 33,771 ಜನರಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಅವಕಾಶ ದೊರೆಯಲಿವೆ. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ, ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ, ರಾಮನಗರ ಮತ್ತು ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯ ನಾನಾ ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಟ್ಟಿಗೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ 485 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯ ಯಾಂತ್ರೀಕೃತ ಎರಕಹೊಯ್ಯುವ ಘಟಕ ಸ್ಥಾಪನೆ. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಗ್ರಾಮಾಂತರ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿ 484.33 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮೊತ್ತದ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ -ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನ ಸಂಶೋಧನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕೌಶಲ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸ್ಥಾಪನೆ. ಮೈಸೂರು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ 415 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮೊತ್ತದ ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಮಿತಿ ಟ್ರಸ್ಟ್‌ನ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ ಸ್ಥಾಪನೆ ಮತ್ತಿತರ ಯೋಜನೆಗಳು

ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇರಿವೆ.

50 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ.ಗಳಿಗೂ ಅಧಿಕ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯ 22 ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಬೃಹತ್ ಮತ್ತು ಮಧ್ಯಮ ಯೋಜನೆ ಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಮೋದನೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇವುಗಳಿಂದ 4230.64 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮೊತ್ತದ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ 24,846 ಜನರಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಅವಕಾಶಗಳು ದೊರೆಯಲಿವೆ. 15 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಗಳಿಂದ 50 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮೊತ್ತದವರೆ ಗಿನ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯ ಒಟ್ಟು 104 ಹೊಸ ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುಮೋದನೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇವುಗಳಿಂದ 2056.68 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮೊತ್ತದ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ 8,425 ಜನರಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಸಿಗಲಿವೆ.

ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಹೂಡಿಕೆಯ ಎರಡು ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಗೂ ಸಭೆ ಅನುಮೋದನೆ ನೀಡಿದ್ದು, ಇದರಿಂದ 120.50 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಹೂಡಿಕೆ ಆಗಲಿದ್ದು ಕನಿಷ್ಠ 500 ಜನರಿಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗಗಳು ಸಿಗಲಿವೆ. ಸಭೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಮತ್ತು ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಆಯುಕ್ತ ಶಾಲಿನಿ ರಜನೀಶ್, ಕೈಗಾರಿಕಾ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಪ್ರಧಾನ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಎಸ್. ಸೆಲ್ವಕುಮಾರ್, ಇಲಾಖೆ ಆಯುಕ್ತ ಗುಂಜನ್ ಕೃಷ್ಣ, ಕೆಎಐಡಿಬಿ ಸಿಇಒ ಎನ್.ಮಹೇಶ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಹಿರಿಯ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಿದ್ದರು.



## ಅನುಮೋದನೆ ಪಡೆದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ಯೋಜನಾ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವನೆಗಳು

| ಕಂಪನಿ ಹೆಸರು                       | ಸ್ಥಳ           | ಹೂಡಿಕೆ (ಕೋ ರೂ.) | ಉದ್ಯೋಗ |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------|
| ಜಯಡಿ ಟೆಕ್ನಾಕ್ ಪ್ರೈ. ಲಿ.           | ಬೆಳಗಾವಿ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆ | 485             | 1025   |
| ಗೋಕುಲ ಎಜುಕೇಷನ್                    | ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ      | 484.33          | 660    |
| ಧರವಾಲ್ ಇಂಡಸ್ಟ್ರೀಸ್ ಪ್ರೈ. ಲಿ.      | ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ      | 465             | 1500   |
| ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಸಮಿತಿ ಟ್ರಸ್ಟ್    | ನಂಜನಗೂಡು       | 415             | 350    |
| ಶಿವಾ ಆಂಡ್ ಶಿವಾ ಹಾಪಿಟಲ್            | ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ      | 255             | 3830   |
| ಯುಆರ್‌ಸಿ ಕನ್‌ಸ್ಟ್ರಕ್ಷನ್ ಪ್ರೈ. ಲಿ. | ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ      | 228.73          | 371    |
| ಸೆಂಟ್ರಲ್ ವೇರ್‌ಹೌಸಿಂಗ್             | ದಾಬಸ್‌ಪೇಟೆ     | 155.50          | 206    |
| ಮೆಟಲ್ ಸ್ಟೋರೇಜ್ ಸಿಸ್ಟಮ್ಸ್          | ದಾಬಸ್‌ಪೇಟೆ     | 96              | 530    |
| ವೈರ್ಮನ್ ಇಂಡಸ್ಟ್ರೀಸ್ ಪ್ರೈ. ಲಿ.     | ದಾಬಸ್‌ಪೇಟೆ     | 95              | 500    |
| ಕ್ಲೌಡ್‌ವೇವ್ ಟೆಕ್ನಾಲಜೀಸ್ ಪ್ರೈ.     | ದಾಬಸ್‌ಪೇಟೆ     | 52              | 262    |

Source: Vijayakarnataka, p.04, Feb.11, 2024



# Spotlight on B'luru devpt, irrigation

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**Bengaluru:** The much talked about rivalry between chief minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar has turned the spotlight on expected budget allocations for water resources and Bengaluru development, portfolios which Shivakumar holds.

A section of Congress functionaries is said to have urged the CM to allocate



adequate funds to these departments, to present a picture of "unity".

"Theories are being floated on alleged friction between the CM and his deputy and the opposition is fanning it with selective remarks," said TB Jayachandra, senior Congress legislator and Karnataka's special representative in Delhi. "The perception that Shivakumar is eying the CM post and Siddaramaiah is



**DEMANDS LIST:** Siddaramaiah, on Sunday, met with members of farmer groups besides various other stakeholders as part of budget preparations

## Fund flow for water resources

2023-24: ₹19,057cr  
(irrigation and flood control)

2022-23: ₹22,933cr

## Allocation for water resources:

₹16,760cr

Released till Jan end:

₹11,500cr

Spent so far: ₹10,619cr

## Bengaluru development

Allocated in 2023-24: ₹3,350cr

Sought for 2024-25: ₹8,000cr

blocking it is fueling this speculation. The best thing the CM can do to put speculation at rest is to leverage the budget and allocate sufficient funds to the departments held by the deputy CM."

In his budget last year, Sid-

daramaiah had reduced allocations for water resources, earmarking Rs 19,057 crore for irrigation and flood control. It was a 17% decrease from Rs 22,933 crore allocated in the previous budget.

Of the 16,760 crore allocated for water resources, the finance department released Rs 11,500 crore till Feb 1 and the department has spent Rs 10,619 crore so far.

Now, the water resources department expects the CM to double allocation to Rs 36,000 crore while actual requirement to complete the pending projects is more than Rs 56,000 crore. Shivakumar, during a pre-budget meeting last week, is learnt to have said that he did not pressure the finance department last year in view

of guarantee schemes that were in the initial stage of implementation, but he needs adequate funds for 2024-25.

"Irrigation projects worth Rs 1 lakh crore have been sanctioned and more than Rs 56,000 crore worth of works have been tendered. The department needs at least Rs 20,000 crore to finish projects which are 90% complete," said an advisor to Shivakumar.

While Siddaramaiah allocated Rs 7,400 crore for Bengaluru's development under Nagrothana scheme for five years, the city got about Rs 3,350 crore for 2023-24. Now, Shivakumar is seeking more than Rs 8,000 crore for works such as restoring storm water drains (Rs 2,000 crore), ward works (Rs 1,500 crore) and flyovers (Rs 3,000 crore).

"The city's development needs govt's support," said NA Harris, Congress MLA and chairman of Bangalore Development Authority. "For instance, we need to hire urban designers through a global tender to prepare a master-plan. The govt must ensure funds for this."

**Source: The Times of India, p.4, Feb. 12, 2024**

# Five guarantees are helping 1.2 crore families come out of poverty: Governor

Over 5 crore in State will be promoted to middle-class status owing to implementation of these schemes, says Gehlot

## IN THE LEGISLATURE

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

**G**overnor Thawar Chand Gehlot said 1.2 crore families are rising above the poverty line and entering middle class owing to implementation of 'five guarantee schemes' by the Congress government in the State.

In his address to the joint session of both the Houses of the State legislature on Monday, the Governor said: "It is a global record that more than five crore people of the State will be promoted to middle-class status by implementation of five guarantees — Shakti, Anna Bhagya, Griha Jyoti, Griha Lakshmi, and Yuva Nidhi — by the State government."

In the 24-page address, Mr. Gehlot largely spelt out the government's programmes, specifically the guarantee schemes. "My government has done what it has said, without compromising on the love, trust, and hopes of the people. It has brought about a wind of change in the lives of seven crore people of the State by launching a new era of happiness,



Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot addressing the joint session of the State legislature at the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Monday.  
SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

peace, and contentment."

"Shakti scheme, which provided free bus travel for women, benefited 3.5 crore women of Karnataka, including gender minorities and students irrespective of caste, religion. Women passengers have made more than 150 crore trips under the scheme. Under the Anna Bhagya scheme, 5 kg foodgrain and ₹34 per kg in lieu of additional 5 kg foodgrain

have been given to eligible families under DBT. From July 2023 to January 2024, ₹4,595 crore has been transferred to eligible beneficiaries," the Governor said.

Mr. Gehlot said: "Under the Gruha Jyoti scheme, free electricity has been provided to every household in the State subject to a maximum consumption limit of 200 units a month, and 1.5 crore consumers

have benefited."

Under the Gruha Lakshmi scheme, ₹17,500 crore has been allocated for providing ₹2,000 per month to the woman head of every eligible family. About 1.17 crore beneficiaries have registered, and ₹11,037 crore has been released to beneficiaries till January 2024 through DBT. Under Yuva Nidhi scheme, orders have been issued by the government to provide a monthly allowance of ₹3,000 to unemployed graduates and ₹1,500 to diploma holders, the Governor said.

"Economic activities are picking up due to accumulation of purchasing power among the people due to the guarantee schemes. The guarantee schemes are a model for the country. Other governments are competing to adopt these schemes," Mr. Gehlot said in his hour-long address to members.

The schemes have provided solace to people suffering from growing economic inequality. The money in the hands of the people from the schemes has given a boost to the economy, he said.

On the investment front, the State has received ₹77,000 crore in the

last eight months. Apparently referring to alleged discrimination in devolution of taxes to the State by the Centre, he said: "Karnataka ranks second in GST collection in the country, but it ranks 10th in terms of receipt of tax share."

Despite the drought, Mr. Gehlot said: "There is a record level of development in the fields of road, water, education, health, agriculture, sericulture, animal husbandry, and industry. It is a record that out of the total Budget announcements, notifications have been issued and implemented in 97% of the total announcements."

Emphasising the government's efforts in reducing economic inequality, Mr. Gehlot said: "Development not only means economic development, but also includes sustainable development and social harmony. The government has been following the 'Karnataka model' since it came to power and aims to further strengthen this model, and make Karnataka a unique State in the entire country."

With the Governor's address, the 10-day State Budget session has commenced.

**Source: The Hindu, p.4, Feb. 13, 2024**



# Gov peppers speech with pointers on drought relief, tax devolution

## Constitution our nat'l religion, Gehlot tells joint session

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a speech laced with political messaging targeting the BJP, Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot on Monday said the Constitution is the "national religion" while also lamenting the delay by the Union government in the release of drought relief.

Gehlot, in his address to the joint session of the legislature, also brought up how Karnataka is getting shortchanged in tax devolution.

"As per our Constitution, there are restrictions on the use of religion, caste etc in elections. We should ensure

that all our actions and activities are in accordance with the Constitution. We all need to be determined and protect the Constitutional institutions so that they are not weakened or misused for any reason," Gehlot said.

"We have to take a firm pledge that if we protect the Constitution, the Constitution will protect us," he added.

"My government has the desire to implement every aspiration of the Constitution literally. We have intensified our efforts to protect and uphold the Constitution, protect human rights and establish the desires of the Constitu-



Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot takes the grand steps of the Vidhana Soudha to address the joint session of the state legislature in Bengaluru on Monday. Legislative Assembly Speaker UT Khader is seen. DH PHOTO/S K DINESH

tion. Necessary laws are being framed to improve the law and justice system," Gehlot said.

Gehlot said his government is ready to implement more pro-people schemes, but there are not enough resources available. "Karnataka ranks second among the states that collect the highest tax in the country. But it is ranked tenth

in terms of receipt of tax share. My government is putting every effort to get our due share rightfully and justifiably," he said.

Gehlot said 223 taluks are drought-hit and that the state government had sought financial assistance of Rs 18,171.44 crore. "Till now, no amount has been released. The state

government is making all necessary efforts to release drought relief urgently to alleviate the sufferings of the people," he said.

Stating that the government had declared 12th-century social reformer Basavanna as the state's cultural leader, Gehlot said: "People like Basavanna, Allama Prabhu, who formed a movement against Manuvada and sowed the dream of equality, need to be our inspiration again and again in our actual life."

Without mentioning the NEP, Gehlot said Karnataka's State Education Policy would create "new possibilities of providing education that will meet the needs of present and future." The government, he said, has realized the necessity of correcting the deficiencies in the field of education. "The State Education Policy will show a new direction for the country in this regard."

**Source: Deccan Herald, p. 5, Feb. 13, 2024**

# Hookah bars exploiting loophole to avoid GST and 'sin tax': Health experts

Strategy employed by bars involves presenting hookah as component of food and beverages, thereby subjecting it only to a 5% GST rate, says official

Afshan Yasmeen  
BENGALURU

Following the recent ban, hookah bars in Karnataka have come under scrutiny for evading GST and 'sin tax'. Public health advocates said hookah bars have been exploiting a loophole in the GST system to avoid the prescribed 28% GST rate and a 72% cess, known as a "sin tax", by serving hookah as part of their food and beverage offerings. This controversial practice has raised significant concerns among regulatory authorities and public health advocates.

While the Shisha Cafes and Restaurants' Association has approached the court claiming that the ban has resulted in employment loss, public health advocates said their licences are for running restaurants and not hookah bars. Hence, there is no question of employment loss.



Public health advocates say that the licences are for running restaurants and not hookah bars. FILE PHOTO

U.S. Vishal Rao, member of the State government's High Power Committee on Tobacco Control, said the strategy employed by hookah bars involves presenting hookah as a component of

food and beverages, thereby subjecting it only to a 5% GST rate.

"Proponents of this approach argue that hookah can be classified as an "article for human consumption", allowing it to fall un-

der the lower tax bracket. However, this argument is contentious, as hookah is not a traditional food item and is widely acknowledged to pose significant health risks, including potential harm to respiratory

and cardiovascular systems," Dr. Rao told *The Hindu*.

"Moreover, it has been observed that hookah bars may be neglecting the display of health warnings while serving hookah, further exacerbating concerns about their compliance with public health and safety regulations. The absence of prominent health advisories raises serious questions about the establishments' commitment to safeguarding the well-being of their patrons and the general public," he said.

Dr. Rao said the implications of this practice extend beyond potential tax evasion, touching upon broader issues of public health, consumer protection, and regulatory compliance.

**Legal business, says association**

However, Mohammed Danish, president of the

Shisha Cafes and Restaurants' Association, claimed their business is legal and legitimate.

"Apart from purchasing tax, sales tax and several other licence fees, we pay GST ranging between ₹15,000 to ₹20,000 to the government monthly," he said.

"Hookah smoking could be compared to smoking cigarettes, and the High Court had earlier ruled that a trade licence was sufficient to run a hookah bar, and if a dedicated smoking area is provided within a restaurant, then there were no legal issues running the business," he explained.

He said the Association had on February 9 approached the court challenging the State government's order banning the use, sale, or service of smoking hookah in Karnataka. "We are planning to file another blanket petition on Tuesday," he said.

**Source: The Hindu, p.2, Feb. 13, 2024**



**OLD STORY** Loans Were Disbursed Between 1977 And 2007 | 5.6% Stake In Mysore

# CAG report: State-run entities owe govt ₹10k cr, BWSSB is top debtor

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** Even while concerns swirl over the govt's financial health, a report reveals that 28 state-run boards, corporations and other firms owe the govt a staggering Rs 10,390 crore and some of these loans have been outstanding for the past 45 years.

Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) stands at the top of the list of debtors with dues of Rs 8,094 crore outstanding. The loan goes way back to 1977. Karnataka Urban Water Supply and Drainage Board (KUWSDB), with an outstanding amount of Rs 1,576 crore since 1986, is a distant second.

These loans were extended between 1977 and 2007 and the bulk remain unpaid, a report by Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) states.

Besides KUWSDB and BWSSB, Karnataka Housing Board, Bangalore Development Authority, Hutti Gold Mines, Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Ltd among others owe the govt money.

The total principal due stands at Rs 9,380 crore, although many entities have been making regular interest

## Sparks fly over law and order

Tensions flared in the legislative assembly as BJP accused the govt of fostering a "goonda rajya" (lawless state). Opposition leader R Ashoka kicked off a debate on the deteriorating law and order situation by highlighting recent incidents, including the case of public humiliation in Belagavi and a gang rape in Haveri.

Ashoka's call for an adjournment motion faced resistance from Congress, leading to tumult. Home minister G Parameshwara assured action, but BJP MLAs pressed for immediate intervention. Amid heated exchanges, speaker UT Khader said only one adjournment notice could be considered per day, and since JD(S) had given prior notice, BJP's motion was moved to Wednesday.

payments. So far, these entities have paid back Rs 5,466 crore, mostly in interest.

For example, the principal amount of BWSSB's loan, initiated in 1977, ballooned to Rs 7,085 crore and Rs 5,059 crore interest. Despite repaying Rs 4,049 crore in interest, the



**HOLDING FORTH:** Deputy chief minister DK Shivakumar and home minister G Parameshwara with legislators in the assembly on Tuesday

## BJP objects to ₹32 cr grant for waqf assets

BJP criticized the government's decision to allocate Rs 32 crore to safeguard waqf properties, citing more compelling issues such as drought and a drinking water crisis. On social media, BJP accused chief minister Siddaramaiah of prioritising the development of a "specific community" rather than addressing issues faced by all citizens. They likened the move to Nero fiddling while Rome burnt. The govt announced the grant on Feb 7.

board still owes the govt a hefty Rs 8,094 crore as of March 31, 2023.

There is also the preposterous case of Karnataka State Seeds Corporation Ltd which borrowed Rs 1.4 crore in 1977. Although it repaid a staggering Rs 7.3 crore in interest, the

principal remains unpaid.

The CAG report also flags a separate issue concerning the single nodal agency (SNA) for central govt schemes in Karnataka. Despite transferring central and state shares amounting to Rs 12,069 crore and Rs 11,463 crore, respec-

## GOVT DEFAULTS ON INTEREST

The CAG report reveals the govt fell short of disbursing enough cash to pay interest on state govt employees' group insurance during the 2022-23 fiscal. While the govt allocated Rs 278 crore in its budget for the purpose, it failed to fulfil its obligation by Rs 84.7 crore for the fourth quarter due to insufficient funds. The responsibility for implementing the compulsory insurance programme for all state govt employees falls under the Karnataka government insurance department (KGID).

However, despite its crucial role, KGID had only Rs 45.4 crore in its kitty. As a result of this shortfall, KGID was compelled to seek re-appropriation to address the financial gap and meet its obligations.

tively, a significant sum of Rs 13,925 crore remained unspent in SNA bank accounts as of March 31, 2023.

The report highlights discrepancies in expenditure figures and urges transparent financial management practices within govt agencies.

**Source: The Times of India, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**

## 70% of 46L construction workers' cards bogus: Min

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** Labour minister Santosh Lad revealed that of the 46 lakh construction workers registered with Karnataka Construction Workers' Welfare Board, a staggering 70% are believed to be bogus.

He said the department has removed around 7 lakh fraudulent cards, but the process of weeding out these registrations requires time

and diligence.

Replying to BJP's Siddu Savadi during question hour in the legislative assembly on Tuesday, Lad disclosed that efforts are under way to identify and eliminate bogus registrations from the system. Savadi and other BJP members questioned the stringent registration process



imposed by the department. They questioned the practicality of demanding official reference letters from contractors and previous work locations for those wanting to register. BJP chief whip V Sunil Kumar highlighted the challenges faced by labourers in obtaining such documentation.

However, Lad emphasised

the importance of verifying the authenticity of registrations to ensure effective delivery of the govt's social security benefits. He cited instances, such as in Haveri district, where a significant number of worker cards were found to be bogus, underscoring the need for a thorough review process.

Lad outlined plans to establish nodal offices in every district to help workers submit

documents and streamline the registration process. He reiterated the commitment of the labour department to address the issue and ensure welfare reaches genuine beneficiaries.

The workers' board has a substantial corpus of more than Rs 2,000 crore and it plays a crucial role in providing social security benefits, including support for children's education and weddings of construction workers.

**Source: The Times of India, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**



# Namma Metro Phase 3 plan afoot; Rs 1,000 cr sought from state govt

As Centre preps to okay DPR, groundwork will start soon on West of ORR line

MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Groundwork is set to begin on Namma Metro's Phase 3 as the BMRCCL has sought over Rs 1,000 crore in the upcoming state budget to undertake works related to two new lines.

Phase 3 will be 44.65 km long and have two new lines (JP Nagar 4th Phase to Kempapura and Hosahalli to Kadabagere). The first line will cover the western part of the Outer Ring Road while the second will run along Magadi Road.

The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Phase 3 was sent to the union government in November 2022 for approval. After a lengthy discussion process, the Centre will likely approve the DPR by March, multiple sources in Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCCL) said.

"The union government usually takes 12-18 months to approve the DPR. So this is nothing unusual," a well-placed source told *DH*.

To carry out the groundwork, the BMRCCL has requested the state government to allocate Rs 1,003.47 crore in the upcoming budget for

| PHASE 3  |
|--|
| Length: <b>44.65 km</b>                                    |
| Lines: <b>2</b>  |
| Stations: <b>31</b>  |
| JP Nagar 4th Phase-Kempapura: <b>32.15 km; 23 stations</b> |
| Hosahalli-Kadabagere: <b>12.5 km; 9 stations</b>           |
| Funds sought in 2024-25: <b>Rs 1,003.47 cr</b>             |

Phase 3, the source added.

While a key sticking point about reducing the train length from six to three coaches for the Magadi Road line has been resolved, another official source said all nine stations between Hosahalli and Kadabagere would have the standard 135-metre-long platforms. "We may run six-coach trains in the future based on demand," the source added.

The BMRCCL has already undertaken pre-construction activities for the ORR line. These include shifting



Namma Metro's Phase 3 line will deviate from the road median to avoid demolishing the Delmia Circle flyover. *DH FILE PHOTO*

## Funds for metro

■ The BMRCCL has sought Rs 5,234.62 cr from the state government and Rs 2,597.57 cr from the Government of India for the 2024-25 financial year.

■ The state government funds will be spent on Phases 2, 2A, 2B and 3 while the GoI funds will be utilised for Phases 2, 2A and 2B, a well-placed source said.

of utilities, enumeration of trees and land acquisition.

Talking about land acquisition, the BMRCCL's General Manager (Land Acquisition) M S Channappagoudar said properties required to build stations and viaducts between JP Nagar 4th Phase and Mysuru Road had been identified and documents were being collected from owners.

However, land requirement plans for the Nagarabhavi-Kempapura stretch and the Magadi Road line are still being finalised, he added.

While the metro viaduct will mostly run along the median strip, it will

take a different route in some places given the presence of flyovers and railway lines. The alignment will change at the Delmia Circle flyover, Deve Gowda Petro Bunk and the flyover on Mysuru Road. In addition, the metro line will pass through defence land and skirt the railway line near Yeshwantpur.

"We will need private land to build the viaduct at these places," he told *DH*.

Channappagoudar added that land acquisition would start as soon as the government approved Phase 3 and would take 6-8 months.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p. 3A, Feb, 14, 2024**

# PRR project requires ₹24,000 cr.; it will be turned into economic corridor, says Dy. CM

**The Hindu Bureau**

**BENGALURU**

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Tuesday told the Legislative Assembly that the proposed Peripheral Ring Road (PRR) project in Bengaluru will be converted into an economic corridor and that the project would require an estimated ₹24,000 crore.

Responding to a call-attention notice tabled by BJP MLA Shailendra Bel-dale in the Assembly, Mr. Shivakumar said, "It has been 15 years since the project was proposed. Previous governments tried to begin the project. But they failed as no one came forward to bid for the tender. So now the plan is being changed and it will be

rolled out under the PPP model. The tender for this project has been called and February 29 is the last day for tender submission. The project requires an area of 2,596 acres, of which only 220 acres is government land, and the rest is private land."

## **In Cabinet**

"Even though there is a court order about compensation for this land, we have decided to discuss this issue in the State Cabinet and help farmers who are losing their land. I have assured the farmers that we will not de-notify this land again and we will implement the project. It is estimated that ₹24,000 crore is required for this project," Mr. Shivakumar said.

**Source: The Hindu, p.4, Feb. 14, 2024**



# ‘Govt. has not recovered huge loans since 1977’

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The State government has not recovered outstanding loans of ₹10,389.78 crore given to its eight departments and undertakings, which included borrowings since 1977, stated the Comptroller & Auditor General (CAG) report.

The CAG report on Finance Accounts for the 2022-23 fiscal was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Tuesday. “In respect of old loans amounting to ₹10,389.78 crore involving eight departments (21 loanee entities), recoveries of principal have not been effected for several years. This includes loans pending since the year 1977,” the report said.

The 21 loanee entities, most of them State-owned undertakings, have arrears of ₹15,856 crore, which includes principal of ₹9,380 crore.

The oldest arrears are from 1977 pertaining to loans given to the BWSSB, Karnataka State Seeds Corporation Ltd., the Electro Mobile India Ltd., and Karnataka State Tourism Development Corporation.

Further, the terms and conditions of repayment of loans have not been settled for the 28 statutory bodies or other entities with loans amounting to ₹1,462.01 crore as on March 31, 2023.

It said in recent years, the borrowing profile of the State has shown an increasing trend towards more reliance on open market borrowings. The outstanding market borrowings of the year (2022-23) worked out to 62.92% of the gross public debt and other liabilities. The government has raised market loans of ₹36,000 crore.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**

# Law to curb cricket betting and online gaming soon

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The Karnataka government on Tuesday announced that it would come out with a new legislation to curb cricket betting and online gaming.

Replying to concerns raised by members across party affiliations in the Assembly about the serious impact of betting and online gaming on youth, Home Minister G. Parameshwara said, "Soon we will bring out a new legislation to prevent this." At the same time, he sought to re-



G. Parameshwara

mind the Centre that it too had a role in curbing the menace by amending the Central legislation concerned.

Pointing out that the Centre was getting 28% GST on proceeds from online gaming, he said the Centre should not allow

online gaming to continue just because it is getting huge GST from it.

Earlier, IT&BT Minister Priyank Kharge said there was a dire need to clearly define "Game of Chance" and "Game of Skill" by both the State and the Centre to set the legal stage ready for banning online betting and gaming.

Pointing out that gaming transactions accounted for about ₹1.6 lakh crore, he said the Centre was getting nearly ₹74,000 crore as GST from these transactions. Some online gamers had even started playing on

the servers of other countries to avoid GST, he said.

The Home Minister also talked about drug cases, and said, "Our government has filed 6,764 cases related to drug peddling so far. In fact, the police recently seized 9,645 kg of ganja and 233 kg of synthetic drugs, together worth around ₹142 crore."

Dr. Parameshwara said the government had already deported 245 foreigners, mostly African nationals for their involvement in drug dealings.

Cases had been filed against 102 foreigners in

this regard, he said.

Earlier Congress MLA Ravi Ganiga alleged that the cricket betting had become so rampant in districts including Mandya that there were bookies in every prominent village. "After every IPL cricket match, the bookies are taking away two-wheelers from the youth who lose bets and fail to provide the betting amount," he said.

He alleged that the bookies had connections with all the three major political parties and used their influence whenever they were in trouble.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**

## Govt. will withdraw benefits to firms that failed to provide jobs to land-losers: Patil

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

Large and Medium Industries Minister M.B. Patil on Tuesday told the Legislative Assembly that the government would take strict action including withdrawal of incentives to the industries that have failed to provide jobs to land-losers despite availing incentives and subsidies from the government including allotment of land.

Replying to a call attention notice in this regard by JD(S) member Samruddhi

Manjunath, Mr. Patil said the rules made it clear that the industries would lose the incentives and the land if they failed to honour the commitment of providing jobs to land-losers depending upon their educational qualification.

Members across party affiliations alleged that various prominent industries who had availed land and other benefits from the government had failed to abide by the norm of providing jobs to land-losers or to the locals.

BJP member Arvind Bel-

lad alleged that the Infosys which had been given 58 acres of land in Hubballi for industrial purposes had actually "turned the land into a garden."

Claiming that the land had been granted to the Infosys at ₹35 lakh an acre as against the prevailing rate of ₹1.5 crore an acre hoping that the land-losers' children would get jobs, he said the hopes of the land-losers had now been dashed. Responding to this, the Minister said the government would look into the issue.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**



# ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇವಲ ಮೂರೇ ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 397 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಧೋಖಾ ತೆರಿಗೆ ವಂಚಿಸಲು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದ್ದ 223 ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿ ಸಿಬಿಐಸಿಯಿಂದ ಪತ್ತೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಟೋಪಿ!

■ ಕೀರ್ತಿಪ್ರಸಾದ್‌ರಾಯ್ ಸಿ. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು  
ಅಕ್ರಮವಾಗಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ಹೆಸರಲ್ಲಿ ನಕಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವಾಯ್ಸ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸುವ ಮುಖೇನ ಸರಕು ಮತ್ತು ಸೇವಾ ತೆರಿಗೆ (ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ) ವಂಚಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರುವುದು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಗಳಿಗೆ ತಲೆನೋವಾಗಿದೆ. ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಬರೇ 3 ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬರೋಬ್ಬರಿ 397 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಮೊತ್ತ ಮೂಡಿರುವುದು ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದೇ ವೇಳೆ ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಣಿಯಾಗಿರುವ 1 ಲಕ್ಷ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ 22 ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಬೋಗಸ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳೆಂಬುದು ಗೊತ್ತಾಗಿದೆ.

2023ರ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್‌ನಿಂದ ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್ ವರೆಗೆ ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ಪತ್ತೆಗಾಗಿ ಅಯಾ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಗಳ ನೆರವಿನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಯ ಪರೋಕ್ಷ ತೆರಿಗೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಕಸ್ಟಮ್ಸ್ ಮಂಡಳಿ (ಸಿಬಿಐಸಿ) ದೇಶಾದ್ಯಂತ ವಿಶೇಷ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಚರಣೆ ಕೈಗೊಂಡಿತ್ತು. ಈ ವೇಳೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದಲ್ಲಿ 223 ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಇನ್‌ವುಟ್ ಟ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ ಕ್ರೆಡಿಟ್ (ಜಟಿಸಿ) ವಂಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾಗಿಯಾಗಿರುವುದು ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇವುಗಳನ್ನು ಬಂಧಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ವಂಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳನ್ನು ಬೋಧಿಸಿ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಂಕರ ಯಾವುದೇ ರೀತಿಯ ಸರಕುಗಳನ್ನು ಪೂರೈಕೆ ಮಾಡದೆ ನಕಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವಾಯ್ಸ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿದ್ದು, ಅವುಗಳನ್ನೇ ಇನ್‌ವುಟ್ ಟ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ ಕ್ರೆಡಿಟ್ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಬಳಸಿರುವುದು ಪರಿಶೀಲನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೃಢಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಸಿಬಿಐಸಿ ನೀಡಿರುವ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ 3 ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 223 ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿವೆ. 397 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ವಂಚಿಸಿರುವುದು ಗೊತ್ತಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವುಟ್ ಟ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ ಕ್ರೆಡಿಟ್ ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಪ್ಲಾಕ್ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದು, 59 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮರು ವಸೂಲಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಅರಂಭದಲ್ಲೇ ಬೋಗಸ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ನೋಂದಣಿ ತಡೆಯುವ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಚರಣೆಯ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಯೋಮೆಟ್ರಿಕ್ ಆಧಾರಿತ ಆಧಾರ್ ದೃಢೀಕರಣ ಪೈಪ್ಲೈನ್ ಜಾರಿಗೆ ತರಲು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿದ್ದು, ಈಗಾಗಲೇ ಅಂದ್ವಜದೇಶ, ಗುಜರಾತ್ ಮತ್ತು ಪುನಃಜೀವನ ಪ್ರಾಯೋಗಿಕವಾಗಿ ಜಾರಿ ತರಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಈ ಕಡೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿನ



- ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಮೋಸ ಪತ್ತೆಗೆ ದೇಶವ್ಯಾಪಿ ವಿಶೇಷ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಚರಣೆ
- ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್-ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್ ವರೆಗೆ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ಜಾಲಾಡಿದ ಸಿಬಿಐಸಿ
- 4253 ನಕಲಿ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಿಂದ ₹12036 ಕೋಟಿ ಮೋಸ ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ

## ಹೇಗೆಲ್ಲ ಮೋಸ?

- ಸರಕು ಸೇವೆ ಪೂರೈಕೆ ಇಲ್ಲದೆಯೇ ನಕಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವಾಯ್ಸ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಿ, ಇನ್‌ವುಟ್ ಕ್ರೆಡಿಟ್ ಟ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಬಳಕೆ.
- ನಕಲಿ ಇನ್‌ವಾಯ್ಸ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಸಲೆಂದೇ ಅಮಾಯಕ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳಿಂದ ಆಧಾರ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಪಾನ್ ಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಪಡೆದು ಬೋಗಸ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳ ಹೆಸರಲ್ಲಿ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ನೋಂದಣಿ.
- ಯಾರದ್ದೋ ಆಧಾರ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಪಾನ್ ಕಾರ್ಡ್ ಗಳನ್ನು ಬಳಸಿ ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೂ ಆಧಾರ್, ಪಾನ್ ಕಾರ್ಡ್ ವಿವರ ಹುಚ್ಚಿ ಕೊಳ್ಳದಂತೆ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕರಿಗೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಸಲಹೆ.

ಸಾಧಕ-ಬಾಧಕಗಳನ್ನು ನೋಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಎಲ್ಲ ರಾಜ್ಯಗಳಿಗೂ ವಿವರಿಸಲು ಆರೋಗಿಸಿದೆ.

2023ರ ಮೇ ತಿಂಗಳಿಂದ 2024ರ ಜನವರಿವರೆಗೆ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ 44,015 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಇನ್‌ವುಟ್ ಟ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್ ಕ್ರೆಡಿಟ್ ವಂಚಿಸಿರುವುದು ಗೊತ್ತಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ 29,273 ಬೋಗಸ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಭಾಗಿಯಾಗಿರುವುದು ದೃಢಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. 44,015 ಕೋಟಿ ವಂಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ 15,240 ಕೋಟಿ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಹಾಗೂ 28,775 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಸೇರಿದ ಒಂದು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಸಹಿವಾಳುವಂತೆ ಹಿಣಿಸಿದೆ.

## ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ವಂಚನೆಯ ಟಾಪ್ 10 ರಾಜ್ಯಗಳು (2023 ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್-ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್)

| ರಾಜ್ಯ       | ವಂಚನೆ (ಕೋಟಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ) | ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿ | ವಸೂಲಿ | ಬಂಧನ |
|-------------|--------------------|------------|-------|------|
| ದೆಹಲಿ       | 3028               | 483        | 90    | 11   |
| ಮಹಾರಾಷ್ಟ್ರ  | 2021               | 926        | 102   | 11   |
| ಯುಪಿ        | 1645               | 443        | 44    | 05   |
| ಅಂದ್ವಜದೇಶ   | 765                | 19         | 11    | 00   |
| ಹರಿಯಾಣ      | 624                | 424        | 76    | 03   |
| ತೆಲಂಗಾಣ     | 536                | 117        | 235   | 01   |
| ತಮಿಳುನಾಡು   | 494                | 185        | 374   | 01   |
| ಗುಜರಾತ್     | 445                | 178        | 25    | 03   |
| ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ     | 397                | 223        | 59    | 02   |
| ಪಶ್ಚಿಮಬಂಗಾಳ | 343                | 126        | 18    | 00   |

## ವಂಚನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೆಹಲಿಯೇ ನಂ.1

ವಿಶೇಷ ಕಾರ್ಯಾಚರಣೆ ವೇಳೆ ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿರುವ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ವಂಚನೆ ಪಟ್ಟಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೇಶದ ರಾಜಧಾನಿ ನಡದೇಹಲಿ ನಂ.1 ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿದೆ. 2023ರ ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್‌ನಿಂದ ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರೋಬ್ಬರಿ 3,028 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ವಂಚಿಸಿರುವುದು ದೃಢಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. 483 ನಕಲಿ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು ಸಿಕ್ಕಿವಿದ್ದಿದ್ದು, 11 ಜನರನ್ನು ಬಂಧಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. 2ನೇ ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಹಾರಾಷ್ಟ್ರ ಇದ್ದು, 2201 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮೋಸ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. 926 ಬೋಗಸ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, 102 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ತೆರಿಗೆ ಮರು ವಸೂಲಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅಂದ್ವಜದೇಶ 3ನೇ ಸ್ಥಾನದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದು, 1,645 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ವಂಚಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. 443 ನಕಲಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿದ್ದು, 44 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮರು ವಸೂಲಿ ಮಾಡಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಸಿಬಿಐಸಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ನೀಡಿದೆ.

## ₹12,000 ಕೋಟಿ ಐಟಿಸಿ ಅಕ್ರಮ!

ಇದೇ 3 ತಿಂಗಳ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೇಶಾದ್ಯಂತ ಅಂದಾಜು 12,036 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ.ಗಳ ಐಟಿಸಿ ವಂಚನೆ ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. 4,153 ನಕಲಿ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳು ಸಿಕ್ಕಿವಿದ್ದಿವೆ. ಈ ಪೈಕಿ 2,358 ನಕಲಿ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳೇ ಪತ್ತೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಉಳಿದ ಬೋಗಸ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅಯಾ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಗಳು ಪತ್ತೆಹಚ್ಚಿವೆ. 1,317 ಕೋಟಿ ರೂ. ಮರು ವಸೂಲಿಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಒಟ್ಟಾರೆ 41 ಆರೋಪಿಗಳು ಬಂಧಿತರಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಈ ಪೈಕಿ 31 ಮಂದಿಯನ್ನು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಬಂಧಿಸಿದ್ದರೆ ಉಳಿದವರು ಅಯಾ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಜಿಎಸ್‌ಟಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕೈಗೆ ಸಿಕ್ಕಿವಿದ್ದಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

## EDUCATION

# Revision panel report yet to be submitted, delay likely in supply of textbooks

**Jayanth R.**  
BENGALURU

A delay is likely in the printing and supply of textbooks to schoolchildren in Karnataka for the 2024-25 academic year as the Textbook Revision Committee, headed by Manjunath G. Hegade, is yet to submit its report to the State government.

From the next academic year, steps have been taken to provide two books per year, divided into two parts – (Summative Assessment) SA-1 and SA-2. The Karnataka Text Book Society (KTBS) has to print about 12 crore textbooks. The delay in submission of the textbook revision com-

mittee report will delay the printing of textbooks.

In September 2023, the State government appointed the committee to re-examine the textbooks revised by the earlier committee headed by Rohit Chakratheertha in 2022-23. The committee said it would submit a report to the government by the end of January, 2024. However, the committee is yet to submit its report.

Sources in the Department of School Education and Literacy said that the unavailability of the Minister is the main reason for the delay in submission of the report. "The committee has decided to submit the report to the Minister

concerned. However, as the Minister is not available in his Bengaluru office for many days, the submission of the report is getting delayed. The Budget session will start on February 12, and the report may be submitted at that time," sources said.

### Delay in printing

To reduce the burden of school bags, the State government has decided to divide the textbooks into two parts – SA-1 and SA-2 – from the year 2024-25.

The KTBS has planned to print around 12.79 crore textbooks from classes 1 to 10 with a total of 984 titles. When the textbooks of about 120 pages are divid-

ed into SA-1 and SA-2, it is estimated that an additional 8 to 10 pages should be printed for each textbook, including the cover page. During 2023-24, around 6.39 crore text books were printed and supplied out of a total of 562 titles.

Tender rules for textbook printing are strict. Piece tender cannot be given for printing of textbooks. Also, all textbooks should be printed in the same publishing house. The tender process will be finalised after completion of other assessment, including quality of paper used for printing.

**CONTINUED ON**  
» PAGE 2

**Continued...**



## **From Page One**

### **Revision panel report yet to be submitted**

It takes at least 90 to 120 days to print such a large volume of text books. So, the department would finalise the tender process by the end of February and start the printing in March to ensure that the textbooks reach the children by June. Last year, the department had supplied textbooks to all schools by the end of May.

Prof. Hegade, Chairman, Textbook Revision Committee, told *The Hindu*, “Due to various reasons, submission of the textbook revision committee report has been slightly delayed. The report is ready, and will be submitted to the government next week.”

An official of KTBS said, “After the committee submits its report to the government, the report will be examined at the government level. The government then puts the report in the public domain and sets aside 15 days for submission of objections from the public. Then, this report should be approved at the government level, and approval for printing of text books should be given. All these processes should be completed by the end of March at least. Only after this, the KTBS should call for tender and issue the work order for printing of text books. This time SA-1 and S-2 textbooks have to be printed. So, at least four months are required to print. So, the availability of textbooks is doubtful even by July.”

**Source: The Hindu, p.1 & 2, Feb. 10, 2024**

# Twinning Prog: Study-abroad dream of students shattered

## Not authorised to give associate's degree, say collaborative varsities

BENGALURU, DHNS

The study-abroad dreams of several students, who had enrolled for the Twinning Diploma Programme launched by the previous BJP government at Sri Jayachamarajendra Government Polytechnic (SJP) in Bengaluru, were shattered as the overseas universities have been sending communication saying that they no longer offer such a course.

The programme was launched during the 2021-22 academic year and the students were supposed to be sent to the foreign universities for on-campus study during

their third-year/final semester of the course. As many as 48 third-year students have now lost their hopes after they received email communication from Athens State University in Greece stating that they are not authorised to give 'associate's degree'.

The email accessed by *DHNS* reads, "We have not been authorised to give an associate's degree for a very long time. So this is not a sudden change. Our original partnership depended on a collaboration with a community college that does offer an associate's degree. We have not been able to get this collaboration because of increased costs in

higher education."

The Athens State University further said that they can transfer the course credits and the candidates can get in touch with the community college to continue their educational goal.

Several parents and students staged a protest in front of the director of technical education office at KR Circle in Bengaluru a few days ago.

Parents of the aggrieved students claimed that the earlier agreements with Monte Carlo and Harrisburg Universities in Pennsylvania university in the United States of America were discontinued and the government signed agreement with Athens State University. The faculties from Athens varsity even conducted virtual classes for these students in the second-year.

"The officials of the technical education department are saying the MoU was scrapped in December 2023 itself and

the Athens state university had sent a communication regarding that. But the Athens university is still conducting online classes," said a parent.

"We suspect something fishy in this entire programme. The state government has cheated our children and shattered their dreams of studying at a collaborative foreign university. They joined the Cyber Security course, now college is asking them to study Computer Science," lamented another parent.

Meanwhile, the officials of the department blamed the officers who were involved in introducing this programme during the BJP's regime. "The department is not aware of the communication sent by the collaborative foreign universities since the emails are being sent to those who introduced this programme during the previous BJP government," they said.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3B, Feb, 10, 2024**



# Higher rungs of learning ladder out of reach

To leverage the demographic dividend and literacy, India needs a comprehensive policy to ensure youth have better access to higher education

R KRISHNAKUMAR  
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2023 underlines an exercise that tested critical thinking among the respondents of the national survey, all aged between 14 and 18 years and living in rural areas. Their task involved the calculation of money to be repaid on a loan of Rs 20,000, based on different interest rates offered by three banks. Two questions were posed: Which bank would you approach? What would be the amount to be repaid after a year?

## INSIGHT

Only 10.6% of the sampled group could answer both questions correctly. About 37% of the respondents could work the percentages and calculate the interest but adding it to the principal to arrive at the repayment amount was the tougher part.

The report notes that even among the science and commerce stream students in classes 11 and 12, only 20% could get the answer.

Four key questions that emerge from the findings of ASER 2023 – the report is based on a citizen-led household survey, conducted in 28 rural districts across 26 states, and reaching 34,745 youth – are about the inadequacies in our school education systems and a set of unique social and economic markers that influence learning in rural India.

What pushes a large number of children out of schools between ages 14 and 18? How do we intervene and set right the flat learning trajectories in grades 5 to 8? Why are there, still, large gaps between the learnings from school and their applications in life? Is India at a place where it can leverage its rising digital literacy to enable a generation of students to find more employment opportunities?



The high rate of enrolment among 14-year-olds declines as the age increases, according to a recent study. In pic, children at a school in Bengaluru, DH PHOTO/ B K JANARDHAN

### What a law can do

Prof S Japhet, former vice-chancellor of the Bengaluru Central University and founding director of the UGC-sponsored Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy, lists multiple factors that contribute to the high rate of school dropouts among older children, most of them traced to social inequalities.

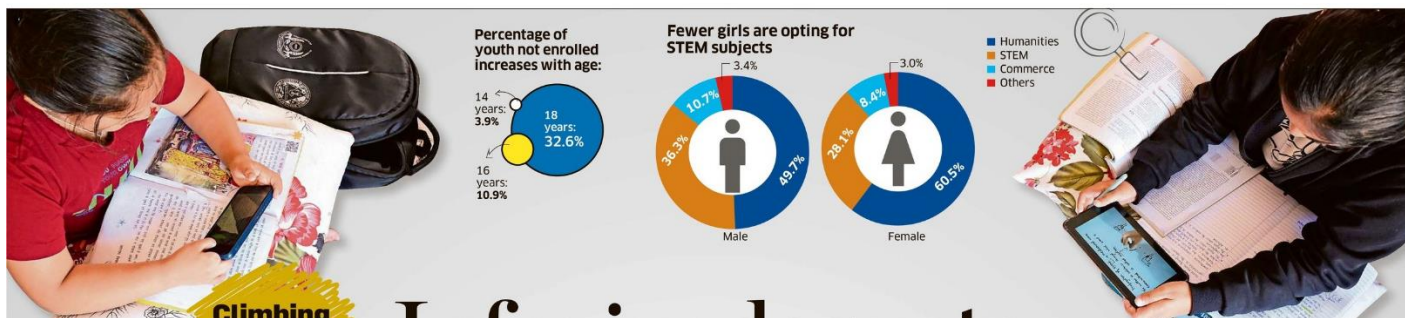
He notes that economic constraints make the possibility of an immediate income seem attractive, forcing parents to send their children to work. "The proximity to schools is critical in getting children to enrol; this has always been a serious issue. A lack of clarity on prospective careers among the youth is more evident in rural areas. The subpar quality of existing school curricula has also contributed to the poor retention of children in this age group," Prof Japhet says.

The report reveals that while 86.8% in the 14-18 years age group are enrolled in educational institutions, age-specific discrepancies emerge as a key takeaway – among the 14-year-olds, 3.9% are not enrolled; the non-enrolment rate among the 18-year-olds is significantly higher, 32.6%.

► Higher education, Page 2

**Continued...**





## Climbing the learning curve

**In 2017**

14% of youth in the 14-18 age group were not enrolled in formal education

Only 5% were taking some type of vocational training

57% of enrolled youth could not do a 3-digit by 1-digit division correctly

About 35% were unable to name India's capital city

**In 2022**

More than 85% of youth aged 14-18 are currently enrolled in some educational institution

45% in the age group have basic arithmetic proficiency

Close to 90% of the 14-18 age group reported having a smartphone at home

More than 90% reported being able to use such a device

**However,**

About 25% of this age group still cannot read a Class 2 level text fluently in their regional language.

More than half struggle with division problems.

About 57.3% can read sentences in English.

Less than 6% are currently doing vocational courses.

### The case of Karnataka

Number of schools per 1,00,000 population

58

Schools with Class 8

26

Schools with Class 9 & 10

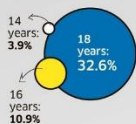
8

Schools with Class 11 & 12

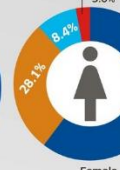
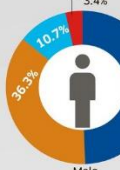
The percentage of youth not enrolled rises sharply between 17 and 18 years

| Age   | Male  | Female | All   |
|-------|-------|--------|-------|
| 14-16 | 1.4%  | 2.4%   | 2%    |
| 17-18 | 21.2% | 18%    | 19.2% |

Percentage of youth not enrolled increases with age:



Fewer girls are opting for STEM subjects



Humanities  
STEM  
Commerce  
Others

### Higher education, from P1

Education policy expert and researcher Rishikesh B S traces this striking variance to the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which covers children who are aged between six and 14 years. "The high enrolment rate among the 14-year-olds shows that the RTE Act has had a tremendous impact. This is the power of law and this is why it needs to be extended to the 14-18 years age group. The high dropout rate among older students reflects multiple systemic flaws. There is poor implementation because there is no law. For households struggling for their two daily meals, sending the child to work makes economic sense. The children themselves are averse to the idea of continuing because of the poor standards of elementary schooling they have had," he says. Rishikesh leads the Hub for Education, Law and Policy at Azim Premji University.

### Low access, lacklustre resources

The calls for extending RTE to older students have been gaining traction in India. Prof Japhet says the potentially "transformative" extension could significantly improve two key aspects of India's school education system - inclusivity and continuity. "By ensuring free education to a large group of children, you are addressing the social and economic disparities as well. This, however, is an ambitious task that will require extensive planning and careful allocation of resources," he says. India's plans for revitalising its schooling system, some of them inspired by successful global models, are also tempered by the realities of inadequate basic infrastructure - this has necessitated experiments like clustering, where schools that do not have enough students, teachers or facilities, are grouped to share the resources.

ASER 2023 highlights the rising academic pressure on the children, and "severe disappointments", often a result of the aspirations of parents with limited or no schooling. Experts have also underlined the need to address learning disabilities in rural India where a lack of resources could leave these shortcomings unattended. "There has to be a system that identifies these issues and sensitises people who are handling them. It requires a certain level of proficiency to distinguish between what is an inherent learning issue and something that is the result of the quality of education that is being offered. Trained clinical psychologists, among a few other groups of professionals, can identify learning disabilities and provide the appropriate intervention," says Thomas Kishore, Professor of Clinical Psychology at NIMHANS.

Prof Japhet, a member of the expert committee which is drafting the upcoming

state education policy in Karnataka, sees the training of teachers as critical to developing learning models that engage with the children. "There is the issue of filling up the large number of vacancies. Then comes the challenge of getting the teachers who are used to traditional methods to adapt to digital tools," he says.

### By rote is not the route

There are foundational problems to address, like the absence of basic reading and numeracy skills among large sections of India's young population. Students who miss the initiation to these skills in the early stages of schooling are, typically, left without intervention as they progress to higher classes with flat learning curves. ASER 2023 reveals that more young people have completed eight or more years of schooling - 84% of the sampled group - compared to 81% in the 2017 report. It notes that the longer period of schooling has, however, not translated to improved Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) skills. While 76.6% of the 14-18-year-olds could read a grade 2-level text in 2017, the number dropped to 73.6% in 2023. Only 43.3% could solve 3-digit by 1-digit division problems (39.5% in 2017), a skill "usually expected" in grade 3-4 students.

Rishikesh notes that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has been emphatic on the importance of FLN skills. "There is no need to pit FLN against critical thinking in some kind of a debate - without FLN, children will not survive high school, without FLN, that ninth standard is going to be a horrible place for them. It needs to be emphasised that FLN is not mere reading, writing and math; it involves thinking while the children engage in these activities. These skills, unlike those acquired through rote learning, help the children understand the concepts," he says.

ASER 2023 comes with the tagline 'Beyond Basics'. Wilma Wadhwa, the ASER Centre Director who details findings from the bank loan exercise in the report, notes how the respondents missed a "fairly simple operation". This is where she argues for a reorientation in the teaching methodologies, a shift in objectives that is aimed at enabling students to apply their learnings from school in life situations.

NEP 2020 addresses these concerns in its plans to transform the student assessment models. It proposes a shift from existing models that test rote memorisation skills to a more competency-based system that encourages critical thinking.

The importance of FLN skills in handling everyday tasks has been acknowledged in government programmes like the National Initiative for Proficiency in Reading with Understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN) Bharat. These steps come against the backdrop of negligible growth in basic learning reported over the last

decade. Experts maintain that widening the scope of these efforts to address learning deficits among children in higher grades is the way forward.

### Skills for the future

According to ASER 2023, only 5.6% of the respondents are currently taking vocational training or related courses. NEP 2020 has recommended a phased integration of vocational education programmes into mainstream education. This proposed integration is aimed at overcoming the "social status hierarchy" associated with vocational education which is perceived as inferior to mainstream education.

Narratives around the education and employability of the youth are increasingly tagged with the staggering rise in the use of smartphones and digital technologies in rural India. Is the country placed well to leverage this digital literacy, to prepare its youth for higher studies and better employment?

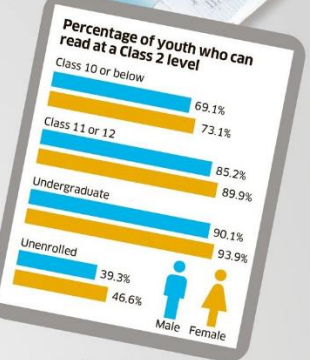
The internet's potential to democratise the use of these technologies comes with pitfalls, argues N Ramakrishnan, founder and director of projects at Ideosync Media Combine, a policy advocacy group that works in the area of communication for social change. The Haryana-based group runs Free/Dem, a programme that trains young women and men from marginalised communities in digital media and information literacy skills, helping them navigate fake news and familiarise themselves with safe social media practices.

Ramakrishnan says the COVID years presented a challenge and an opportunity. "Smartphones became necessary for the children to attend online classes but there was also the issue of children having to drop out and miss school because they did not have access to these phones; the situation was exclusionary on that account. Online learning (during the pandemic years) also had the potential to create connected communities which I don't think has happened. There has been a rise in the use of smartphones but that does not ensure greater knowledge levels or a more informed use of technology," he says.

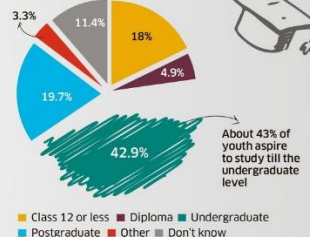
Digital literacy, when integrated into school curricula, could be a gamechanger. Its potential, experts argue, is realised only when complemented with efforts to offset social and gender disparities (boys finding greater access to smartphones than girls, for instance) and a key capacity-building measure that remains largely underexplored - the training of the trainers.

### Have your say

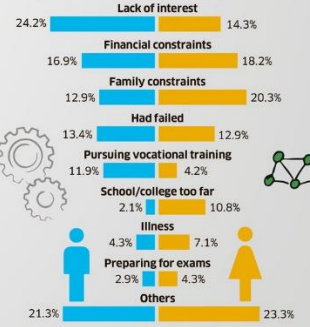
To express your opinion, e-mail us at: [insight@deccanherald.co.in](mailto:insight@deccanherald.co.in)



### Aspired level of education



### 1 out of every 5 girls between 14-18 years drops out due to family constraints



COMPILLED BY SWEETKRUTHI K DH GRAPHIC SAGAR M S  
DH PHOTO: B K JANARDHAN  
Source: 'Beyond Basics 2023' and 'Beyond Basics 2017', Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), All India Survey on Higher Education 2021-22

'Learning deficits need to be corrected when they happen'

High digital penetration presents an opportunity to expand the reach via open university-type instruction, Wilma Wadhwa, Director of ASER Centre, which publishes the Annual Status of Education Report, tells *DH's R Krishnakumar*. Considering the significantly higher school dropout rates reported among older children in ASER 2023, how compelling is the argument for extending RTE to children aged 18?

The RTE has been very successful in reducing the proportion of children

who are out of school. In 2010, the proportion of 6-14-year-old children who were not currently enrolled was 3.5%. This fell steadily, and in 2022 was only 1.6%, despite fears that children would drop out due to the hardships imposed by the COVID pandemic. While younger children are easier to get into school, via enrolment drives etc., older children are more difficult. However, even here, a lot of progress has been made. According to ASER, the proportion of 15-16-year-olds not currently enrolled fell from 16.1% in 2010 to 7.5% in 2022.

High digital penetration presents an opportunity to expand the reach via open university-type instruction.

The flat rates of growth reported in foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) are indicative of stagnant, uninspiring learning setup. What is the reorientation needed to reverse the trend?

It is more about the fact that learning deficits need to be corrected when they happen. If a child has progressed through school without learning to read fluently or do simple arithmetic, they are likely to be left behind, since

teachers are not teaching reading or subtraction in grades 6/7/8. This is reflected in the flat learning trajectories that we see over time in ASER - there is not much change in learning levels as children progress from grade 5 to 6 to 7 and higher. Even in 2022, according to ASER, close to 30% of eighth graders were not fluent readers and what we are seeing in ASER 2023 is just a reflection of that ground reality.

The NEP recognises this and there has been a big push across states under NIPUN Bharat to achieve universal FLN by the end of grade 3.

Just as NIPUN Bharat addresses FLN for grades 1-3, serious "catch-up" efforts are needed in upper primary and grade 9.

How prepared is India to build on its digital literacy to create a competent future workforce?

In the post-COVID years, there has been a huge increase in digital penetration. According to ASER 2023, almost 90% of rural youth had access to a smartphone and 92% knew how to use one. This is a huge advantage that can be leveraged to strengthen their digital skills.



# Australia exploring opening university in Karnataka

**Mini Tejaswi**

BENGALURU

Australia is exploring possibilities to expand the operations of its universities to Karnataka, according to Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar. "To start with, it is going to be an agriculture university. The proposal came to me, and I have put the concerned authority from Australia in touch with our Agriculture Ministry," the Minister told *The Hindu*.

He further said Hilary McGeachy, Australian Consul General in Bengaluru, had a discussion with him a couple of weeks ago regarding establishing an Australian university in Karnataka. He was speaking at the Australia Day event here on Friday.

"India and Australia share a strong bond. We have many things in common. We both were colonised by the British, we love cricket, and India's Republic Day on January 26 coincides with Australia Day, the country's official national day," said the Minister. "We are eager to welcome the best universities from all over the world with open arms," Mr. Sudhakar said.

Meanwhile, New Zealand on Thursday signed multiple MoUs with the State government to open eight universities, according to industry sources.

**Source: The Hindu, p.11, Feb. 10, 2024**

# 'Science researchers in India not lacking funding, but reliable fund flow'

Dr. Swami Subramaniam, CEO of Bengaluru-based Ignite Life Science Foundation, talks about the need to fund quality research, and importance of cross-border collaboration of scientists

## INTERVIEW

**Dr. Swami Subramaniam**

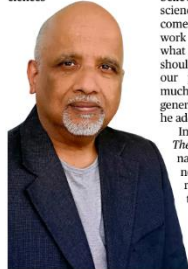
Shilpa Elizabeth  
BENGALURU

**I**n February 5, the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) Act came into effect. ANRF, which aims to be a research funding organisation and subsumed the very similar Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) established in 2008, is supposed to have a corpus of ₹50,000 crores.

Despite the tall claims, reports suggest that the actual funds allocated for ANRF have been meagre so far.

The inadequate and insufficient funding for science and research has been a major hindrance to the scientific and research community in India. The budget allocation to science has also remained a minuscule percentage much to the chagrin of the community.

Dr. Swami Subramaniam, CEO of Bengaluru-based Ignite Life Sciences



Foundation, has a slightly different view, although he agrees that inadequate funding for science has been a critical problem in India. "Science is not even in the top 10 categories for India. There are other sectors like defence, health-care and so on which need more attention and more money," he says.

"As long as our GDP does not match that of bigger economies like the USA or China, there is no point in saying that our allocation to science should be similar to theirs. In India, I believe, spending on science should be outcome-driven. We should work backwards to see what kinds of science we should depend on our priorities and how much we should spend to generate those outcomes," he adds.

In an interview with *The Hindu*, Dr. Swaminathan talks about the need to fund quality research, the importance of cross-border

Dr. Swami Subramaniam, CEO of Ignite Life Science Foundation

collaboration of scientists and Ignite's role in facilitating them.

**Can you elaborate on outcomes-driven research?**

There are Indian priorities in science, especially in applied aspects of science.

For example, we have a lingering infectious disease problem which has now converted into an antimicrobial resistance problem. While this is a problem everywhere in the world, it's much worse in India because of the nature of medical practice and the use of medicines here. It's more of a critical threat here. Antibiotics are not being developed at all here. So that's an area where India can play. We can make significant strides and we can contribute to the global efforts to combat this problem. Obvious areas like tuberculosis would be where we should invest money.

**How does Ignite LSF work towards this?**

Unless we invest the money in the best quality science, we're just going to churn the ocean. That is

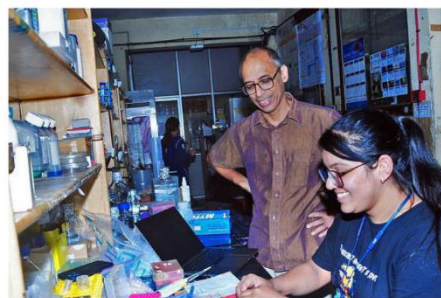
where I think Ignite plays a role.

We are, as a funding agency, minuscule. We have done about ₹20 crores of funding over three years. So, we are not going to make a difference by saying we come with a lot of money. But what we can do is engage very closely with the scientists, whom we fund. We coach them and mentor them.

We have a slightly different selection process for the scientists whom we fund compared to national agencies like the DBT or DST. We are extremely selective of not just the scientific idea, but also about the investigator. That coupling of the right investigator with the right idea is going to generate the best outcome.

**What is the state of science funding in India currently?**

Most investigators are not suffering from a lack of funding but from a lack of consistent, reliable fund flow. The scientists in top research institutes like IISc have been allocated crores of rupees. But an allocation doesn't mean that



mRNA Vaccine platform applied to combat COVID-19, one of the researches supported by Ignite LSF

they get the money. Although they are all pretty fund-rich, they still apply to Ignite.

It is a fact that Indian scientists don't get money on time. It is heart-wrenching to see the kind of suffering we put these people through. A lot of research staff depend only on the research project funding.

**How do you assess the impact created by your funding?**

We are not passive; we actively try to create impact. If we identify something that is of value, we will work with the investigator to make sure that value is realized in the fastest manner possible. For example, some of our investigators do not necessarily file an intellectual property patent. We counsel them to file it soon so that they protect their IP.

Then we put them in touch with the development folks.

Translational science is of two types. One is called pull translation, where a pharmaceutical company needs an idea, and they actively seek investigators and scientists and pull the

idea into their lab.

Since we don't have a large number of pharmaceutical companies doing drug discovery in India, we don't have powerful pull translation. So, we need more push translation. We need our investigators to understand how drugs are developed and do some of that early de-risking and drug development work themselves.

At Ignite since many of us, including myself, have worked in industry we can give the investigators skills and knowledge they don't have. I think DBT and DST will do well to create some kind of a program where skills in push translation are provided either through training or consulting.

**How many projects have you supported so far? Have you seen a geographical pattern?**

We have funded around 20 so far.

We get proposals from all across the country. But in the end invariably researchers from IISc, IITs or IISER get funded. There is no bias. It just so happens that the best proposal

comes from these institutes given that they are the best research institutes in the country currently.

One limitation is that some of the money we get is from CSR and CSR money cannot be given to private universities. Therefore, we have to deny funding even for good private universities. It is a very sad thing because there are some emerging Centres of Excellence, and they need this kind of funding. And we need competition for government institutions. So, we are trying to create a pool of funding targeting centres of excellence in private universities.

**Bengaluru is known as the science capital of India. Do you see the best research emerging from the city?**

Not necessarily. In life science interdisciplinary research is going to be the most productive. While IISc does some interdisciplinary research, I think the IITs are a little ahead. So, I believe that the leaders are going to be from places like IIT Kanpur, IIT Madras, and IIT Bombay. Paradoxically, engineering

institutes are going to produce the best life science research.

It's a commentary on our life science research community. The nature of science has become so interdisciplinary now compared to what it was 20-30 years ago.

Our medical institutes are doing poorly in terms of research. Medical institutes must do good research because they have clinical material, patient samples and patients. A lot of hypotheses can be tested in real-life situations. So, the application also will happen faster. All of our medical colleges should be thought hotbeds of good research, but they are not, except for a few like AIIMS, JIPMER and so on. Even they are not performing to their fullest potential.

**What's the gap between the research in such premier institutes and others?**

Huge. That's mainly because we create a large community and then we push them to various corners of the country. For example, there's an IISER in Berhampur. It's harder to get faculty to come there. Secondly being away from the city, it takes time if you want to get some equipment or service there.

You don't need acres of land for good institutes. You need good quality building space.

I think Indian scientists will do very well to collaborate with their counterparts elsewhere. We should have in place systems and mechanisms to promote trans-border collaboration. Automatically the science will improve.

We are working on developing a platform for scientists to collaborate seamlessly across borders. It's in the beta phase. You can call it a Slack for the scientists.

**Source: The Hindu, p.5, Feb. 13, 2024**



# Monthly excise revenue rises 15% as beer, IML sales jump

## Annual Target Of ₹36k-cr May Be Elusive

Chethan.Kumar  
@timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** The average monthly revenue earned from the sale of alcohol up to Jan 31 this fiscal is 15% more than that recorded the previous fiscal. The average stands at Rs 92 crore, compared to Rs 80 crore for the same period in 2022-23 and Rs 72 crore in 2021-22.

Overall, the state exchequer earned Rs 28,292 crore from excise between April 1, 2023 and Jan 31, 2024, which is 78.6% of the annual target of Rs 36,000 crore. This is Rs 3,537 crore more than the amount earned in the same period the previous financial year (Rs 24,755 crore, which was 77.4% of that year's target).

Sales of both beer and IML have increased by 16.2% and 2.2%, respectively. By the end of Jan 31, as many as 591 lakh cartons of IML were sold, compared to 578.1 lakh in the same period of the previous fiscal. Similarly, the

### BOOZE SOLD IN CARTONS

| Quarter      | IML (23-24)       | IML (22-23)       | Beer (23-24)      | Beer (22-23)      |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| April - Jun  | 177 lakh          | 171.2 lakh        | 118.5 lakh        | 104.4 lakh        |
| Jul - Sept   | 175.8 lakh        | 168.5 lakh        | 92.8 lakh         | 79.8 lakh         |
| Oct - Dec    | 180.4 lakh        | 179.2 lakh        | 113.1 lakh        | 96.3 lakh         |
| Jan - Mar*   | 57.7 lakh         | 59.2 lakh         | 36.4 lakh         | 29.8 lakh         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>590.9 lakh</b> | <b>578.1 lakh</b> | <b>360.8 lakh</b> | <b>310.4 lakh</b> |

Sales of beer and IML have increased by 16.2% & 2.2%, respectively. But according to officials, hitting Rs 34,000 crore — 94.4% of this year's target — could be best-case scenario



### REVENUE MOP-UP

| Quarter      | 2023-24             | 2022-23             |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| April - Jun  | ₹8,465.2 cr         | ₹7,721.2 cr         |
| Jul - Sept   | ₹8,145.9 cr         | ₹6,990.1 cr         |
| Oct - Dec    | ₹8,844.6 cr         | ₹7,556.7 cr         |
| Jan - Mar*   | ₹2,836.1 cr         | ₹2,487.5 cr         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>₹28,291.8 cr</b> | <b>₹24,755.4 cr</b> |

Source: Excise dept | \*Up to Jan 31 | Figures rounded off

number of beer cartons sold has risen from 310.4 lakh to 360.8 lakh.

#### Impact of AED hike

That said, the overall increase in revenue is attributed to the additional excise duty (AED), hiked in the last budget by 20% across 18 price slabs of IML and 10% for beer.

Despite this, the excise department is unlikely to meet the annual revenue target. According to officials, hitting Rs 34,000 crore — 94.4% of

this year's target — could be the best-case scenario.

On whether the additional 10% increase on AED on beer sales introduced in Jan 2024 could yield more revenue, one senior official said, "It was done to match the hike in duty on beer sales with that on IML, as earlier the govt had increased IML duty by 20% and beer duty only by 10%. The new beer rates came into effect on Feb 1 and revenue for the last two months of the fiscal will reflect the

additional amount." The official, however, admitted that despite this, the department is unlikely to mop up Rs 36,000 by March 31.

Further, analysis of month-on-month data shows that IML sales were highest in Dec (41.8 lakh cartons) and June 2023 (41.6 lakh), while beer sales peaked in July (66.2 lakh) and Dec 2023 (64.3 lakh).

In terms of revenue, June (Rs 3,549.6 crore) and Dec 2023 (Rs 3,287.4 crore) saw the highest collection.

**Source: The Times of India, p.5, Feb. 13, 2024**

# Of ₹20,000cr pending bills of contractors, K'taka govt clears ₹800cr in 1<sup>st</sup> tranche

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** After months of delay, Karnataka govt has started clearing bills of contractors amounting to Rs 800 crore — which is just 4% of the total dues of Rs 20,000 crore. This comes barely days after Karnataka State Contractors' Association accused Cong govt of taking 40% kickbacks for awarding civil projects — a similar allegation had hurt the previous BJP govt badly in the 2023 polls.

Welcoming the govt's decision which offers partial relief, association president D Kempanna said on Tuesday that pending bills of 1,054 small contractors in the public works department (PWD) have been cleared. For perspective, the total outstanding in PWD alone

## 70% labour cards bogus: Minister

**L**abour minister Santosh Lad revealed Tuesday that of the details of 46 lakh construction workers registered on the Karnataka Construction Workers' Welfare Board, around 70% are bogus. The labour dept has so far expunged around seven lakh fake cards from its database, he said. **P 6**

ne is Rs 4,000 crore. Kempanna urged the govt not to take up any fresh project without clearing the dues. He said the association has yet again appealed to chief minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar to clear the remaining dues.

► **'Package system', P 6**

**Source: The Times of India, p.5, Feb. 14, 2024**



# Rules do not permit regularisation of guest lecturers: Minister

**The Hindu Bureau**

BENGALURU

Stating that the rules do not permit the regularisation of guest lecturers, Higher Education Minister M.C. Sudhakar told the Legislative Council on Tuesday that the government was in the process of appointing 310 principals and 1,208 assistant professors shortly.

“The list of selected principals is ready and verification of selected assistant professors is under way.

This will help mitigate the shortage to an extent. We have requested Finance Department to sanction 7,000 teaching posts, including technical posts. Of the total 2,000 assistant professor sanctioned posts, 1,208 are being filled,” he said, participating in a debate initiated by the Opposition seeking the regularisation of guest lecturers and providing them with job security.

Both BJP and JD(S) earlier said that the recent hike of salaries was insufficient.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**

# Pre-KG, additional bilingual sections to be started in more govt. schools in State from 2024-25 academic year

Government wants to encourage English-medium education right from the primary level and to strengthen the learning ability of children in government schools. There are a total of 2,686 bilingual schools

**Jayanth R.**  
BENGALURU

**T**o encourage English-medium education from the primary level and to strengthen the learning ability of children in government schools, the Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL) has decided to start pre-primary classes (LKG and UKG) and additional English-medium (bilingual) sections from class I in government schools across Karnataka from the 2024-25 academic year.

The department has invited proposals from eligible government schools with details, including the number of students, availability of basic infrastructure, teachers and other facilities, and has set February 28 as the deadline to submit proposals.

## **2,686 bilingual schools**

At present, there are 46,757 government primary and high schools across Karnataka with a total of 42,92,351 students. There are a total of 2,686 bilingual schools with En-



At present, there are 46,757 government primary and high schools across Karnataka with a total of 42,92,351 students. FILE PHOTO

glish-medium, in government primary schools, government Urdu schools, and in Karnataka Public Schools.

Deputy Directors of the Department of Public Instruction (DDPIs) have submitted 613 proposals to the department seeking approval for bilingual sections from class I for years 2023-24 and 2024-25. The department is reviewing the proposals submitted for

starting pre-primary schools in 2024-25. In addition, the department has invited proposals from further eligible schools.

Officials have been told that before the beginning of the academic year, a survey of areas with educational backwardness should be conducted and a proposal should be submitted for the start of pre-primary classes in the existing government schools,

along with the bilingual (English-medium) section from class I.

In addition, they have been asked to submit proposals for upgrading the existing classes I to V to classes VI to VIII or classes I to VII/VIII to classes IX and X, and if there is a need to relocate or merge any schools owing to the shortage of students.

B.B. Cauvery, Commissioner of Department of Public Instruction, told *The Hindu*, "Proposals have been invited to start bilingual sections in government schools in rural and backward areas with good infrastructure, and a checklist of conditions is also provided. February 28 is the last date for submission of proposals. After verifying the checklist, the department will submit the proposal to the government to start bilingual sections and pre-primary schools in the eligible schools from the next academic year."

As of now, the government has sanctioned a total of 2,37,040 teacher posts for government

schools in Karnataka, out of which 1,83,180 posts have been filled and 53,860 teacher posts are vacant.

## **Shortage of teachers**

In the 2,268 bilingual medium schools, only 7,276 teachers are working against the total of 11,124 sanctioned teachers posts, and 3,848 posts are vacant.

Allegations have been made that there will be a shortage of teachers to start the bilingual sections in government schools.

"We welcome the government's decision to start bilingual sections, but there is a huge shortage of teachers who can effectively teach English-medium education to children. Effective teaching and learning is not possible by merely hiring guest teachers. Therefore, the government should take action to fill the vacant posts of teachers in government schools, including for the bilingual sections," said Umesh G. Gangavadi, State president, School Development and Monitoring Committee.

**Source: The Hindu, p.7, Feb. 16, 2024**

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# Deemed forest problems will be solved: Forest minister

BENGALURU, DHNS

**F**orest Minister Eshwar Khandre has said that the state government will file an interlocutory application (IA) in the Supreme Court to resolve genuine problems surrounding the deemed forest notification.

During a meeting with farmers from Yadgir district, who are affected by the deemed forest notification, here on Thursday, the minister said that the extent of the deemed forest has already been reduced from 9.94 lakh hectares to 3.33 lakh hectares.

“Even then, patta land, areas with houses, hospitals and anganwadis have been notified as deemed forest in some districts. We will file an interlocutory application in

the Supreme Court stating that the issues will be resolved through a joint survey and giving alternative land for the deemed forest,” he said.

The meeting, co-chaired by Minister for Small Scale Industries and Public Enterprises Sharanabasappa Darshanapur, saw farmers sharing their grievances with Khandre.

Darshanapur urged the forest minister to drop the cases against the farmers.

Khandre was told that 48 acres of land, distributed among farmers, has been notified as deemed forest at Evuru village of Surapur taluk.

He promised to take up the issue with the chief minister and legal experts about approaching the Supreme Court for a solution.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.4 Feb, 10, 2024**

# Kalasa-Banduri project: NBWL defers decision on State's application

**Rishikesh Bahadur Desai**  
BELAGAVI

The National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) has deferred a decision on Karnataka's application for the diversion of forest land for the construction of the Kalasa nala irrigation projects in the Mahadayi basin.

In a meeting held in New Delhi on January 30, the NBWL's standing committee cited multiple reasons such as the matter pending before courts and non-receipt of approval from the National Tiger Conservation Authority as the reasons for the postponement of the decision. While Prime Minister Narendra Modi is the Chairman of the NBWL, Yogenra Yadav, Minister for Forests and Ecology, is the chairman of the standing committee. Mr. Yadav headed the January 30 meeting.

## For use of forest land

The proposal was for the use of around 11 hectares of forest land situated on the tiger corridor between Kali and Sahyadri tiger reserves. This is supposed to be for the construction of a diversion weir, jack well-cum-pump house, electrical substation, pipeline and power line at Kanakumbi and other villages. This is part of the State government's project for the construction of Kalasa Nala Diversion Scheme in Khanapur taluk of Belagavi district.

"The proposal has been recommended by the Chief Wildlife Warden, the Karnataka State Board for Wildlife and the State government. The NTCA has mentioned that the matter is *sub judice* and therefore not provided any comment on it as such. After discussions, the standing committee decided that the comments on the proposal shall be sought from the NTCA in accordance with the Wildlife Protection Act. Accordingly, the proposal was deferred for the next meeting," as per the minutes of the meeting, informed a senior officer. The date of the next meeting is yet to be announced.

"The cases in question are the separate applications filed by the riparian



A file photo of the work on the Mahadayi river diversion project in Belagavi district.

## The matter is *sub judice*, says standing committee

States of Karnataka seeking higher allotment of water and Goa opposing the project on environmental grounds," the officer in charge of the project said.

## What farmers say

Vijay Kulkarni, founder president of the Kalasa Banduri Horata Samiti, said, "We have been fighting for over 30 years for this, saying it will change the fortune of farmers in dry land north-west Karnataka. But neither the Union government nor the State government is listening to our woes," he said.

Sidagouda Modagi, Krishik Samaj leader, alleged that the Mahadayi issue is being politicised. "Leaders of all the parties have misused the project as an election plank to gain votes for their candidates and to portray the other parties as anti-farmer," he said.

## For drinking water

The total project involves diversion of water from Kalasa and Banduri nalas, tributary streams of the Mahadayi, into the Malaprabha, to supply drinking water to cities in the dry northern plains of Kalyan Karnataka. The major beneficiaries will be towns in Belagavi, Gadag, and Bagalkot districts, along with the twin cities of Hubballi and Dharwad.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is hereby brought to the notice of general public that my clients intend to purchase the agricultural property, the details of which is given hereunder, from **Smt. Anitha H (w/o Shri Chikkanna T K)** who is GPA holder representing **Smt Shivamma** residing in K Ranganahalli, Gowdagere, Sira Taluk, Tumkur district.

**Source: The Hindu, p.10, Feb. 10, 2024**



# 'Forest land leased before Independence will be reclaimed'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MYSURU

Minister for Forest, Ecology, and Environment Eshwar B. Khandre said here on Saturday that steps had been taken to expedite the process of reclaiming nearly 7,500 acres of forest land leased out before the Independence.

Mr. Khandre told media persons that almost 95% of the leased forest land is in Chamarajanagar, Mysuru,

and Kodagu districts and they were leased for a period of 99 years to individuals and industrialists.

Over the decades, they have been converted into coffee, tea, and rubber plantations and the government has expedited the process of reclaiming them, he added. When the officials issued notices to the tenants under the lease period, some of them approached the court claim-

ing that the lease period was for a duration of 999 years, he said.

## Claims disproved

"We disproved the claims and the courts recognised the lease period as 99 years. Now the lease period is over and nearly 7,500 acres of land belonging to the Forest Department has to be reclaimed. This will act as a buffer to our existing forests and provide adequate breath-

ing space for wildlife and reduce conflict situation," said Mr. Khandre.

## Committee set up

He said a committee has been constituted to expedite the reclamation process headed by senior official B.P. Ravi who first issued notices to the lessees when he was the Chief Conservator of Forests in Chamarajanagar. Besides, a legal team has been set up and retired judges are

being consulted. The Minister said Bandipur and the adjoining forests were rich in wildlife and their population too had increased owing to protection measures. Rapid urbanisation and disturbance to wildlife habitats were forcing animals to come out and stray into the human landscape, leading to an increase in human-animal conflicts. "With the reclamation of the leased land the con-

licts can be arrested significantly," he added.

On forest encroachment, Mr. Khandre said a joint survey by the Forest Department and the Revenue Department had been ordered to establish the extent of forest land and the revenue land. Though no deadlines can be set, given the complexity of the issue, the joint survey is expected to be completed in six months, the Minister added.

**Source: The Hindu, p.7, Feb. 11, 2024**

# How a slip in the lake turned Anand Malligavad into a conservationist

Anand Malligavad, who was recently recognised as 'Earth Champion' by Sony BBC Earth, speaks on how he got interested in lake rejuvenation and what drives him to do what he does

**Preeti Zachariah**  
BENGALURU

It began with a newspaper article claiming 21 cities, including Bengaluru, would run dry by 2025. "That really stuck with me," says Anand Malligavad, who was recently named "Earth Champion" by Sony BBC Earth. It got him thinking about why a city which once had surplus water was at risk of running out of it, and he began reading and researching extensively about it.

"Bengaluru does not have big rivers," he says, pointing out that even the smaller ones, Vrishabhavathi, Kumudavathi, Arkavathi and Dakshina Pinakini, which generate from Nandi Hills, are now so polluted that they resembled septic tanks. He also began investigating the city's lakes, once Bengaluru's primary source of potable water, many built by the Chola kings some 800-900 years ago. "They had built it systematically as interconnected, cascading lakes," he says, claiming that the city once boasted of nearly 1850 lakes. Around 465 remain, of which only a tiny percentage still contain clean water, the abysmal situation a function of the city's unprecedented growth over the last few decades. "Bengaluru was not a metro city," says Anand. It was a small city surrounded by villages, each containing a lake or two built by our ancestors, which merged over the years. "Lakes were once the lungs of this area," he says.

In 2017, after spending a year or so on research, he decided to take matters into his own hands, a decision galvanised by an incident at the mostly dry Kyalasanahalli lake he drove past every day on his



A file photo of Varthur lake in poor condition. SUDHAKARA JAIN



A view of Hebbal lake. SUDHAKARA JAIN

way to his office; he worked in Sansera Engineering, an automotive components manufacturer, back then. Wanting to look closer, he began walking around the 36-acre lake, filled with debris, industrial effluents and sewage. Then, disaster struck. "I slipped and fell," he says, with a laugh, recalling how the stench of the lake hung onto him for days after. "That is when I thought of creating a model of lake rejuvenating, working in parallel with the government to resuscitate the water body."

## Growing up

Anand Malligavad grew up in the village of Karamudi, a small hamlet located in Karnataka's Koppal dis-

trict, an hour or so away from Hampi, the erstwhile capital of the Vijayanagara kingdom. He says it was a dry, arid landscape, constantly prone to drought, comparing it to the state of Rajasthan in which the Thar Desert is located. The village lake, therefore, became the fulcrum around which life revolved, says Anand, who considers himself lucky because his school was near this lake. "I used to spend a lot of time there," he says, recalling how he frolicked in the water, making models of check dams and lagoons with mud. "That was my life. I learnt about ecosystems from that lake, something that helps me today," he believes.

In 1996, he moved to

Bengaluru to study mechanical engineering, getting a job at Sansera Engineering, where he would spend the next 15-odd years of his life before quitting in 2019 to pursue lake conservation full-time. He has fond memories of the city back then.

## Changing Bengaluru

"Bengaluru used to receive the best rains...had a great climate...rich soil...lots of greenery," he says, pointing out that this dense vegetation ensured moderate microclimates, plenty of rain and the fragrance of flowers constantly lingering in the air. He offers an adage, which was true about the city before it became the messy metro it is today. "Whenever a Benga-

lurian sweats, the city would receive rain."

Not anymore, however. The former garden city, now constantly clogged with traffic, smog and construction dust, filled with high-rises, malls and IT Parks, is among the most water-starved cities in the world, with a crisis looming large almost every other summer, including this one. It is also vulnerable to frequent flooding, a function of poor infrastructure, concretisation and destruction of its lakes and green spaces, among other things. "Economy and infrastructure here are going up like a high-rise building. But the environment is going down like water," he quips.

Water, like air, should be a free commodity, he believes. And yet, most people in this city end up spending a considerable chunk of their earnings trying to source clean water. Rejuvenating lakes the right way could play a huge part in solving the city's water shortage problem. According to him, when authorities rejuvenate the lakes, they don't always do so in an eco-sensitive and self-sustaining way. "They

water but the entire ecosystem, including soil, water, flora and fauna. "This way, it will maintain itself and not need human interference," he says.

## Dipping into the past

The first lake Anand decided to rejuvenate was the lake he had fallen into - Kyalasanahalli. He took a couple of months to design a plan to rejuvenate it, looking to the past for answers. "I used the con-

cept of the Chola and technique of the current era," he says, pointing out that the ancient kingdom has used a "ridge to river" methodology, creating a complex network of channels and bunds that both conserved water and prevented flooding. "It was the cheapest technology available," he says. Unlike the regular lake beautification process, which often runs into crores, he believed he needed only around 95 lakhs to revive the 36-acre lake. "I was looking for funds. Where to go? Whom to get it from?" remembers Anand, who turned to his own company's CSR wing to obtain these, taking almost three months to convince leadership of the project's viability.

On April 20, 2017, he began working on the lake, dredging the filthy mud, creating islands for birds and planting many saplings with the help of volunteers over the next 45 days before finally stepping back to wait for the monsoons. Within six months, the lake, which had been parched for decades, was filled with water, so much that Anand could even boat across it.

Since then, Anand says he has rejuvenated over 35 lakes in the city, almost all paid for using CSR funds, and over 80 across the country, including U.P., Orissa, Telangana and Maharashtra, quitting his day job in 2019 to focus completely on lakes. He also conducts training programmes on lake rejuvenation all across the country, advising many states in India about better water management. Currently, he says, he is working on rejuvenating Billapur near Sarajapur Lake, Sira Lake in Tumkur and Kolar's Kolaramma Lake. "We are planning for another 5 lakes; it is yet to start," he says.

While things have come a long way since 2015, there are still many challenges in lake conservation. "People are more aware and know we need to do something, but they don't always come forward (to help)," he says. Encroachment is also a big issue, with the government often being lethargic about clearing it. "People fight with me," says Anand, who actively engages with local leaders and the community to sort out encroachment issues.

Yet, he remains hopeful that things will improve, especially considering that the younger generation appears to be more concerned about the planet.



File photo of Haralur lake where hundreds of dead fish were found floating.

focus on beautification, relying a lot on architects," he says, pointing out that their water quality continued to be questionable even after crores of rupees were spent on these lakes. Beautification, he firmly believes, is not the answer. Instead, water bodies should be rejuvenated in a way that is as natural as possible, not just focusing on the



Anand Malligavad

**Source: The Hindu, p.5, Feb. 12, 2024**



# When climate action starts with children

The Parikrma Innovations conclave focused on how children could help mitigate the effects of climate change

Rohith D.S.  
BENGALURU

**R**akshitha T. talks about how she started managing her waste effectively around six years ago, going on to share a practical suggestion.

"When you buy chips or any other (packaged) foods, make sure that when you tear it, the tip of it gets attached to the package itself," she says, pointing out that failure to do so may see that bit of plastic going into the compost bin, finally ending up in the ocean, and then, our food.

"It not only affects us, but it also affects the animals, birds and the environment," says Rakshitha, who believes that taking these small steps can help mitigate climate change.

**Climate change**  
Rakshitha, a student representing Parikrma Centre for Learning and a conservative enthusiast, was part of a panel titled, 'How can India prioritise climate change and what can children do to help?' at the Parikrma



Students exhibiting their models.

**Innovations conclave.** The event, a collaboration between Parikrma Humanity Foundation and NetApp, was held recently.

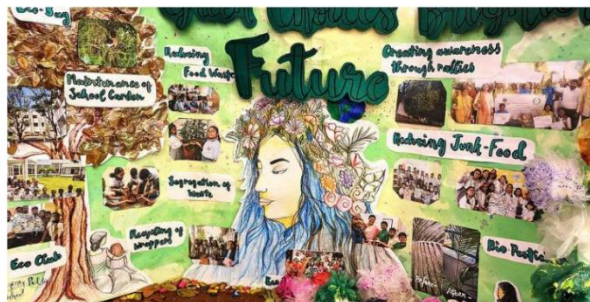
**Deforestation**  
Talking about the innovation programme, which is now in its third year, Shukla Bose, the founder and CEO of the Parikrma Humanity Foundation, says climate change was chosen as this year's theme because it is so crucial.

"Children are very interested in it. But if you were to look at the curriculum, there is very little constructive application of climate



Participants explaining their models to visitors.

change in it," she says, adding he hoped that the programme would give them that exposure. "Our political leaders are going all over the world talking about how we are going to



Model depicting climate change.

biologist specialising in elephant conservation who expressed concern that elephants have lost nearly half their homes due to deforestation and are struggling against the effects of various anthropomorphic activities.

## Innovative ideas

In a similar vein, Dr. Jeannet Kessels, the co-founder of Vets for Climate Action and a climate change advocate, talks about the animals massacred by the floods and fires that have engulfed Australia in recent years, courtesy of climate change.

The programme also ended up bringing up many innovative ideas from the students from different schools. Inventure Academy's 'We the Local' app ended up bagging the first prize at a contest aimed at rewarding those bringing in an innovative approach to climate change.

"We believe that such events play a pivotal role in the holistic development of our youth and provide them with the tools and inspiration needed to envision a brighter, more sustainable future," says Ravi Chhabria, the managing director of NetApp.

**Source: The Hindu, p.5, Feb. 12, 2024**

## K'taka in dock for denotifying deemed forest land

Niranjan.Kaggere @timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** The state govt has found itself at the receiving end for going ahead with its decision to denotify deemed forest lands in 2022. Following its move to denotify a whopping 6.6 lakh hectares of deemed forest land across Karnataka including in and around Bengaluru, without prior permission from the Centre,

### 6.6 LAKH HECTARES

re, the Union ministry of environment, forests and climate change (MoEF&CC) has now sought a detailed report on the controversial decision and those responsible for it.

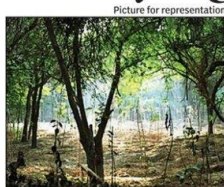
Two decades ago, the state govt had estimated that close to 10 lakh hectares of area was deemed forest land.

However, while filing an affi-

davit before the Supreme Court in 2022, the state disclosed that a total of 6.6 lakh hectares out of the 9.9 lakh hectares was denotified, revealing that the actual extent of deemed forest in Karnataka would be just 3.3 lakh hectares — almost one-third of what was initially estimated.

Justifying its decision to denotify the land then, the state govt had also argued that almost 1.7 lakh hectares of the area did not meet the parameters of having 50 'mature' trees with a girth of more than one metre. Further, more than 25,000 hectares of land was discovered to have identical survey numbers.

Subsequently, then revenue minister R Ashoka, who is currently the leader of opposition in the state legislative assembly, had announced that the denotified 6.6 lakh hectares would be under the purview of the reve-



**IN SOUP:** The MoEF&CC have sought a detailed report on the state govt's controversial decision to denotify 6.6 lakh hectares of deemed forest land

nue department and the same would be leased out to 'encroachers' for 30 years besides being utilized for various infrastructure and developmental projects of the state govt as projects on these land would need not any clearance from the statutory authorities.

The govt's decision had

drawn bitter criticism from conservation circles including retired forest officials who argued that the decision was largely in favour of land encroachers.

Advocate and conservationist Veerendra Patil and Pape Gowda from Bengaluru had contested the decision in the Supreme Court.

Patil said, "While the entire decision to denotify the deemed forest land was illegal, we have also sought the status of more than 3 lakh hectares of deemed forest area and details of forestry activities in those areas."

Taking note of the denotification decision, the regional office of the MoEF&CC in Bengaluru wrote to the additional chief secretary, forest, environment and ecology department, on Feb 6, seeking a detailed response on the entire decision.

"It is alleged that the Govt of

Karnataka has denotified deemed forest land measuring 6.6 lakh hectares without prior permission... It is requested to kindly examine the issues raised in the representation including those regarding the status of the said affidavit filed before the SC and orders if any... The factual report may be provided at the earliest to the ministry," the letter said.

Deemed forest areas are those that have not been declared formally as forests by the Centre or states but have all the characteristics of forests and tree cover. In Karnataka, these lands include Devara Kadu, Baane, Kanu forest, Kumki land, Amrith Mahal kaval, Jammabane, Soppina Betta etc.

Forest minister Eshwar Khandre has reportedly called a meeting of senior forest officials on Thursday at Vikasa Soudha.

**Source: The Times of India, p.5, Feb. 13, 2024**



# 4-lane Hassan-Hiriyuru highway gets eco clearance amid concerns

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**A**mid concerns over destruction of environment and impact on animal movement, a central expert committee has given green signal to NHAI's proposal to build a new four-lane road between Hassan and Hiriyuru bypass to provide an "economic corridor" to Chitradurga.

A whopping 42,845 trees are standing on the proposed 114-km road which passes through Uttaregudda wildlife sanctuary and Arsikere sloth bear sanctuary. The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) has also sought diversion of 208.5 acres of forest land.

The proposed highway runs parallel to the present two-lane road between Hassan and Hiriyuru via Tiptur and Huliyar. However, the NHAI promises a wider road with far fewer curves.

## Human-wildlife conflict

During the public hearing for the project, several persons had questioned the need for the project while farmers and others have raised concerns that the project may further fuel human-wildlife conflict in the area.

In Chitradurga district, Karnataka Rajya Dhvani Damantara Horata Kendra's K Rameshwarappa noted that the highway authorities have included notified forests and sanctuaries.

"Farmers are innocent and do not have any information about the project. Earlier, there was movement of elephants and tigers in this part. (The road) will cause problems for domestic animals to graze.

Losing all the land, the ecology and the wildlife sanctuary will cause a lot of trouble in future due to the two highways," he said. Earlier, NHAI had said that "there was no wildlife

sanctuary in the vicinity of the project." Replying to the question over the need for the road, officials had said the alignment was designed as per Bharatmala project circular.

The expert appraisal committee of the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change cleared the project recently with a condition that its nod is subject to the clearance from the standing committee of the National Board of Wildlife.

While there was no opposition for the road during the hearing in Hassan district, farmers in Tumakuru questioned the new road's necessity as "there is not much vehicle density" on the current road to Hiriyuru.

NHAI officials, however, replied, "Considering the traffic in future, the project is beneficial. The existing Hassan to Hiriyuru route takes 4 hours of travel time. The proposed greenfield crow-flight alignment will reduce travel time to two hours," they said.

The central committee has asked the highway authorities to conduct specific biodiversity studies and prepare conservation plans in synchronisation with the local biodiversity of the species within the study area, including flagship species authenticated by designated authorities. An activist tracking the developments said the new road will only add to the infrastructures with speculations of future needs at the cost of the environment.

## 'Widen present road'

"The NHAI could have widened the existing roads to improve connectivity, instead of building a greenfield highway. Aside from forest diversion, turning agricultural lands into build-up areas will have an impact on wildlife and the general ecosystem," he said.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3C Feb, 14, 2024**

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# K'taka asks pvt hospitals to participate in central govt health scheme

BENGALURU, DHNS

A recent circular from the Karnataka government has asked eligible private hospitals to seek accreditation to offer healthcare services to central government employees and beneficiaries under the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS).

Issued by the state government's Commissionerate of Health and Family Welfare Services, the circular references Section 11 of the Karnataka Private Medical Establishments (KPME) Act, 2007, stipulating that "every private medical establishment shall actively participate in the implementation of all national and state health programmes in such manner as the state government may specify from time to time".

The CGHS scheme covers serving and former Members of Parliament, central government employees and pension-



ers, freedom fighters, retired Supreme Court judges, and all their dependents.

Private hospitals are invited to submit proposals for empanelment as Health Care Organisations (HCOs) to the nodal officer. Once empanelled, they are expected to deliver healthcare services at revised rates outlined by the scheme.

D Randeep, Commissioner, Health, and Family Welfare Services, clarified that compliance is not mandatory for hospitals. "Many package rates have been revised and we have been informed that more revisions are underway. Reimbursement periods un-

der the scheme have also been reduced to less than a month. Since central government employees can benefit from the scheme, we have actively sought prominent hospitals' participation, but we will not hold them accountable," he told *DH*.

However, the Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association (PHANA) expressed reservations. "Such schemes must be made with rationality of costing and sustainability of the hospitals in mind," said Dr Rajashekar YL, Vice-President, PHANA.

"Some of the revised rates under the CGHS scheme are not scientifically sound, so when the government aims to expand the scope of such services to cover more people, it can financially strain private hospitals," he noted, adding that if the rates were more stable, hospitals would be more willing to participate in such schemes.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.II, Feb, 10, 2024**



# School performance hit by poor eye health in exam season, say doctors

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

With the exam season approaching, prolonged study hours, in addition to lack of adequate sleep and outdoor activities, has resulted in undue stress on students. This is taking a toll on visual attention, concentration, and focus beyond refractive errors, according to ophthalmologists.

Doctors at Narayana Nethralaya, who said 30% of children presenting with vision problems during exams have focussing issues, said a range of problems related to sight including pseudomyopia and an increase in myopia, can significantly impact a child's exam performance.

## 10th grade or PU

Addressing presspersons here on Friday, hospital

## Tips for students on maintaining good eye health

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ■ Maintain a good reading distance (14-16 inches for a book)             | mobile phones or watching television                              |
| ■ Avoid using small devices like mobile phones for online study material | ■ Practise meditation to rest your eyes and improve concentration |
| ■ Follow the 20-20-20 rule for taking frequent breaks                    | ■ Maintain a healthy diet   |
| ■ During breaks, avoid using   | ■ Ensure sufficient sleep   |
|  | ■ Get regular eye checks done                                     |

chairman Rohit Shetty said over 50% of patients with these eye issues are in the 10th grade or PU or are preparing for competitive exams. "Unfortunately, 95% of focusing issues or binocular vision anomalies are not diagnosed during routine eye examinations. When left unnoticed, these issues can lead to symptoms such as eye strain, fatigue, poor concentration, frequent headaches, double vision, and blurred vi-

sion," he said.

In addition to these issues, excessive screen time (for reading online study material) can lead to dry eyes, progression of myopia, and disturbed sleep. "These eye symptoms are often misinterpreted by parents or teachers as disinterest in studies, leading to a lack of confidence and feeling of overburden in children," he said.

Jyoti Matalia, Consultant, Paediatric Ophthal-

mology and Strabismology at the hospital's Bommasandra branch, said traditional eye check examinations usually focus on identifying problems of distant vision only.

"Thus, the crucial diagnosis of eye problems that require a detailed orthoptic evaluation is missed out. This evaluation ensures tailored treatment that includes glasses, targeted eye exercises, and in rare cases, surgery," she said.

"A child may have perfect vision when reading a chart but still complain of headaches or double vision, indicating that their eye muscles are strained and require a thorough eye examination. Children should maintain good visual hygiene, which includes following simple measures for eye health," she added.

**Source: The Hindu, p.2, Feb. 10, 2024**

# Misconception drives under-prescription of ORS

**The Hindu Bureau**  
CHENNAI

Most healthcare providers in developing countries know that Oral Rehydration Salts (ORS) are a life-saving and inexpensive treatment for diarrhoea in children, but few prescribe it. Taking a closer look at this know-do gap, a new study has found that healthcare providers assume that patients do not want ORS, and this, in fact, played a major role in under-prescribing ORS.

Diarrhoea is a leading cause of death in children, and lives could be saved with a low-cost and widely available treatment - ORS.

However, presently, nearly half of diarrhoeal cases around the world do not receive ORS, according to researchers from institutions in the U.S. and India, including the Department of Economics, Sociology and Statistics, RAND Corporation (U.S.), Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University, Center for Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management-Bangalore, Karnataka, and Sol Price School of Public Policy, University of Southern California.

The study published in *Science* used a randomised controlled trial to simultaneously study the role of three leading explanations



**Antidote:** Corporation health workers preparing oral rehydration solution in Coimbatore. FILE PHOTO

for under-prescribing of ORS - providers might think patients prefer non-ORS treatments such as antibiotics or dislike ORS because of poor taste and perceptions that ORS is not

a real medicine; providers could be responding to financial incentives to sell more profitable alternatives (ORS is inexpensive and antibiotics generate nearly double the profit);

and ORS stock-outs, the study authors said.

More than 2,000 providers across 253 medium-sized towns in Karnataka and Bihar participated in the study. Standardised patients (actors trained to act as patients) made unannounced visits during which they presented a case of diarrhoea for their two-year-old child. To estimate the effect of ORS stock-outs, the researchers randomly assigned all providers in half of the 253 towns to receive a six-week supply of ORS.

They found that provider misperceptions that patients do not want ORS play the biggest role in the

underprescribing of ORS. They estimated that provider misperceptions explained 42% of underprescribing, whereas stock-outs and financial incentives explained only 6% and 5% respectively.

The study said 28% providers prescribed/dispensed ORS when standardised patients expressed no preference, and 55% prescribed ORS when they expressed ORS preference.

A press release from the University of Southern California, said these results could be used to design interventions that encourage patients and caretakers to express preference for ORS when seeking care.

**Source: The Hindu, p.11, Feb. 10, 2024**

# 28% tele-ICU spoke hosps in K'taka not functional, 1 fully deactivated

## Misplaced Software Hits Govt Initiative

Mini.Thomas@timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** Two tele-ICU clusters were opened in the state recently, with the govt claiming the initiative will enable hub hospitals to address shortage of specialists in spoke hospitals in the hinterland. However, what was glossed over was the fact that only 29 of the 40 state-run tele-ICU spoke hospitals in Karnataka are currently functional, while the rest are dormant.

Data accessed by **STOI** shows the tele-ICU spoke hospitals in Bengaluru Rural, Chikkaballapur, Kolar, Shivamogga, Chamarajanagar, Gadag, Kalaburagi, Koppal, Raichur, and Yadgir are dormant. These spoke hospitals come under Bengaluru, Mysuru, Hubballi, and Ballari clusters. One spoke hospital at Santemarahalli in Chamarajanagar district has been deactivated.

Tele-ICU clusters are based on the hub-and-spoke model wherein one big hospital



**FOCAL POINT:** A new tele-ICU hub was launched at Victoria Hospital, Bengaluru, earlier this month

acts as the hub and provides services to spoke hospitals in taluks and smaller towns. Karnataka's initiative also includes two smart ICUs in Ballari district that facilitate AI-based interventions for critically ill patients.

Sources part of the hub-and-spoke model admit that tele-ICUs have been non-starters in the state as taluk hospitals have misplaced CDs and pen drives loaded with CARE (computer-aided regulation engineering) software distri-

buted to them. Ideally they should've filed FIRs but they have not done it, they added.

Dr Vasanth Kumar DE, state nodal officer, tele-ICU, told **STOI**, "We're facing problems with internet connectivity. Our ICUs require private internet connection." Most of the taluk hospitals were given KSWAN (Karnataka State Wide Area Network) earlier.

Another official said CARE requires hospitals to have open internet and not

## 8k patients treated in state

As many as 8,000 patients have been treated till date at tele-ICUs in Karnataka.

On tele-ICU outcomes, Dr Vasanth Kumar DE, state nodal officer, tele-ICU, claims that only 1-2% of the admitted patients died in a year. More than 70% of them were cured and discharged. The rest moved out of ICUs against medical advice.

The reasons for non/semi-functional tele-ICUs are shifting of doctors and staff nurses posted to ICUs to labour rooms and casualty, CARE software installation delays and some of the cameras and software requiring private internet which is being installed now. Presently, all our govt facilities have KSWAN network. We'll ensure steps are taken to ensure full functionality of all linked tele-ICUs

**D Randeep** | COMMISSIONER, HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

KSWAN which is a closed network that only allows whitelisted domain access. CARE is still in active development and there are software releases every week to meet the demands on the field and KSWAN does not allow such dynamic systems to be whitelisted. Once CARE crosses the active development stage, enabling the same over KSWAN could be considered, the official explained.

The tele-ICUs are also fa-

cing a shortage of manpower. "We had hired doctors and nurses during the pandemic. They have been shifted to the labour room and casualty. We are getting them back now," Dr Vasanth Kumar said, adding all the spokes will be functional soon and that efforts are being made to set things right. "It is important to have SOPs in place so that once ICU clusters start functioning, they are up and running," another source said, referring to standard operating procedures.

Karnataka made headlines as it launched state-run tele-ICUs in 2022. Two new tele-ICU hubs were launched at Trauma Care Centre, Victoria Hospital, Bengaluru, and Ballari district hospital earlier this month, and they will be linked to 20 taluk hospitals in Bengaluru and Kalaburagi divisions of Karnataka.

Tele-ICUs were implemented in the state in a public-private partnership (PPP) model at a cost of Rs 40 crore for the hardware. Around Rs 60-70 lakh was spent for spoke hospitals in taluks, which included the cost of 10 beds, ventilators, multiparameters, ABJ machines, and laryngoscope.

**Source: The Times of India, p.5, Feb. 11, 2024**



# Govt launches neonatal ambulance for swift care of critically-ill babies

Mobile intensive  
care units,  
incubators  
in vehicles

BENGALURU, DHNS

**A**iming to bring down the mortality rate among newborns, the Health department has launched a new neonatal ambulance service that will help shift premature and critically ill infants to specialised health-care facilities.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, who launched four new ambulances on Tuesday, said that the ambulances come with a number of advanced facilities that could help swift and safe transportation of critically ill patients. This could be crucial, especially in remote areas, he added. The ambulances are equipped with state-of-the-art mobile intensive care units, including ventilators, incubators and monitoring systems. They will also be supported by trained medical personnel



Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao at the launch of ambulance for neonates, in Bengaluru on Tuesday. Health Commissioner D Randeep is also seen.

and will be stationed at chosen crucial locations. The ambulances will be stationed at the Vani Vilas Hospital, Bengaluru; Chaluvamba Hospital, Mysuru; Raichur Institute of Medical Sciences, Raichur; and Karnataka Institute of Medical Sciences, Hubballi.

## Eye care services

Rao also flagged off eight District Mobile Ophthalmic Vans that will provide eye care services in remote areas.

Each mobile unit consists of an ophthalmologist, a Paramedical Ophthalmic Assistant (PMOA), a Block Health Education Officer (BHEO), a staff nurse and a driver.

The vans are equipped to conduct eye care activities in regions where access to such services is limited. The staff in these vans will conduct screening and diagnosis of diseases such as cataract, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and corneal opacity. The vans will

also be used to conduct eye screening in schools and will also help in moving patients from screening centers to the nearest District Hospital or Referral Centre for further treatment.

The vans will also provide on-the-spot refraction and prescription of glasses. The programme is already operational in 17 districts across the state and eight new districts have been chosen in this phase.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3C, Feb, 14, 2024**

# NIMHANS study identifies novel risk genes associated with PSP in Indian population

**Afshan Yasmeen**  
BENGALURU

A study by a team of researchers specialising in Human Genetics and Neurology at NIMHANS has identified novel risk genes associated with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP) in the Indian population. With a global prevalence of 1-18 per lakh population, PSP is a rapidly progressive and rare brain disease that affects walking, balance, eye movements and swallowing.

The disease results from the damage of cells in areas of the brain that control body movement, coordination, thinking and other important functions. The study has been published online this month in *Movement Disorders*, one of the journals brought out by The International Parkinson and Movement Disorder Society.

Ravi Yadav, Professor of Neurology at NIMHANS, who is the corresponding author of the study, told *The Hindu* that PSP is often assumed to be Parkinson's disease as it usually affects people aged above 60 years.

"The exact cause of PSP is not clear, but it may involve many factors, including genes. This study examined the genes of Indian patients with PSP and found some new results. This is the first study in India that shows that two genes - Microtubule-associated Protein Tau (MAPT) and Syntaxin 6 (STX6) - are linked to PSP, and some of the variants of these risk genes are specific to the Indian population," Dr. Yadav said.

Asserting that some of these genetic variations make the disease worse, he said, "This study adds new knowledge on the genetic basis of PSP. Interestingly, some variations of the MAPT gene that are seen in PSP patients from other world populations are not found in Indian patients."

The study, which has been done with funding from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR),



A file photo of National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bengaluru.

reinforces that it is essential to examine the genetic background of PSP patients across various ethnicities. "This will help in identifying new genetic risk variants and developing the diagnostic gene panel of PSP," he said.

## Risk variants

Monojit Debnath, Professor in Human Genetics at NIMHANS, who is one of the lead authors of the study, said the disease is recognised to have a complex genetic basis. "Pathogenic variants within MAPT gene and MAPT haplotypes were seen to modify the risk of PSP. Besides candidate gene studies, genome-wide association studies identified several polymorphic risk variants within genes such as STX6 and Myelin-associated Oligodendrocyte Basic Protein (MOBP), among others. However, genetic findings are not consistent across populations," he said.

The Professor said it is essential to replicate earlier findings in major world populations to develop a universal diagnostic gene panel for PSP. "The impact of major risk genes has not been explored in Indian PSP patients. To address this knowledge gap, the profile of pathogenic MAPT gene variants as well as Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs) within MAPT, STX6, MOBP, and other genes were examined in PSP patients of Indian ethnicity," he explained.

"This is the first Indian study that provides support for MAPT and STX6 being risk genes of PSP as observed in European and Caucasian populations. More importantly, the current study adds a new dimension to the genetic basis of PSP by reporting association of novel genotypes, haplotypes, and sub-haplogroup of major risk genes of PSP," the authors claimed.

## Text & Context and Science

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (February 16, Friday), the following articles are available:

- Why Ladakh has turned to mass protests in freezing temperatures [bit.ly/ladakhprotests](https://bit.ly/ladakhprotests)
- The big diversity blindspot in health policy [bit.ly/diversityandhealth](https://bit.ly/diversityandhealth)

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 16, 2024**

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## Gender

# 33% of passport holders women; 1.3cr issued in '23

**Bengaluru:** At least a third of India's passport holders are women with the gap more skewed in states like Bihar (10%) and UP (19.6%) while it's more than the national average in 23 states, including Karnataka, Maharashtra and the northeast, reports **Chethan Kumar**.

With more than 1.3 crore passports issued between Jan and Dec, annual issuance in 2023 has breached the pre-Covid mark in 2019 (1.1 crore). According to the external affairs ministry data, the total number of passports issued and currently valid in India is 9.2 crore, and

### 4.9CR PASSPORTS FROM JAN 2019 TO DEC 2023



it accounts for only 6.5% of the total population (estimated at 142 crore).

► **UP lags in issuance, P 18**

## Passport gender shift: Mizoram leads, UP lags in issuance to women

► Continued from page 1

This is because the passport-issuance policy was rigid until recently and the number of Indians with aspirations — and the wherewithal — to go abroad is increasing in recent years.

While the 9.2 crore passports include those issued by Indian missions abroad, the gender-wise break-up is available for more than 8.8 crore passport holders spread across 37 states and Union territories. Of these, more than 3 crore — or 34.9% — are women.

Seven states — Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and Gujarat — have more than 50 lakh passport holders and together account for 63% of the 8.8 crore. Five of these states, barring

### STATES WITH MORE THAN 50L PASSPORT HOLDERS

| State         | Female    | Male      | Total     | % Female |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| Kerala        | 42.1 lakh | 56.7 lakh | 98.9 lakh | 42.60%   |
| Maharashtra   | 40.7 lakh | 57.3 lakh | 98.1 lakh | 41.50%   |
| Uttar Pradesh | 17.2 lakh | 87.8 lakh | 87.8 lakh | 19.60%   |
| Tamil Nadu    | 28 lakh   | 55.4 lakh | 83.5 lakh | 33.20%   |
| Punjab        | 27.7 lakh | 42.4 lakh | 70.1 lakh | 39.50%   |
| Gujarat       | 24.9 lakh | 37.4 lakh | 62.4 lakh | 39.90%   |
| Karnataka     | 22.7 lakh | 32 lakh   | 54.8 lakh | 41.40%   |

Source: MEA | All figures rounded off

UP and Tamil Nadu (33.2%), have a better gender ratio in the passports issued than the national average. With 61.7% of the passports issued to women, Mizoram tops the table, while Nagaland (54.4%) and Sikkim (51.1%) have also seen more than

half of the passports being issued to women. Other than Bihar and UP, no other state has women accounting for less than 20% of the passport holders, while it is between 20% and 30% in six states. Past data on gender-wise break-up is not immediately av-

ailable. The number of passports issued in 2023 grew 17% compared with 2022, which had seen a massive jump compared with 2021 (73.6 lakh) when numbers were low owing to Covid-19. In 2020, it was at 54.1 lakh.

In fact, the 1.3 crore passports in 2023 account for 15% of the total valid passports (9.2 crore). And, the top seven states, naturally, accounted for the most in the said year.

Analysis of data for the five years between Jan 2019 and Dec 2023 shows that 4.9 crore — or 53% — of the 9.2 crore valid passports in the country were issued in this period. And 3.1 crore of the 4.9 crore came cumulatively from the seven states: Kerala, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Gujarat and Karnataka.

**Source: The Times of India, p.1 & 18, Feb. 10, 2024**

# BMTC mulling reintroduction of 'Pink buses' amidst Shakti scheme's success

Launched in 2006-07 exclusively for women, these buses were discontinued because of poor patronage

**Darshan Devaiah B.P.**  
BENGALURU

**A**s Karnataka's Shakti Scheme is seeing huge success and has led to an increased women ridership on buses, Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) is now considering the reintroduction of 'Pink buses' in Bengaluru.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy said that the idea of pink buses was initially given by Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar during a recent bus launch event. "Following the successful launch of

Shakti, women's ridership in Karnataka buses has increased. Now, we are in the process of adding more buses to the fleet. The pink bus idea is good and we are exploring the possibility of introducing new pink buses in the BMTC fleet, exclusively dedicated to women passengers," he said.

Initially launched in 2006-07 exclusively for women, the pink buses were discontinued owing to poor patronage. Subsequently, BMTC considered reintroducing them multiple times, but the plans didn't materialize for various reasons. "BMTC will examine how pink buses



More women are travelling by KSRTC buses after the Shakti scheme was introduced in Karnataka. RAVICHANDRAN N.

can benefit women passengers. We need to identify routes with higher women passengers and obtain approval from the State government to procure new

buses. Our officials will conduct a route rationalisation study," Mr. Reddy said.

Since the launch of the Shakti Scheme on June 11, 2023, till February 10,

2024, the RTCs have issued over 150 Crore "zero tickets" indicating the number of free bus rides women have taken utilising the scheme. The cumulative value of tickets so issued has been ₹3,599.63 crore.

## **Additional buses to reduce holiday rush**

Meanwhile, Mr. Reddy, who is also Muzrai and Endowment Minister, said that he has directed all four road transport corporations (RTCs) to deploy additional buses during the upcoming summer holidays season. The initiative aims to accommodate the increased travel anticipated

in coming months during summer holidays for schools and colleges as people head to temples and other tourist destinations across the State utilizing the Shakti scheme.

"After the introduction of the Shakti scheme in the state, we observed a significant increase in women passengers utilising the scheme to travel to temples and various tourist destinations. We anticipate that many women passengers will travel during the upcoming summer holidays too, and therefore, all the corporations will have additional buses to various destinations," he added.

**Source: The Hindu, p.2, Feb. 12, 2024**



# 94,000 rape survivors, acid-attack victims get ₹1,478 crore aid in 7 yrs

Chethan.Kumar  
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**Bengaluru:** Nearly 94,000 rape survivors and acid-attack victims from across India have received Rs 1,478 crore in compensation after the Centre began implementing a compensation scheme seven years ago as per a Supreme Court directive.

The compensation is in line with the guidelines formulated by the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) under the compensation scheme for women survivors of sexual assault/other crimes-2018. According to the Union law ministry, the compensation was handed between 2017-18 and 2023-24 (up to Nov 2023). In the first eight months of 2023-24, some Rs 255 crore compensation has been paid out, while the highest

## 1.2L APPLICANTS

- Govt began **compensation scheme** for survivors **7 years ago** following a SC directive
- A total of **1.2 lakh applications received** since 2017-2018 and **compensation paid to 93,678 survivors**
- At **20,900**, highest number of **applications** cleared in **2022-23**; **₹347.8 crore** aid paid
- In first 8 months of 2023-24, **₹255 crore** compensation paid

amount of Rs 347.8 crore was given in 2022-23.

The guidelines list 18 types of compensation: The lowest is Rs 2 lakh in two categories (20% disability & grievous physical injury requiring rehabilitation) and the highest of Rs 10 lakh (loss of life).

► **Long way to go, P 12**

Continued...

# ‘NALSA would go a long way in achieving its goals’

► **Continued from page 1**

More than 1.2 lakh victims had filed applications through NALSA or courts. Some 73.5% applications have been settled, and nearly 34,000 are yet to be decided on. Welcoming the handout of compensation, Kushi Kushalappa, director (support and rehab team), Enfold Proactive Health Trust, which has been working with Pocso victims across the country for more than a decade, said the scheme would go a long way in achieving its goals if there was prioritisation of fund allocation to various legal services across states that deal with such

cases. Another activist said that victims, in some cases, are made to wait for months despite recommendations since the state-level authority doesn't get sanctions easily.

Besides, victims are entitled to free legal services under Section 12 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, while Section 357A of the CrPC, 1973, mandates, “Every state government, in co-ordination with the central government, shall prepare a scheme for providing funds for the purpose of compensation to the victim or his dependents who have suffered loss or injury as a result of the crime and who require rehabilitation...”

**Source: The Times of India, p.1 & 12, Feb. 14, 2024**



# ತನಿಖೆಗೆ ಸಹಕಾರ ನೀಡದ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು | ತಪ್ಪಿತಸ್ಥರನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸಲು ಹುನ್ನಾರ ಭ್ರೂಣ ಪತ್ತೆ-ಹತ್ಯೆ ಕೇಸ್‌ಗಳಿಗೆ ಗ್ರಹಣ!

■ ಹರೀಶ್ ಬೇಲೂರು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ತಲ್ಲಣ ಮೂಡಿಸಿದ್ದ ಭ್ರೂಣಹತ್ಯೆ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳು ಹಳ್ಳ ಹಿಡಿಯವತ್ತೆ ಸಾಗಿವೆ. ಮೈಸೂರು, ಮಂಡ್ಯ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಸೇರಿ ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಹಲವು ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದಿರುವ ಭ್ರೂಣ ಪತ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಹತ್ಯೆ ಕೇಸ್‌ಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಕೂಲಂಕಷವಾಗಿ ತನಿಖೆ ನಡೆಸಲು ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳನ್ನು ಸಿಬಿಡಿಗ್ಗೆ ವಹಿಸಿ ಒಂದೂವರೆ ತಿಂಗಳಾದರೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರಗತಿ ಕಂಡಿಲ್ಲ. ಅರೋಗ್ಯ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ತನಿಖೆಗೆ ಸಹಕರಿಸದ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕರಣ ನಿಂತಲ್ಲೇ ನಿಂತಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ.

» **ಮಂಡ್ಯದ ಆಲೆಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೂರು ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 242 ಭ್ರೂಣ ಹತ್ಯೆ**  
ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಹಾಗೂ ಮೈಸೂರು ಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಭ್ರೂಣ ಪತ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಹತ್ಯೆ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳೂ ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ ಬಂದು ರಾಜ್ಯದ ಗಮನ ಸೆಳೆದಿತ್ತು. ಜೀವ ಉಳಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ವೈದ್ಯರೇ ಇಂಥ ಅಮಾನವೀಯ ಕೆಲಸಕ್ಕೆ ಕೈ ಹಾಕಿರುವುದು ಮನುಕುಲವೇ ತಲೆ ತಗ್ಗಿಸುವಂತಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಮಂಡ್ಯದ ಆಲೆಮನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ 3 ತಿಂಗಳಲ್ಲೇ ಬರೋಬ್ಬರಿ 242 ಭ್ರೂಣ ಹತ್ಯೆ ಮಾಡಿರುವುದು ಪತ್ತೆಯಾಗಿತ್ತು. ಪ್ರತಿ ಭ್ರೂಣ ಪತ್ತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಹತ್ಯೆಗೆ ಒಟ್ಟು 50-60 ಸಾವಿರ ರೂ. ಹಣ ಪಡೆಯುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಸಾಬೀತಾಗಿತ್ತು.

ಎರಡು ವರ್ಷದಿಂದ ಭ್ರೂಣ ಹತ್ಯೆ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಪೊಲೀಸ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅರೋಪಿಗಳು ತಪ್ಪೊಪ್ಪಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು. ಮೈಸೂರು, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು, ರಾಮನಗರದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಿತ ಜಾಲದ ಮುಖೇನ ಗರ್ಭಪಾತ ನಡೆಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿತ್ತು. ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಅಧಿವೇಶನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಿತವಾಗಿ ಶಾಸಕರು, ಚರ್ಚೆ ನಡೆಸಿ ದಂಧೆಗೆ ಕಡಿವಾಣ ಹಾಕುವಂತೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಒತ್ತಾಯಿಸಿದ್ದರು.



ಆ ಬಳಿಕ, ಈ ಕೇಸನ್ನು ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಸಿಬಿಡಿಗ್ಗೆ ವಹಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಕಾನೂನು ಬಾಹಿರವಾಗಿ ಲಿಂಗ ಪತ್ತೆ: ರಾಜ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಒಟ್ಟು 6,395 ಸ್ವಾನಿಂಗ್ ಸೆಂಟರ್‌ಗಳಿವೆ. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ 6,068 ಬಾಣಸ್ ಹಾಗೂ 27 ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಸ್ವಾನಿಂಗ್ ಸೆಂಟರ್‌ಗಳಿವೆ. 'ಬಾಲಿಕಾ' ಸಾಫ್ಟ್‌ವೇರ್ ಮುಖೇನ ಎಲ್ಲ ಸೆಂಟರ್‌ಗಳು ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು. ಭ್ರೂಣ ಲಿಂಗ ತಪಾಸಣೆ ಕೇಂದ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಕೆಲ ನಿಯಮ ವಿಧಿಸಿದೆ.

ಭ್ರೂಣದ ಲಿಂಗ ನಿರ್ಧರಣೆಯ ಉದ್ದೇಶಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಅಲ್ಟ್ರಾಸೋನೋಗ್ರಫಿ ಸೇರಿ ಇನ್ನಾವುದೇ ತಪಾಸಣೆಯನ್ನು ಪ್ರಯೋಗಾಲಯ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಅಥವಾ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಕೆಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳುವಂತಿಲ್ಲ. ಕಾನೂನಿನನ್ವಯ ವಿಧಾನವನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿ ಅಥವಾ ಗರ್ಭಿಣಿ ಸ್ತ್ರೀಯರ ಜತೆ ಭ್ರೂಣ ಲಿಂಗದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಸಂವಹನ ಮಾಡುವಂತಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದರೂ, ಕೆಲ ಸ್ವಾನಿಂಗ್ ಸೆಂಟರ್‌ಗಳು ಕಾನೂನುಬಾಹಿರವಾಗಿ ಲಿಂಗ ಪತ್ತೆ ಮಾಡುವ ದಂಧೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿವೆ.

## ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕಳ್ಳಾಟ

ರೇನಾಟಕ ಬಾಣಸ್ ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ (ಕೆಪಿಎಂಎ) ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರ ಪಡೆಯದ, ನಿಯಮ ಪಾಲಿಸದ ಸ್ತ್ರೀನಿಕ್ ಹಾಗೂ ನಿಯಮಾನುಸಾರ ದಾಖಲೆ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸದ ಸ್ವಾನಿಂಗ್ ಸೆಂಟರ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಜಪ್ತಿ ಮಾಡಿ ಕೇಸ್ ದಾಖಲಿಸುವುದು ಅರೋಗ್ಯ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯ. ಅಲ್ಲದೆ, ಮಡಿಕಲ್ ಸ್ನೋರ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಭ್ರೂಣಹತ್ಯೆ ಶಸ್ತ್ರಚಿಕಿತ್ಸೆಗೆ (ಅಬಾರ್ಷನ್) ಅವಕಾಶವಿರುವ ಔಷಧ ಕಟ್ ಖರೀದಿ ಸುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆಯೂ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಇರುತ್ತದೆ. ಅದರೆ, ಕೆಲ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳೇ ಹಣದ ಆಸೆಗಾಗಿ ತಪಾಸಣೆ ವೇಳೆ ನ್ಯೂನತೆ ಕಂಡುಬರುವ ಸ್ತ್ರೀನಿಕ್, ಸ್ವಾನಿಂಗ್ ಸೆಂಟರ್‌ಗಳ ಜತೆ ಕಾಮೀಲಾಗಿ ಕೇಸ್ ದಾಖಲಾಗದಂತೆ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಭ್ರೂಣ ಹತ್ಯೆ ದಂಧೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿರುವವರು ತಮ್ಮ ಮೇಲೆ ದಾಳಿಯಾಗದಂತೆ ನೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ನಿಟ್ಟಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತಿಂಗಳಿಗೆ ಇಂತಿಷ್ಟು ಮಾಮೂಲಿ ನೀಡುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಮೇಲಿನ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆಲ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಕಾಮೀಲಾಗಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿದೆ. ಹೇಗಾದರೂ ಮಾಡಿ ಈ ಕೇಸ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಹಳ್ಳ ಹಿಡಿಸಲು ಅಥವಾ ಮುಚ್ಚಿಹಾಕುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಒಳಗೊಳಗಿನ ನಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದೆ ಎನ್ನಲಾಗಿದೆ.

## ಟಾಸ್ಟ್‌ಪೋರ್ಸ್ ರಚನೆ

ಪಿಸಿ ಮತ್ತು ಪಿಎನ್‌ಡಿಟಿ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ ಪರಿಣಾಮಕಾರಿ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಹೊಸದಾಗಿ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಡೆ (ಟಾಸ್ಟ್‌ಪೋರ್ಸ್) ಸಮಿತಿ ರಚಿಸಿದೆ. ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸಲಹಾ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಸಲಹಾ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರ, ರಾಜ್ಯ ತಪಾಸಣಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮೇಲ್ವಿಚಾರಣಾ ಸಮಿತಿ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ತಪಾಸಣಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮೇಲ್ವಿಚಾರಣಾ ಸಮಿತಿಗಳ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಯನ್ನು ಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿ ಮೇಲ್ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ನಡೆಸಲು ರಾಜ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಡೆ ಮುಂದಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರೋಗ್ಯ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು ಕಾರ್ಯಪಡೆಗೆ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರಾದರೆ, ರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ಅರೋಗ್ಯ ಅಭಿಯಾನ (ಎನ್‌ಎಚ್‌ಎಂ) ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಉಪಾಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇಲಾಖೆ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಯೋಜನಾ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು, ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಸದಸ್ಯರಾದರೆ, ಇಲಾಖೆಯ ವೈದ್ಯಕೀಯ ಕಾಯ್ದೆ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಉಪ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು ಸಂಚಾಲಕ ಸದಸ್ಯರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕಾರ್ಯಪಡೆಗೆ ಅರ್ಹತೆ ಇಲ್ಲದ ಕೆಲವರನ್ನು ನೇಮಿಸಿರುವುದು ಕಂಡುಬಂದಿದೆ.

Source: Vijayavani, p.05, Feb.13, 2024

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# Old vehicle owners face hardship in getting HSRP

**Darshan Devaiah B.P.**  
BENGALURU

As the deadline for getting the High-Security Registration Plate (HSRP) approaches, vehicle owners, particularly those with older vehicles from companies that no longer exist, are confused and facing challenges.

The department issued a notification in August 2023 mandating the installation of HSRP on an estimated two crore vehicles registered before April 1, 2019, setting a November 17, 2023, deadline. However, as very few people installed the HSRP, the department extended the deadline till February 17, 2024.

Harish R. Naik from Rajajinagar, the owner of a 15-year-old bike from a company that no longer exists, is unable to obtain an



The deadline for installing the High-Security Registration Plate is February 17. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

HSRP. He said, "For the last two months, I have been trying to get the HSRP for my bike. Unfortunately, the brand is not listed on the website (of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers), and despite my efforts to contact the RTO, the issue remains unresolved."

Anil Kumar, the owner of a minibus in Mandya district, faced difficulty registering for the HSRP number as the website consistently declined his request, indicating that the vehicle number was not registered under the RTO. Expressing his frustration,

he said, "I have all the necessary documents, and the vehicle is in good running condition. However, the website displays an error message and instructs me to contact the RTO. Upon reaching out to the RTO, they seemed unaware of the issue I am encountering."

Some vehicle owners are reporting issues where the website fails to recognise their vehicle numbers. Prashanth Swamy, a resident of Seshadripuram, said, "I am unable to book my HSRP as the vehicle registration number is not recognised as Karnataka re-

gistered. Despite raising a couple of complaints, there has been no resolution. I also tried with another car registered in Karnataka, and the issue persists with the same error."

Vehicle owners in Kodagu district are upset as they need to travel long distances to have their number plates installed. Residents point out that the issue stems from the absence of authorized shops or dealers in the district permitted to install HSRP.

### **'Reach out to dealer'**

Meanwhile, the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers says companies that are no longer in business and old companies have also been listed on its HSRP website.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Mahesh Malhotra, the spokesperson for Rosmerta

Technologies, a company involved in the production of HSRP number plates, said, "People should be aware of the manufacturing company's name, and they can get to know about it by reaching out to their dealers for accurate information or contact the nearest RTO offices." Regarding vintage vehicles, Mr. Malhotra said a majority of these vehicles are not utilised for daily road use and are primarily used during vintage rallies.

Meanwhile, a Transport Department official said, "We will look into these issues. However, people can only book for those vehicles whose brand names are displayed on the website. For other brands which are not displayed, we are not authorised to process the HSRP order. They should get in touch with their dealer."

**Source: The Hindu, p.1, Feb. 10, 2024**



# ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳ ನಿರ್ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯದಿಂದ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಗೆ ಭಾರೀ ನಷ್ಟ

ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಎರಡು ಅಂತಸ್ತಿನ ಮನೆ ಕಟ್ಟಿರುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ದೂರು | ನಿಯಮಾವಳಿಯನ್ನು ಮೀರಿ ಕಟ್ಟಡಕ್ಕೆ ಚರಂಡಿ ಶುಲ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿ ವಿನಾಯಿತಿ | ಕಾನೂನು ಬಾಹಿರ ಅನುಮತಿ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ವರದಿ ಕೊಟ್ಟರೂ ಕ್ರಮವಿಲ್ಲ

ನಿ ಅಪರ್ಣಾ ಎ.ಎಸ್. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯು ನಗರಕ್ಕೆ ಸಮರ್ಪಕ ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ ಒದಗಿಸಲು ಹಲವಾರು ಯೋಜನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕೈಗೆತ್ತಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಕೆಳಹಂತದ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಮಾಡುವ ಎಡವಟ್ಟುಗಳಿಂದ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿ ಕೋಟ್ಯಂತರ ರುಪಾಯಿ ನಷ್ಟವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿದೆ.

ನಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಶಾಶ್ವತ ಕಟ್ಟಡವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ ಮಾಡಬೇಕೆಂದರೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಅನುಮತಿ ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಚರಂಡಿ ಹಾಗೂ ನೀರಿನ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯ ಒದಗಿಸುವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿ ಶುಲ್ಕವನ್ನು ವಿಧಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಈ ಶುಲ್ಕವನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಡದ ವಿಸ್ತೀರ್ಣ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಹಲವು ಅಯಾಮಗಳ ಆಧಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕೆಳ ಹಂತದ ಕೆಲವು ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು, ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ಮಾಲೀಕರು ಹಾಗೂ ರಿಯಲ್ ಎಸ್ಟೇಟ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳೊಂದಿಗೆ ಕೈಜೋಡಿಸಿ, ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಗೆ ನಷ್ಟ ವನ್ನುಂಟು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಇದೀಗ ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿದೆ. ತಿಂಚ್ಚು ಭಾಗದ ವಿರುಪಾಕ್ಷ ನಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯಿಂದ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಅಪಾರ್ಟ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಈ ರೀತಿ ಅಕ್ರಮ ನಡೆದಿರುವುದು ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ ಬಂದಿದೆ.

ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಅಪಾರ್ಟ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿರುವ ಕೂಲಿ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರ ವಾಸ್ತವ್ಯಕ್ಕಿಂದು ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅನುಮತಿ ನೀಡಿರುವುದು ಇದೀಗ ವಿವಾದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾರಣವಾಗಿದೆ. ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅವಕಾಶ ನೀಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಕಾನೂನಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅವಕಾಶವಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಎರಡು ಅಂತಸ್ತಿನ ಮನೆಗಳನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದೆ. ಈ ರೀತಿ ಎರಡು ಅಂತಸ್ತಿನ ಮನೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿದರೆ, ಅದನ್ನು ಶಾಶ್ವತ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿ, ಶುಲ್ಕ ವಿಧಿಸಬೇಕು. ಆದರೆ ಇದನ್ನು ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಗುರುತಿಸಿದ್ದು, ಇದರಿಂದ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಗೆ ಲಕ್ಷಾಂತರ ರು. ಶುಲ್ಕ



- ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಶಾಶ್ವತಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ
- ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಕೂಲಿಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರಿಗೆ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿರುವ 30 ಮನೆಯ ಕಟ್ಟಡಕ್ಕೆ ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಮಾನ್ಯತೆ
- ಇದರಿಂದ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಗೆ ಲಕ್ಷಾಂತರ ರುಪಾಯಿ ನಷ್ಟ
- ಈ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಹಿರಿಯ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ವರದಿ ನೀಡಿದ್ದರೂ, ಕ್ರಮವಹಿಸಿಲ್ಲ ಎನ್ನುವ ಆರೋಪ

ನಷ್ಟವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನು ಈ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳಿಗೆ ಒಂದು ವರ್ಷದ ತನಕ ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಅವಕಾಶ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ಸುಮಾರು ಮೂರು ವರ್ಷಗಳಿಂದ ಈ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳನ್ನು ಉಳಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಅಂಕಿ-ಅಂಶದಲ್ಲಿ ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿರುವುದರಿಂದ, ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಗೆ ಭಾರಿ ನಷ್ಟವಾಗಿದೆ ಎನ್ನುವ ಆರೋಪ ಕೇಳಿಬಂದಿದೆ.

ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸಹಾಯಕ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಎಂಜಿನಿಯರ್ ಸ್ವಹಿತಾಸಕ್ತಿಗಾಗಿ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಗೆ ನಷ್ಟವಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದೇ ವಿಷಯವಾಗಿ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಹಿರಿಯ ಎಂಜಿನಿಯರ್ ನೇತೃತ್ವದ ಸಮಿತಿಯೂ ಈಗಾಗಲೇ, ಈ ಕೃತ್ಯ ನಿಯಮಬಾಹಿರ ಎನ್ನುವ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ ವರದಿಯನ್ನು ನೀಡಿದ್ದರೂ, ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕ್ರಮವಹಿಸಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಈ ಪ್ರಕರಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಸೂಕ್ತ ಕ್ರಮವಹಿಸದಿದ್ದರೆ, ಕಾನೂನು ಹೋರಾಟ

## ಕಾನೂನಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಏನಿದೆ?

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಟ್ಟಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಮೊದಲು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯಿಂದ ಒಳಚರಂಡಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಪರವಾನಗಿ ಪಡೆಯಬೇಕು. ಆದರೆ ಕಟ್ಟಡಗಳ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣದ ವೇಳೆ ಕೂಲಿ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರು ಉಳಿದುಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾವುದೇ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಪಾವತಿಸುವ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ಕೆ ಆಂಡ್ ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ತನ್ನ ಕೂಲಿ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರಿಗಿಂದು ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿರುವ ಮನೆಗಳು, ಎರಡು ಅಂತಸ್ತಿನ ಮನೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಇದನ್ನು ತೆರವುಗೊಳಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದರೆ ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡವೆಂದು ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯ ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಮಣ್ಣರಚಲಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿದುಬಂದಿದೆ.

## ದೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಏನಿದೆ?

ಸಾಮಾಜಿಕ ಕಾರ್ಯಕರ್ತ ಮರಿಲಿಂಗೇಗೌಡ ಮಾಲಿಪಾಟೀಲ್ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಡಾ. ರಾಮಪ್ರಸಾದ್ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಪತ್ರ ಬರೆದಿದ್ದು, ತಿಂಚ್ಚುವಿನಲ್ಲಿರುವ ವಿರುಪಾಕ್ಷನಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆ2ಕೆ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರಿಗೆ ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಿರುವ ತಾತ್ಕಾಲಿಕ ಕಟ್ಟಡಕ್ಕೆ ನೀಡುವ ಒಳ ಚರಂಡಿ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯನ್ನು ನೀಡುವಂತೆ ಸುಮಾರು 30 ಮನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಕಟ್ಟಡಕ್ಕೆ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಅರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಂಹಿತೆ 2021-22ರ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆ. ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಕೇಳಿದರೂ, ಪೂರಕ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ನೀಡಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ದೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಉಲ್ಲೇಖಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಮಾಡುವುದು ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ ಎನ್ನುವ ದೂರು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿ ಅಧ್ಯಕ್ಷರಿಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ.

Source: Vishwavani, p.02, Feb.11, 2024

# Online marriage registration begins in city on a pilot basis

It will be extended across the State before month-end; those wishing to provide Aadhaar authentication can complete process from home, while those who don't do Aadhaar authentication can register marriage by visiting the sub-registrar's office

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

In what could bring significant relief to citizens, the Karnataka government on Thursday (February 15) launched the facility for online registration of marriage under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955, and also the online application process for marriages to be registered under the Special Marriage Act, 1954.

The facility was launched on a pilot basis at the Malleshwaram sub-registrar office on Thursday by Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda.

Two online registrations of marriages took place as scheduled on Thursday.

It will be extended to all sub-registrar's offices across the State before the end of this month.

Those wishing to provide Aadhaar authentication can complete the process from home, while those who don't do the Aadhaar authentication can register their marriage by visiting the sub-regis-



Revenue Minister Krishna Byre Gowda launching the online marriage registration facility in Bengaluru on Thursday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

trar's office. In another major change brought in the system, the process of application for registering marriages under the Special Marriages Act has been made online.

After providing all the necessary documents online, a visit to the sub-registrar's office will only be for

registration. Among other online facilities that the Minister launched is applying and receiving encumbrance certificates of properties registered before 2004. Earlier, the EC application had to be made at the sub-registrar's office that would issue physical certificates.

Now, the application for EC and payment of fee can be made online, and the EC will be sent to the user login, and people do not have to visit the office physically.

In another measure, the certified copies of property documents for 150 years will also be made available

online. In a similar process to the EC, the public can apply for certified copies online and the copies will be sent to the user login. An official said the certified copies of properties registered since 1857 will be available. In another new initiative, farmers can get encumbrance certificates for their agricultural land online. The GIS-based mapping will help uploading of details of land automatically.

In a bid to reduce the inconvenience to the public with respect to mistakes in documents, under valuation of properties, wrong usage of legal terms and other problems that required running around government offices to rectify, the State government has introduced online pre-registration checks.

Revenue Department Principal Secretary Rashmi Mahesh, Inspector General of Registration B.R. Mamatha, and Assistant Inspector General of Registration H.L. Prabhakar were present.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**



ಸ್ವಾಂಪ್ ಡ್ಯೂಟಿ ನಾಲ್ಕೈದು ಪಟ್ಟು ಹೆಚ್ಚಳ ವಿವಿಧ ಬಾಂಡ್‌ಗಳಿಗೆ ದುಪ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಮೊತ್ತ

# ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಹೊರೆಯಾದ ಮುದ್ರಾಂಕ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಏರಿಕೆ

ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಆದಾಯ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸುವ ಗುರಿಯೊಂದಿಗೆ ಇತ್ತೀಚೆಗಷ್ಟೇ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಮುದ್ರಾಂಕ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿ ಆದೇಶ ಹೊರಡಿಸಿತ್ತು. ಆದರೆ, ಇದು ರೈತಾಪಿ ವರ್ಗಕ್ಕೆ ಭಾರಿ ಹೊರೆಯಾಗಿ ಪರಿಣಮಿಸಿದೆ ಎಂದು ವಿಜಯವಾಣಿ ಸಹಾಯವಾಣಿಗೆ ಹಲವು ರೈತರು ಅಳಲು ತೋಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದರು.

ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಗದಗ ವರದಿಗಾರ ಶಿವಾನಂದ ಹಿರೇಮಠ ನೀಡಿದ ವರದಿ ಇಲ್ಲಿದೆ.

ಬಂದಿಂದ ಕೃಷಿ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗೆ ಹಿನ್ನೆಡೆಯಾಗಿ ರೈತರು ಕಂಗಾಲಾ ಗಿರುವ ನಡುವೆಯೇ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಮುದ್ರಾಂಕ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿರುವುದು ರೈತ ವರ್ಗಕ್ಕೆ ಗಾಯದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬರೆ ಎಳೆದಂತಾಗಿದೆ. ವಿವಿಧ ಸರ್ಕಾರಿ ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕೃಷಿ ಚಟುವಟಿಕೆಗೆ ಅಗತ್ಯವಿರುವ ಮುಚ್ಚಳಿಕೆ ಪತ್ರ, ಪ್ರಮಾಣಪತ್ರ, ವಿವಿಧ ರೀತಿಯ ಬಾಂಡ್‌ಗಳನ್ನು ಖರೀದಿಸಲು ದುಪ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಹಣ ಪಾವತಿಸುವ ಅನಿವಾರ್ಯ ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಎದುರಾಗಿದೆ. ಗ್ಯಾರಂಟಿ ಯೋಜನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಕೋಡೀಕರಿಸಲು ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಹಲವು ಸ್ವಾಂಪ್ ದರಗಳ ಏರಿಕೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದರ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ರೈತರು ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸಂಕಷ್ಟಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿಲುಕುವಂತಾಗಿದೆ.



ಸಮಸ್ಯೆ ಏನು?: ಕೃಷಿ, ನೀರಾವರಿ, ಕಂದಾಯ ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಇತರೆ ಇಲಾಖೆಗಳ ಫಲಾನುಭವಿಯಾಗಲು, ಸಬ್ಸಿಡಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಮತ್ತು ಹೊಲ-ಗದ್ದೆಯನ್ನು ಸಹೋದರ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಕರ ನಡುವೆ ಇಬ್ಬಾಗ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ರೈತರು ವಿವಿಧ ರೀತಿಯ ವ್ಯವಹಾರಕ್ಕೆ ವಿವಿಧ ಇಲಾಖೆಗೆ ಬಾಂಡ್, ಮುಚ್ಚಳಿಕೆ ಪತ್ರ, ಪ್ರಮಾಣಪತ್ರ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕು. **ಓ ಪುಟ 2**



ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಮುದ್ರಾಂಕ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಏರಿಕೆ ಮರುಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಬೇಕು. ರೈತರಿಗೆ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕ, ಕಡಿಮೆ ಮೊತ್ತದ ದರ ನಿಗದಿ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಅಗತ್ಯವಿದೆ. **! ಕುರುಬೂರು ಶಾಂತಕುಮಾರ** ರೈತ ಮುಖಂಡ



ಬಳಕೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ವಿಶೇಷವಾಗಿ ಕೃಷಿ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ರೈತರು ವಿವಿಧ ಯೋಜನೆಯಡಿ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಮುಚ್ಚಳಿಕೆ ಪತ್ರ ನೀಡುವುದು ಕಡ್ಡಾಯ. ರಾಶಿ ಯಂತ್ರ, ಬಿತ್ತುವ ಕೂರಗಿ, ನೇಗಿಲು ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ವಿವಿಧ ಪರಿಕರಗಳನ್ನು ಸಹಾಯ ಧನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಲು 20 ರೂ. ಬದಲಾಗಿದೆ 100 ರೂ. ಸ್ವಾಂಪ್ (ನೋಟರಿ) ಮಾಡಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. **ಜಮೀನಿನ ಖರೀದಿ, ವಜನಪತ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ಜಮೀನಿನ ಮೂಲ ಮಾರುಕಟ್ಟೆ ದರಕ್ಕೆ ಶೇ.01 ರಷ್ಟು ಭರಿಸಬೇಕಿದ್ದ ದರವನ್ನು ಈಗ ಶೇ 0.5ರಷ್ಟು ಭರಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. ಈ ಬೆಲೆ ಲಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೂ ಅಧಿಕವಾಗುವುದರಿಂದ ರೈತರು ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಎಲ್ಲ ವರ್ಗಕ್ಕೂ ಹೊರ ಆಗಲಿದೆ. • ವಿವಿಧ ಪ್ರಾಧಿಕಾರದಿಂದ ಕೇಳಲ್ಪಡುವ ಮುಚ್ಚಳಿಕೆ ಪತ್ರ, ದತ್ತಕ ಪತ್ರ, ಜನನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಪತ್ರ, ಮೂಲ ದಾಖಲೆ ಪಡೆಯಲು. ಕೋರ್ಟ್‌ಗೆ ಅಪಿಡವಿಟ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಇನ್ನುಂದೆ 100 ರೂ. ಸ್ವಾಂಪ್ ಕಡ್ಡಾಯ.**

ವಿಜಯವಾಣಿ ಸಂ 1

## ಹೊರೆಯಾದ ಮುದ್ರಾಂಕ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಏರಿಕೆ

ಮೊದಲನೇ ಪುಟದಿಂದ...

ಮೊದಲೇ ಬರದ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ರೈತರ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಸ್ಥಿತಿ ಹದಗೆಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ಈ ನಡುವೆ ಸ್ವಾಂಪ್ ದರಗಳನ್ನು ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಮೂರರಿಂದ ನಾಲ್ಕು ಪಟ್ಟು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಿರುವುದು ರೈತರನ್ನು ಚಿಂತೆಗೀಡು ಮಾಡಿದೆ.

ಹಿಸ್ಸಾ ದುಪ್ಪಟ್ಟು: ರೈತರು ಹೊಲ-ಗದ್ದೆಗಳ ಪಾಲುದಾರಿಕೆ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಈ ಮೊದಲು ಎಕರೆ ಲೆಕ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿ 200 ರೂ. ನಿಂದ 1000 ರೂ. ವರೆಗೆ ಸ್ವಾಂಪ್ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಪಾವತಿಸಬೇಕಿತ್ತು. ಈಗ ಪ್ರತಿ ಹಿಸ್ಸಾಗೆ (ಪ್ರತಿ ಪಾಲುದಾರಿಕೆ) 1,000 ರೂ.ನಿಂದ 5,000 ರೂ.ವರೆಗೆ ಪಾವತಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. ಈ ಶುಲ್ಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಶೇ.20 ಏರಿಕೆ ಆಗಿದೆ.

# 'New cab fares will come into force from early March'

Industry body writes to transport minister, asks for restoring dynamic pricing

BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**he uniform fare structure for all cabs plying within Karnataka will come into force in early March, according to the Transport Department.

On February 3, a state government notification categorised all cabs plying within Karnataka, whether they are city taxis or those attached to ride aggregators such as Ola, Uber and Rapido, into three based on their purchase price. The notification was published in the government gazette on February 5.

An official source in the Transport Department said the fares would come into force a month after the gazette notification. If ride-hailing



**The new fare structure categorises cabs, whether they are city taxis or those attached to ride aggregators, into three based on their purchase price.** DH FILE PHOTO

firms fail to comply with the fare structure, the department will check cabs and impose a penalty, he said.

The base fare (first four kilometres) for a cab costing up to Rs 10 lakh is Rs 100. For every subsequent kilometre, it's Rs 24. For cabs costing Rs 10-15 lakh, the base fare is Rs 115 and for every subsequent kilometre, it's Rs 28. The base fares for cabs costing more than Rs 15 lakh are Rs 130 and 32, respectively.

The government has also stipulated luggage, waiting time and night-time charges.

While taxi drivers/aggregators can collect GST and tolls from passengers, they cannot levy any per-minute charges.

The previous fares, notified in 2021, contained a flexi-fare structure that allowed cab operators to charge anything within a specific band. This has been removed.

Ola and Uber operate without a licence because their licences expired in 2021. They have challenged the Karnataka On-demand Transportation Technology Aggregators Rules, 2016, and the high court has restrained

the government from taking coercive action against them.

The official insisted that the stay order wouldn't come in the way of enforcing the new fare structure.

In a letter to Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy on February 14, the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), an industry body representing the digital services industry, said flat fares, with no room for dynamic pricing, would have a "chilling impact" on Karnataka's mobility ecosystem.

Chitrita Chatterjee, Associate Vice President and Head of Public Policy at IAMAI, said web-based transportation aggregators were different and more tech-enabled than normal street ride-hailing, and should not be subjected to the same fares.

He argued that the elimination of dynamic pricing would "severely undermine" the livelihoods of drivers.

Reddy said a delegation of ride-hailing firms had met him and asked that they be treated differently. "I asked them to give a representation. I'll look into it," he told *DH*.

**Source: The Hindu, p.3B, Feb. 16, 2024**



# ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂಗನವಾಡಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕರ್ತೆಯರ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಿರಂಗ ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಒಲ್ಲೆಯಿಂದ ವನಿತೆಯರು!

■ ಕೃಷ್ಣಮೂರ್ತಿ ಟಿ. ಕರೆಗಡ್ಡೆ ಶಿರಸಿ

keregaddemurthy@gmail.com

ಪ್ರತಿ ತಿಂಗಳು ಅನಾಯಾಸವಾಗಿ ಎರಡು ಸಾವಿರ ರೂ. ಆಕೌಂಟ್‌ಗೆ ಜಮಾ ಆಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂದರೆ ಯಾರು ಬೇಡ ಎಂದಾರು ಅಲ್ಲವೇ? ಆದರೆ ಉತ್ತರಕನ್ನಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸುಮಾರು ಸಾವಿರದಷ್ಟು ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಯೋಜನೆ ಹಣ ಒಲ್ಲೆಯಿಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ...!

ಆಚ್ಛರಿಯಾದರೂ ಇದು ನಿಜ. ಹೀಗೆ ಬೇಡ ಎಂದ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರ ಅಂಕಿಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯನ್ನು ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಕ್ರೋಡೀಕರಿಸಿದೆ. ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಗೆ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಿ ಎಂದು ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಲ್ಲಿ ಜಾಗೃತಿ ಮೂಡಿಸಲು ತೆರಳಿದ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ಯೋಜನೆ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯ ಬೇಡ ಎಂದು ಮೌಖಿಕವಾಗಿ ನಿರಾಕರಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಪ್ರತಿ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಿಂದ ಅದರ ಕಚೇರಿಗೆ ಈ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ರವಾನೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ, ನಿರಾಕರಣೆಗೆ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟ ಕಾರಣಗಳು ನಮೂದಾಗಿಲ್ಲ.

ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕಾರಣಗಳಿಂದ ನೋಂದಣಿಯಾದ ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಹಣ ದೊರೆತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಇನ್ನು ಕೆಲವು ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಮುಂದಾದರೂ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ದೋಷದಿಂದ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಇಂಥಾ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಶಿರಸಿ ಭಾಗದ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು ಒಲ್ಲೆ ಎಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

**ಮನೆಮನೆಗೆ ಭೇಟಿ:** ಅಂಗನವಾಡಿ ಕಾರ್ಯಕರ್ತೆಯರು ಮನೆಮನೆಗೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಯೋಜನೆಗೆ ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವಂತೆ ತಿಳಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಸಂದರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ನೋಂದಣಿ



## ಹೆಚ್ಚುತ್ತಿರುವ ನೋಂದಣಿ

ಆಗಸ್ಟ್ ತಿಂಗಳಿನಿಂದ ಈವರೆಗೆ ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಯೋಜನೆಗೆ ಉತ್ತರಕನ್ನಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಒಟ್ಟು 3 ಲಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ನೋಂದಣಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಆಗಸ್ಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ 2,85,827 ಇದ್ದಿದ್ದು ನಂತರ ಸೆಪ್ಟೆಂಬರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ

- 3.13 ಲಕ್ಷ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ಬೇಡ
- 992 ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ಬೇಡ

ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ನೋಂದಾಯಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಂದಷ್ಟು ಮಹಿಳೆಯರಿಗೆ ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅವರ ಖಾತೆಗೆ ಇನ್ನೂ ಹಣ ಜಮಾ ಆಗಿಲ್ಲ. ಇನ್ನುಳಿದವರಿಗೆ ಒಂದಷ್ಟು ಕುತುಕಗಳಿಲ್ಲದೇ ಜಮಾ ಆಗಿದೆ. 992 ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ಬೇಡ ಎಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಉತ್ತರ ಕನ್ನಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ 992 ಮಂದಿ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರು ತಮಗೆ ಗೃಹಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿ ಯೋಜನೆ ಬೇಡ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿರುವ ಬಗೆಗಿನ ಅಂಕಿಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಕ್ರೋಡೀಕರಿಸಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಹಾಗಂತ ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಯಾವ ಮಹಿಳೆಯರೂ ಅಧಿಕೃತವಾಗಿ ಪತ್ರ ನೀಡಿಲ್ಲ. ಮೌಖಿಕವಾಗಿ ಹೇಳಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಿಸಿದ್ದೇವೆ.

- ಹುಲಿಗೆಮ್ಮ, ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಮಹಿಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಮಕ್ಕಳ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣ ಇಲಾಖೆ

Source: Vijayakarnataka, 06, Feb.16, 2024

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## Social Issues

# In massive purge, police burn drugs worth ₹36cr, including 3.8k kg ganja

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**Bengaluru:** The 'war on drugs' declared by Bengaluru city police took a decisive turn Friday with a whopping 3,885kg of ganja, 52kg of MDMA (also known as Ecstasy) and other psychotropic substances being destroyed.

The narcotic substances, burnt scientifically, were part of the seizures made by police in 2023. The destruction took place at an authorised industrial waste management company in Dabaspeta area on the outskirts of the city. The value of the destroyed drugs was around Rs 36 crore.

Home minister G Parameshwara, who oversaw the process, said: "We're fighting a war against drugs for the welfare of people. The drugs being destroyed was a result of police crackdown on peddlers and trafficking cartels in the past 12 months. On this day, we've gathered to destroy drugs seized... We wanted to use this occasion to spread

### STEP BY STEP: HOW SEIZED NARCOTICS ARE DESTROYED



**GOING UP IN SMOKE:** Home minister G Parameshwara oversaw the process of destroying the drugs at an industrial waste management firm in Bengaluru's Dabaspeta area Friday

**1** After nabbing drug traffickers and seizing drugs from them, police declare the seizure and store the contraband in stations where the cases are booked, till drug disposal committees give clearance for destruction

**2** Next, the court's nod is taken for destruction and the seized narcotics are transported to the notified industrial waste disposal plant (at Dabaspeta near Tumakuru)

**3** At the plant, they are packed in sacks, placed on a conveyor belt and moved to the incinerator in the presence of cops

**4** The drugs are burnt at 800 degrees Celsius for 30 minutes, according to workers at the industrial waste landfill

**5** While ash is dumped in the landfill, the smoke that billows out of the chimney is filtered for harmful gases before being let out

**6** Waste management company will issue destruction certificate to police, who submit it to the court that permitted the destruction. This marks the end of the destruction process

awareness about the bad effects of drugs." The destroyed drugs also included LSD, hashish, and ganja oil.

In 2023, cops booked at least 6,764 drug trafficking ca-

ses across the state and arrested 7,403 persons, including 106 foreigners. The total value of the seized drugs is pegged at Rs 129 crore. "When you look at the narcotics-related da-

ta for the past three years, the seizures and arrests effected under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act were the highest last year," a senior police officer said.

**Source: The Times of India, p.2, Feb, 10, 2024**

## Stepping up for heritage: Mysuru's active community

**A** youth-led campaign has sprung up to save Devaraja Market in Mysuru. Over the last month, the market has been the venue for silent reading sessions by Mysuru Readers, several heritage walks and treasure hunts by Gully Tours and students of Wadiyar Centre for Architecture (WCA), sketching sessions by Urban Sketchers Mysuru, and a candlelight vigil by the Mysore Storyteller's Network. Artists have photographed, drawn and sketched the market. They share their thoughts and stunning visuals on social media, including on an Instagram page called 'Save Devaraja Market'. And last week, a pre-release YouTube video of the recent Vinay Rajkumar starrer *Ondu Sarada Prema Katha* was filmed in the heritage market.

Devaraja Market was listed as a heritage building in the Mysuru Master Plan 2031, which was adopted by the Mysore Urban Development Authority in 2016. However, later that year, a portion of the market's north gate collapsed. Ever since, the 'sword of Damocles' has been hanging over the market. Several committees have deliberated the market's fate, some calling for its restoration, others for its demolition. When the Mysuru City Corporation proposed to raze the historical market, four citizens filed a PIL against demolition. The Karnataka High Court dismissed the PIL in August 2023. The case is currently in the Supreme Court.

Last month, to bring greater attention



Stills from Devaraja Market. PHOTOS BY K.J. PAVAN

to the market, INTACH Bengaluru Chapter, WCA and Esthetique Architects, with support from Mysuru's N R Foundation, jointly organised a symposium on the conservation of living heritage like markets. Invited experts from around the country were in agreement that Devaraja Market could be restored. Dr S Raghunath of BMS College of Engineering, Bengaluru, shared examples of buildings with severe, Grade 4 damage that he had helped restore. "Devaraja Market has only Grade 2 level of damage," he pointed out.

"Many people did not know about the market's heritage," adds K S Anuroopa, a speech pathologist. Take, for example, her 15-year-old sibling, who initially wondered what the fuss was about. Later, when she took him on a heritage walk around the market, "he was fascinated and thrilled to learn that it is 137 years old," she says. Anuroopa started the Save Devaraja Market Instagram page, a WhatsApp group and is part of a campaign team that organises events at the market.

Devaraja Market has always occupied



a very special place in the heart of many Mysureans. Artist K J Pavan credits the multi-sensory experience of the bustling market with its riot of colour and sound with helping shape him into an artist, a sentiment echoed by artist N S Harsha. Around 5,000 to 8,000 people visit Devaraja Market every day, double that number visit during festival seasons, according to Souharda U L, a documentary filmmaker. "After years of shopping here, people have built relationships with the vendors and others," says Pavan.

### A rich legacy

Lansdowne Building was once as important to Mysureans. People went there to buy textbooks, newspapers, second-hand books, stationery, exam guides and so on. But its shops are shuttered and the building has been abandoned for years. Lansdowne now serves as a powerful example for the movement to save Devara-

ja Market. "It is disheartening to see its skeletal remains. I cannot imagine Devaraja Market becoming like that," says Pavan.

Thanks to its royal past, Mysuru has a rich inventory of heritage buildings. Perhaps this is why people took their legacy for granted. Not any more. The Lansdowne example has catalysed the movement to fight the prospect of losing Devaraja Market. The campaign's two-pronged approach is to create awareness about the market's history and heritage, and to help people build emotional connections with it. "The people, the culture and the language are Mysuru's soul, but its identity is tied to its buildings. And the market is its heart," says Souharda. As part of the core campaign team, he has led several heritage walks around Devaraja Market.

There are plans for more events, a documentary film about the market, and hopes to get younger people involved.

While the market is the current focus of the campaign, the overarching vision is "to let Mysuru be itself," says Amshula Prakash, a media and entertainment lawyer by profession who has helped organise events at Devaraja Market. Besides the action around Devaraja Market, there is already an active community working to save Kukkarahalli Kere. "Slowly, the movement is happening," says Souharda.

(Meera Iyer is the Convenor of INTACH Bengaluru Chapter and the author of *Discovering Bengaluru*.)

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.15, Feb, 15, 2024**



ಬೈಕ್ ಸವಾರರು, ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಅಪಾಯ ಹೆಚ್ಚು • ಸಂಚಾರ ನಿಯಮ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆ: ದಿನಕ್ಕೆ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಇಬ್ಬರು ಸಾವು

# ಅಪಘಾತ: ಒಂದೇ ತಿಂಗಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ 90 ಸಾವು

• ಸಂಚಾರದ ಬೆಳಕೆಡೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು: ನಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಹನ ದುರ್ದೈವಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚುತ್ತಿರುವ ಜೊತೆಯಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಸಂಚಾರ ನಿಯಮ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆಯವರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯೂ ಏರಿಕೆ ಆಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಇದರ ಪರಿಣಾಮವಾಗಿ ಮೇಲಿಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅಪಘಾತಗಳು ಸಂಭವಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಪ್ರಸಕ್ತ ವರ್ಷದ ಜನವರಿ ಒಂದೇ ತಿಂಗಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ 432 ಅಪಘಾತಗಳು ಸಂಭವಿಸಿದ್ದು, 90 ಮಂದಿ ಮೃತಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಹೆಲ್ಮೆಟ್ ರಹಿತ ಚಾಲನೆ ಹಾಗೂ ಅತಿ ವೇಗದ ಚಾಲನೆ ನಡೆಸುವ ವಿವಿಧ ಪ್ರಕಾರಗಳ ನಿಯಮ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘನೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಅಪಘಾತಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚುತ್ತಿರುವುದು ಸಂಚಾರ ಪೊಲೀಸರ ತನಿಖೆಯಿಂದ ಗೊತ್ತಾಗಿದೆ.

ಹೊರವರ್ತುಲ ರಸ್ತೆಗಳು, ಪ್ರಮುಖ ರಸ್ತೆಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಇತರ ಒಳ ರಸ್ತೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಿತ್ಯವೂ ಅಪಘಾತಗಳು ಸಂಭವಿಸುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಇಂಥ ಅಪಘಾತಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿದಿನ ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಇಬ್ಬರು ಸಾವಿಗೀಡಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಅನೇಕವೇ ಸಾವಿರಕ್ಕೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನವರು ಗಾಯಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದು ಕುಟುಂಬಗಳು ಕಣ್ಣೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೈ ತೋಳುತ್ತಿವೆ.

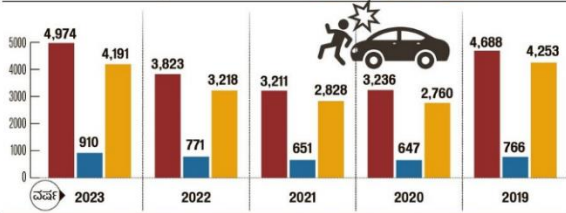
"2023ರ ಜನವರಿ ತಿಂಗಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ 86 ಮಂದಿ ಮೃತಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಪ್ರಸಕ್ತ ವರ್ಷ (2024) ಜನವರಿ 1ರಿಂದ 31ರವರೆಗೆ 432 ಅಪಘಾತಗಳು ಸಂಭವಿಸಿದ್ದು, 90 ಮಂದಿ ಪ್ರಾಣ ಕಳೆದುಕೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. 369 ಮಂದಿ ಗಾಯಗೊಂಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಅಪಘಾತದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕ ತನಿಖೆ ನಡೆಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಯಾವ ಕಾರಣಕ್ಕೆ ಅಪಘಾತ ಸಂಭವಿಸಿದೆ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ಪತ್ತೆ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ರಸ್ತೆ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಎಷ್ಟಾದರೂ ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಬೇಕಾದರೆ, ಸಂಬಂಧಪಟ್ಟ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಜೊತೆ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಮುಂದಿನ ಕ್ರಮ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುವುದು ಎಂದು ಸಂಚಾರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಹಿರಿಯ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಯೊಬ್ಬರು ಹೇಳಿದರು.

ಪಾದಚಾರಿ, ಸವಾರರಿಗೆ ಅಪಾಯ ಹೆಚ್ಚು: 'ಬಹುತೇಕ ಅಪಘಾತಗಳಲ್ಲಿ



ಅಪಘಾತಗಳು ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಹೆಣ್ಣೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಉಪ್ಪರವೇಳೆ ಸಂಚಾರ ಪೊಲೀಸರು, ಯುವ ವೇಷಧಾರಿ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಂಚಾರ ನಿಯಮಗಳ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಜನರಲ್ಲಿ ಜಾಗೃತಿ ಮೂಡಿಸಿದರು

## ವರ್ಷವಾರು ಅಪಘಾತ ವಿವರ



ಮೃತಪಟ್ಟವರಲ್ಲಿ ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ದ್ವಿಚಕ್ರ ವಾಹನ ಸವಾರರು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ರಸ್ತೆ ದಾಟುವ ಹಾಗೂ ರಸ್ತೆ ಬದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುವ ಸಂದರ್ಭಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವಾಹನಗಳು ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಡಿಕ್ಕಿ ಹೊಡೆಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಇಂಥ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳನ್ನು ಗಂಭೀರವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿ, ಪಾದಚಾರಿ ಮಾರ್ಗಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರವು ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಬಿಬಿಎಂಪಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೂ ಕೋರಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ

ಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಪಾದಚಾರಿ ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಗಬೇಕಾದ ಜನರು, ರಸ್ತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಓಡಾಡುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಜೊತೆಗೆ, ನಿಯಮ ಉಲ್ಲಂಘಿಸಿ ರಸ್ತೆ ದಾಟುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದರಿಂದಾಗಿ ವಾಹನಗಳು ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಡಿಕ್ಕಿ ಹೊಡೆಯುತ್ತಿವೆ. ಇಂಥ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳನ್ನು ಗಂಭೀರವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿ, ಪಾದಚಾರಿ ಮಾರ್ಗಗಳನ್ನು ತೆರವು ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಬಿಬಿಎಂಪಿ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳಿಗೂ ಕೋರಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ

ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದರು. 'ಅತಿ ವೇಗದಲ್ಲಿ ದ್ವಿಚಕ್ರ ವಾಹನ ಚಲಾಯಿಸಿದ್ದರಿಂದ, ಉದ್ದೇಶಿತ ಸವಾರರು ಮೃತಪಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಬಹುತೇಕ ಪ್ರಕರಣಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮೃತ ಸವಾರರು, ಹೆಲ್ಮೆಟ್ ಧರಿಸದಿರುವುದು ಗೊತ್ತಾಗಿದೆ. ದ್ವಿಚಕ್ರ ವಾಹನ ಸವಾರರು ಕಡ್ಡಾಯವಾಗಿ ಹೆಲ್ಮೆಟ್ ಧರಿಸುವಂತೆ ನಿಯಮಬದ್ಧರೂ ಕೆಲವರು ನಿರ್ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯ ವಹಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ' ಎಂದು ಅಧಿಕಾರಿ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

| ಸಂಚಾರ ಪೊಲೀಸರು ಅಪಘಾತ ವಿವರ (2024ರ 2ನೇ ತಿಂಗಳು) |          |      |     |
|---|----------|------|-----|
| ರಾಜ್ಯ                                       | ಬಿಬಿಎಂಪಿ | ಸಾವು | ಗಾಯ |
| ಹರಿಹರ                                       | 9        | 2    | 7   |
| ಇಂದಿರಾನಗರ                                   | 6        | 2    | 4   |
| ಪುಲಿಕೇಶಿನಗರ                                 | 5        | 2    | 5   |
| ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ                                  | 25       | 5    | 22  |
| ಎಸ್.ಎಲ್                                     | 7        | 3    | 4   |
| ವೈಟ್‌ಫೀಲ್ಡ್                                 | 16       | 4    | 12  |
| ವಿಲ್ಸನ್‌ಗಾಡ್                                | 6        | 2    | 3   |
| ಬ್ರಾಹ್ಮಣಿಯವರ                                | 18       | 2    | 5   |
| ಕೆಂಪೇ                                       | 25       | 9    | 15  |
| ಕಾಮಾಕ್ಷಿವಾಳ                                 | 25       | 4    | 23  |
| ಹೆಬ್ಬಾಳ                                     | 19       | 4    | 14  |
| ಬಿಳಿಹಳ್ಳಿ                                   | 21       | 5    | 16  |
| ಕೆಂಪೇಗೌಡ ಅಂತರರಾಷ್ಟ್ರೀಯ ವಿಮಾನ ನಿಲ್ದಾಣ        | 27       | 11   | 16  |
| ಹೆಬ್ಬಾಳ                                     | 12       | 3    | 7   |
| ರಾಜಾಜಿನಗರ                                   | 12       | 2    | 9   |
| ಬಿಳಿಹಳ್ಳಿ                                   | 6        | 3    | 5   |
| ವಿಲ್ಸನ್                                     | 2        | 9    | 12  |
| ಹುಣಸೂರು                                     | 8        | 2    | 6   |
| ಸುಮಾರಿನಾಥನಿಲೇಶ್ವರ್                          | 11       | 2    | 12  |
| ಎಲೆಕ್ಟ್ರಾನಿಕ್ ಸಿಟಿ                          | 21       | 6    | 15  |
| ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು                                    | 8        | 3    | 5   |

## 'ಬೈಕ್ ಸವಾರರ ಸಾವಿನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಶೇ 40'

'ಜನವರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೃತಪಟ್ಟ 90 ಮಂದಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಶೇ 40ರಷ್ಟು ಮಂದಿ ಬೈಕ್ ಸವಾರರು. ಶೇ 25ರಷ್ಟು ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳು' ಎಂದು ಸಂಚಾರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಬಂಟಿ ಕಮಿಷನರ್ ಎಂ.ಎನ್. ಅನುಜಿತಾ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.



ಎಂ.ಎನ್. ಅನುಜಿತಾ

'ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ' ಜೊತೆ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದ ಅವರು, 'ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳು ಜುಸ್ತು ಕ್ರಾಸಿಂಗ್ ಬಳಸುತ್ತಿಲ್ಲ. ಎಲ್ಲೆಡೆರಲ್ಲಿ ರಸ್ತೆ ದಾಟುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅಪಾಯಕಾರಿ ರಸ್ತೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬ್ಯಾರಿಕೇಡ್ ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರಿಂದ, ಜನರು ಅದನ್ನು ಹತ್ತಿ ಇಳಿದು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅನುಜಿತಾ

ಇದರಿಂದಲೇ ಪಾದಚಾರಿಗಳ ಸಾವಿನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ' ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದರು. 'ಹೆಲ್ಮೆಟ್ ಇಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ದ್ವಿಚಕ್ರ ಸವಾರರು ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಸಾಯುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಕಾಲ-ಕಾಲಿಗೂ ಹಾಗೂ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಜಾಗೃತಿ ಮೂಡಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ದ್ವಿಚಕ್ರ ವಾಹನ ಸವಾರರು ಹೆಲ್ಮೆಟ್ ಧರಿಸಿ ಸಂಚರಿಸಬೇಕು. ಅಪಘಾತ ಸಂಭವಿಸಿದರೂ ಜೀವ ಉಳಿಯುವ ಸಾಧ್ಯತೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು' ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

Source: Prajavani, p.3D, Feb.15, 2024

ಕೊಪ್ಪಳ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಹಾಲವರ್ತಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಕೆರೆಗೆ ಕಾವಲು • ಕ್ಷೌರಕ್ಕೂ ಇಲ್ಲ ಅವಕಾಶ

# ದಲಿತರು ಬಂದರೆ ಹೋಟೆಲ್ ಬಂದ್!

ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ ವಾಣಿ

ಕೊಪ್ಪಳ: ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಕೇಂದ್ರದಿಂದ ಐದಾರು ಕಿ.ಮೀ. ದೂರದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕೊಪ್ಪಳ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಹಾಲವರ್ತಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ದಲಿತರು ಹೋಟೆಲ್ ಪ್ರವೇಶಿಸಿದರೆ ಹೋಟೆಲ್ ಬಂದ್ ಮಾಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕ್ಷೌರದ ಅಂಗಡಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಅಸ್ವಸ್ಥತೆ ತಾಂಡವ ನಾಡುತ್ತಿದೆ.

ಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಹಲವು ದಿನಗಳಿಂದ ಹೀಗೆ ನಡೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಬರುತ್ತಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಕಂಡು ದಲಿತ ಸಮುದಾಯದ ವಿದ್ಯಾವಂತ ಯುವಕರು ಆಕ್ರೋಶ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಪಡಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಹೋಟೆಲ್ ಹಾಗೂ ಕ್ಷೌರದ ಅಂಗಡಿಗಳ ಮಾಲೀಕರನ್ನು ತರಾಟೆಗೆ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡು ಬುಧವಾರ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯತಿಗೆ ಮುಕ್ತಿ ಹಾಕಿ ಪ್ರತಿಭಟಿಸಿದರು.

ದಲಿತರು ಹೋಟೆಲಿಗೆ ಬಂದರೆ



ಕೊಪ್ಪಳ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಹಾಲವರ್ತಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದ್ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಹೋಟೆಲ್

ತಿಂದು ಬೀಸಾಡುವ ಪ್ಲೇಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ, ಬೇರೆಯವರಿಗೆ ಸ್ಪೀಲ್ ಪ್ಲೇಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹಾರ ಕೊಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಕ್ಷೌರಕರ ಅಂಗಡಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತೆರಳಿದರೆ ಕ್ಷೌರ

ದಲಿತರಿಗೆ ಹೋಟೆಲ್ ಪ್ರವೇಶ ನಿಷೇಧ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎನ್ನುವುದನ್ನು ಸಹಿಸಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಸಂಬಂಧಪಟ್ಟವರ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಕೂಡಲೇ ಕ್ರಮ ಜರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು ಶಿವರಾಜ ತಂಗಡಗಿ, ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಉಪನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರ, ಕೊಪ್ಪಳ

ಹಾಲವರ್ತಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಪ್ರಾಣೇಶ ಗೌಡ್ ಹೊಸಮನಿ 'ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ' ಜೊತೆ ಮಾತನಾಡಿ, 'ಅಪಘಾತದಲ್ಲಿ ನನ್ನ ಸಹೋದರನ ಕಾಲಿಗೆ ಪಕ್ಕಾಗಿದ್ದರಿಂದ ಕ್ಷೌರ ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಬೇರೆ ಊರಿಗೆ ಹೋಗಲು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗದೆ ಅಸಹಾಯಕ ಪರಿಸ್ಥಿತಿಯೇ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಕ್ಷೌರ ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಪರಿಹರಿಸಲು ಬೇಡಿಕೊಂಡರೂ ಅಂಗಡಿ ಬಾಗಿಲು ಮುಚ್ಚಿಕೊಂಡು ಹೋಗುತ್ತಾರೆ' ಎಂದು

ಬೇಸರ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಪಡಿಸಿದರು. ಗ್ರಾಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆರೆಯನ್ನು ಅಲ್ಲಿನ ನೀರು ದಲಿತರು ಮುಟ್ಟಬಾರದು ಎಂದು ಕೆರೆಗೆ ಕಾವಲುಗಾರ ನನ್ನು ನಿಯೋಜಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿರೋಧಿಸಿ 'ಕೆರೆಯ ನೀರು ಕೂಳಜಿ ಯಾಗಬಾರದೆಂದು ಹೀಗೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದೇ ವೆಂದು ಸಬೂಬು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾರೆ' ಎಂದು ಯುವಕರ ತಂಡದವರು ಅಪಾದಿಸಿದರು.

ಘಟನೆ ಬೆಳಕಿಗೆ ಬರುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆ ಗ್ರಾಮಕ್ಕೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ಗ್ರಾಮದ ಎಲ್ಲ ಹೋಟೆಲ್‌ಗಳ ಮಾಲೀಕರನ್ನು ವಿಚಾರಿಸಿದರು. ಗುರುವಾರ ಸಭೆ ನಡೆಸುವುದಾಗಿ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು. ಜಿಲ್ಲಾಧಿಕಾರಿ ನರೇಶ್ ಅಹುಲ್ಯಾ ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯಿಸಿ, 'ಗ್ರಾಮಕ್ಕೆ ಅಧಿಕಾರಿಗಳು ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ತಪ್ಪಿತಸ್ಥರ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ಕ್ರಮ ಕೈಗೊಳ್ಳಲಾಗುವುದು. ಸಂಧಾನ ಸಭೆ ನಡೆಸಲಾಗುವುದು' ಎಂದರು.

Source: Prajavani, p.3D, Feb.15, 2024

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# Namma city's lost loos

Many reports have highlighted the maintenance and safety problems at Bengaluru's public toilets. The BBMP is planning more toilets, but when will the existing issues be fixed?

SHREE D N  
BENGALURU, DHNS

A survey released in January highlighted alarming conditions of 48 public toilets in the city. It disclosed that 75% of the toilets lack door locks and latches. 60% of them had inadequate lighting, which can make women feel unsafe in public toilets, especially at night.

Archana K R, a sanitation campaigner from Reapbenefit, who was involved in the survey, highlights the pay disparity. "For men, it is Rs 2; for women, it is Rs 5, which might sometimes be unaffordable for women from poor sessions of society," she says.

"Maintenance is poor, and contractors are not doing justice. Latches were missing in women's toilets; cleaning materials were not there; there was no running water in many places. Cleaning staff were not getting their salary properly," Archana adds. Lack of light and ventilation in many toilets only adds to the problem. Feedback machines do not work.

Problems related to women's toilets range from lack of lights and safety issues to availability of hygienic water.

What was shocking was this: Male contract workers were seen living and cooking inside a women's toilet complex in Jayanagar. This is not the first time cooking inside the toilet complex has been flagged. A daily order issued by the Karnataka High Court on August 8, 2023, shows that the Action-taken-reports submitted by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) in the court had flagged the same issue.

"The operator has put some households outside the toilet complex, cooking inside and living there... The toilets are very dirty. This has been removed, and the operator was cautioned... If it continues, action will be initiated to terminate the service," the order quotes BBMP's report.

### Many reports, same issues

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call for universal sanitation access and ending open defecation by 2030. Under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 47 of the Constitution of India, which is a part of the Directive Principles of State Policy, the centre, state and city administrations, BBMP, in Bengaluru's case, must set up an adequate number of public toilets.

In September 2020, a non-gov-

ODF++ toilets sport additional features beyond basic sanitation facilities to enhance cleanliness, hygiene, and user experience. Some common features include:

Use of better structural design and construction materials

Waste management systems such as biogas digesters

Water-saving features including low-flush or dual-flush toilets, waterless urinals, and water recycling systems

Handwashing facilities

Accessibility for all, including people with disabilities and the elderly, with ramps, grab bars, and wide doorways

### What is ODF++ toilet?



Public toilets in Cubbon Park and Richmond Park are closed for public use. DH PHOTO/SK DINESH



Public toilets at Kengeri bus stand in Bengaluru have no doors. DH PHOTO/PUSHPAKAR V



People have to wade towards public toilets near K R market when it rains. DH FILE PHOTO/SK JANARDHAN

### Toilets in BBMP limits (Existing)

| Type                                | Toilets    | Seating capacity | Operation & maintenance  |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------------|--|
| Public toilets                      | 360        | 2,160            | Zonal officers   |
| Community toilets                   | 6          | 60               | Zonal officers   |
| E-toilets                           | 229        | 229              | Tender in progress for 8 packages, work order issued in some zones |
| Modular toilets                     | 17         | 34               | Work order issued  |
| Ecofriendly ODF++ toilets (phase I) | 10         | 120              | Work in progress   |
| Restrooms for pourakarmikas         | 181        | 362              | In operation   |
| Indira canteen toilets              | 172        | 172              | In operation   |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>975</b> | <b>3,137</b>     |  |

### Toilets in BBMP limits (Proposed)

| Type                                  | Toilets    | Seating capacity | Status                                |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Ecofriendly ODF++ toilets (phase II)  | 15         | 331              | Work in progress                      |
| Ecofriendly ODF++ toilets (phase III) | 46         | 460              | Letter of Agency issued               |
| Public toilets                        | 246        | 984              | Tender in progress                    |
| Community toilets                     | 15         | 75               | Proposal in front of state government |
| SME toilets (PPP model)               | 100        | 400              | Bids invited. Last 5 date: March 1    |
| Restrooms for pourakarmikas           | 50         | 100              | Letter of Agency issued               |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>472</b> | <b>2,350</b>     |                                       |

Total existing + planned: 1447 toilets, 5487 seats

ernmental organisation, Letzkit Foundation, filed a petition in the high court asking BBMP to ensure an adequate number of toilets in the city. The court asked BBMP to explain the exercise undertaken to decide the number of public toilets to be set up within its jurisdiction and the number of separate toilets required for women—especially those walking on the streets.

The court also asked BBMP what steps were taken to keep public privies clean and safe. The BBMP failed to meet the many deadlines by the high court to the BBMP to submit the action plan.

In July 2021, BBMP placed a City Sanitation Plan prepared by the All India Institute of Local Self Government in the court. The report mentioned issues that required the immediate attention of the author-

ities. It said that in terms of toilet facilities and numbers, Bengaluru lagged behind other cities like Chennai, Hyderabad, and Ahmedabad.

It also highlighted the issue of poor maintenance of community toilets and recommended a review of the operation and maintenance arrangements. The court took note of these and asked the BBMP to investigate the lack of proper data and decentralised planning and execution without a centralised database.

### How many toilets?

As a result of pressure from the court, by August 2021, BBMP had started adding more toilets. The work on 25 toilets began, and the tender process was on for 55 more toilets. A survey by Karnataka State Legal Services Authority (KSLSA) conducted at the behest of the high court submitted to the court in October showed that among the 315 public toilets listed on the BBMP website, 186 (60%) could not be traced.

In August 2023, the court placed the action-taken report by BBMP and KSLSA on record. The BBMP estimated 3,374 public toilet seats to be constructed (562 new toilets with six seats each) for 2021, for a project-

ed floating population of 15.87 lakh. Swachh Bharat Urban norms prescribe one toilet for 400 men and three toilets for 200 women.

There were only 2,525 toilet units available in 450 structures, while the floating population in the city needed 6,349 seats, with a 1:250 ratio for the floating population of 15.87 lakh.

As of today, the data provided by BBMP show that the work is on to construct 472 new toilets with 2,350 seats, out of which 100 will be SHF-toilets for women. This is the first set of 250 women's toilets planned for Bengaluru, aimed at improving safety and hygiene aspects for women.

### Need for transparency

R Rajagopalan, Convenor of Bengaluru Residents Welfare Association, says there is a need to focus on toilets in low-traffic areas that are not used much and hence not maintained well. Citizens who wanted to check on low-traffic toilets and provide infrastructure help found that many people were managing the same toilets in many areas. "A lot of that information was not easily available," he says.

However, on the positive side, he says the BBMP has been sourcing information on the need for more toilets, and his group is working on the neglected areas of Bharatnagar and Shivajinagar to get more toilets. He has also asked for a GIS map for BBMP toilets, with a mechanism to complain and escalate them in case of problems.

Some of them are closed. The one near War Memorial (near Jawahar Lal Nehru Planetarium) has been closed for years, and residents close-by are asking the toilet to reopen," he adds. "There are a lot of requests from lake areas, parks and other areas for new toilets as well," he says.

Sources say many existing contracts are associated with the engineering section in BBMP and not the solid waste management section. "Decentralised and fragmented maintenance has led to problems in accountability and maintenance," he says, adding that they have suggested restructuring O&M procedures and standardising protocols to avoid problems.

"Tell us where you want them" As of now, zonal-level officers are maintaining all public toilets and

community toilets. Officials say operations and maintenance (O&M) tenders expired for the other types of toilets, which is why some toilets were closed. The tender process for the O&M process is on, and all toilets will be up and running soon.

"Wherever the citizens request toilets, we are conducting assessments to see if BBMP or BDA owns space there or if someone with no vested interest is ready to give space. We are commissioning the construction of toilets in packages immediately. The public can write to us if they need toilets in their area or have complaints," says Pratibha R, Joint Commissioner, Solid Waste Management, BBMP.

She says that people can bring old and dilapidated toilets or those that need repairs to BBMP's notice, and the BBMP will work on improving or reconstructing them. "There are no problems with O&M right now. However, the improved O&M will publish an updated O&M policy soon, with strict standards in place. BBMP will also work on a map for toilets," she adds.

Officials refused to comment on the KSLSA's observation of toilets missing on the ground.

### Design aspects of public toilets

When it comes to neglected toilets, the broken window theory applies appropriately. When something looks neglected, it will likely be neglected more and become unusable. Constant attention is what can keep toilets up and running. Where the toilets are located also becomes important in usability.

Under-the-flyover spaces have become predictable spots where toilets are available now, says Anirudha Abhyankar, Chief Design Officer of Bengaluru-based India Rising Trust, involved in many public projects.

This was not the case earlier. There is hardly any flyover in Bengaluru under which there is no toilet," he adds. He says the gap between the roof and the wall in new toilets under flyovers helps in better ventilation and odour control.

Feedback: pointblank@deccanherald.co.in

Source: Deccan Herald, p.II, Feb, 10, 2024



# ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು: ಸಾಲ ಒಪ್ಪಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಸಹಿ

ಪ್ರಜಾವಾಣಿ ವಾರ್ತೆ

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು: ರಾಜಧಾನಿಯ ಸುಮಾರು 148 ಕಿ.ಮೀ. ಉದ್ದದ ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಯೋಜನೆ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಜರ್ಮನಿಯ ಲಕ್ಸಂಬರ್ಗ್ ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯುವಿಫ್ ಡೆವಲಪ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ನಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯುವ ₹ 4,561 ಕೋಟಿ ಸಾಲದ ಮೇಲಿನ ಪರಮ್ಪುಗುಳ್ಳ ಒಪ್ಪಂದಕ್ಕೆ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಸ್ವಾಮ್ಯದ ಕೆ-ರೈಡ್ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ಶುಕ್ರವಾರ ಸಹಿ ಹಾಕಿತು.

₹15,767 ಕೋಟಿ ವೆಚ್ಚದಲ್ಲಿ ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕೆ ತರಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಮತ್ತು ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರಗಳು ತಲಾ ಶೇಕಡ 20ರಷ್ಟು ವೆಚ್ಚ ಭರಿಸಲಿವೆ. ₹ 4,561 ಕೋಟಿ ಸಾಲ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಒಪ್ಪಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಮತ್ತು ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯುವಿಫ್ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್ 2023ರ ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದವು.

ಸಾಲ ಮಂಜೂರಾತಿಯ ಪರಮ್ಪುಗುಳ್ಳ ಒಳಗೊಂಡ ಒಪ್ಪಂದಗಳಿಗೆ ಕೆ-ರೈಡ್ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ ಎನ್. ಮಂಜುಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯುವಿಫ್ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ನ ಭಾರತ ಘಟಕದ ಮುಖ್ಯಸ್ಥ ವೋಲ್ಟ್ ಮತ್ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿದರು. ಮೂಲಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಸಚಿವ ಎಂ.ಬಿ. ಪಾಟೀಲ ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಜರ್ಮನಿಯ ಕಾನ್ಸುಲ್ ಜನರಲ್ ಅಕಿಂ ಬರ್ಕಾರ್ಟ್ ಉಪಸ್ಥಿತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಒಪ್ಪಂದ ಪತ್ರದ ವಿನಿಮಯ ನಡೆಯಿತು.

ಒಪ್ಪಂದದ ಬಳಿಕ ಪತ್ರಿಕಾಗೋಷ್ಠಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತನಾಡಿದ ಸಚಿವರು,

ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಯೋಜನೆಯ ನಾಲ್ಕು ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್‌ಗಳು

| ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್ 1                          | ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್ 2                                   | ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್ 3                            | ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್ 4                           |
|-------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು - ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿ<br>41.4 ಕಿ.ಮೀ. | ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಾಳಾಪುರ - ಬೆನ್ನಿಗಾನಹಳ್ಳಿ<br>25.2 ಕಿ.ಮೀ. | ಕೆಂಗೇರಿ - ವೈಟ್‌ಫೀಲ್ಡ್<br>35.52 ಕಿ.ಮೀ. | ಹೀಳಲಿಗೆ - ರಾಜಾನುರಂಟಿ<br>46.24 ಕಿ.ಮೀ. |



ವಿಧಾನಸೌಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಶುಕ್ರವಾರ ನಡೆದ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆ-ರೈಡ್ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ ಎನ್. ಮಂಜುಳಾ ಮತ್ತು ಜರ್ಮನಿಯ ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯುವಿಫ್ ಬ್ಯಾಂಕ್‌ನ ಭಾರತ ಘಟಕದ ಮುಖ್ಯಸ್ಥ ವೋಲ್ಟ್ ಮತ್ ಅವರು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಯೋಜನೆಯ ಸಾಲ ಒಪ್ಪಂದ ವೆತ್ತಗಳನ್ನು ಪದರ್ಶಿಸಿದರು. ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ರಾಕೀಶ್ ಸಿಂಗ್, ಮೂಲಸೌಕರ್ಯ ಅಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಸಚಿವ ಎಂ.ಬಿ. ಪಾಟೀಲ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಜರ್ಮನಿಯ ಕಾನ್ಸುಲ್ ಜನರಲ್ ಅಕಿಂ ಬರ್ಕಾರ್ಟ್ ಉಪಸ್ಥಿತರಿದ್ದರು.

'ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಯೋಜನೆ 4ರ ಬಡ್ತಿ ದರದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಲ ನೀಡುತ್ತಿದೆ. 20 ಇದೆ' ಎಂದು. ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಕೆಡಬ್ಲ್ಯುವಿಫ್ ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ ಶೇ ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಸಾಲ ಮರುಪಾವತಿ ಅವಧಿ ಕೆಂಗೇರಿ-ವೈಟ್‌ಫೀಲ್ಡ್ ಮಧ್ಯದ ರೈಲ್ವೆ

## 'ಇನ್ನಷ್ಟು ನಗರಗಳಿಗೆ ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವ'

'ಮೈಸೂರು, ತುಮಕೂರು ಸೇರಿದಂತೆ ಇತರ ನಗರಗಳಿಗೂ ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಯೋಜನೆಯನ್ನು ವಿಸ್ತರಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಸ್ತಾವವನ್ನು ಕೇಂದ್ರ ಸರ್ಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕವಾಗಿ ಕೆಲವು ತೊಡಕುಗಳಿವೆ. ಅವುಗಳನ್ನು ನಿವಾರಿಸಿದ ನಂತರ ನಿರ್ಧಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಬರಲಾಗುವುದು' ಎಂದು ಸಚಿವ ಎಂ.ಬಿ. ಪಾಟೀಲ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

## 'ಪ್ರತಿ 90 ಸೆಕೆಂಡ್‌ಗೆ ಒಂದು ರೈಲು'

'ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲು ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿ 90 ಸೆಕೆಂಡ್‌ಗೆ ಒಂದು ರೈಲು ಸಂಚರಿಸುವಂತೆ ಯೋಜನೆ ರೂಪಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಜನಪ್ರಿಯತೆಯ ಆಧಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ರೈಲುಗಳ ಸಂಚಾರದ ಅವಧಿಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಧರಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು' ಎಂದು ಕೆ-ರೈಡ್ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕಿ ಎನ್. ಮಂಜುಳಾ ತಿಳಿಸಿದರು.

ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್-3ರ ಅಡಿ ಬರುವ ನಿಲ್ಲಾಣ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿ, ವಯಾಡಕ್ಸ್, ಹೀಳಲಿಗೆ-ರಾಜಾನುರಂಟಿ ಮಧ್ಯದ ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್-4ರ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬರುವ ದೇವನಹಳ್ಳಿಯಲ್ಲಿನ ಡಿಪೋ-1, ಪಿಗ್ಗಲ್ ಮತ್ತು ಟೆರಿಕಾಂ, ಪ್ಲಾಟ್ ಫಾರ್ಮ್ ಸ್ಕೀನ್ ಡೋರ್, ಸ್ವಯಂಚಾಲಿತ ಪ್ರಯಾಣ ದರ ವಸೂಲಿ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ, ಸೌರ ವಿದ್ಯುತ್ ಫಲಕ, ಭದ್ರತಾ ಸಾಧನಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಮ್ಯಾನ್ ಮೇನಿಂ ಕಂಟ್ರೋಲ್ (ಎಂಎಐ) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಾಲದ ಮೊತ್ತವನ್ನು ಬಳಸಲಾಗುವುದು ಎಂದು ವಿವರಿಸಿದರು.

2027ರ ಅಂತ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಪೂರ್ಣ: ಒಟ್ಟು ನಾಲ್ಕು ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ 148 ಕಿ.ಮೀ. ಉದ್ದದ ಉಪನಗರ ರೈಲ್ವೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ ಬಾಲವನ್ನು

ನಿರ್ಮಿಸಲಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್ ಎರಡು ಮತ್ತು ಸಾಲ್ವರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು ಬೇಗ ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಳ್ಳಲಿವೆ. ಒಂದು ಮತ್ತು ಮೂರನೇ ಕಾರಿಡಾರ್‌ಗಳ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಶೀಘ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಆರಂಭಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು. 2027ರ ಡಿಸೆಂಬರ್ ಅಂತ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಯೋಜನೆ ಪೂರ್ಣಗೊಳ್ಳಲಿದೆ ಎಂದು ಪಾಟೀಲ ಹೇಳಿದರು.

ನಗರಾಭಿವೃದ್ಧಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಮುಖ್ಯ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ರಾಕೀಶ್ ಸಿಂಗ್, ಹಣಕಾಸು ಇಲಾಖೆ ಕಾರ್ಯದರ್ಶಿ ಆರ್. ವಿಕಾಲ್, ಕೆಎಫ್‌ಡಬ್ಲ್ಯುಸಿ ನಗರ ಮತ್ತು ಸಂಚಾರ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಹಿರಿಯ ತಜ್ಞ ಸ್ವಾತಿ ಬನ್ನಾ ಹಾಗೂ ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಜರ್ಮನಿ ಕಾನ್ಸುಲೇಟ್‌ನ ಸಲಹೆಗಾರ್ತಿ ಕಾಂಚಿ ಅರೋಲ ಉಪಸ್ಥಿತರಿದ್ದರು.

Source: Prajavani, p.04, Feb.10, 2024

# Bengaluru will decongest further, improve ranking in next traffic index: Anucheth

BENGALURU, DHNS

**B**engaluru will be decongested further and its rankings in the list of the world's most congested cities will improve this year, according to the traffic police boss.

Bengaluru was placed sixth by the Dutch geolocation technology firm TomTom in the latest traffic index. This is an improvement as it was placed second in the previous index.

MN Anucheth, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), spoke at a seminar on road safety, organised by RASTA Center for Road Technology on Friday.

He listed proactive enforcement measures, including e-paths for ambulances, collaborations with top players to reduce fatalities, turning interest towards traffic management by enforcing contactless fine systems, identifying blackspots and fixing them, among others.



**MN Anucheth, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic), at a seminar on road safety on Friday. DH PHOTO/BH SHIVAKUMAR**

A Veeraragavan, retired professor of the Indian Institute of Technology, Madras; Dr Girish Chandra, Head of Forensic Department, MS Ramaiah Medical College; and Udaya Kumar L, a certified road safety auditor, were the other attendees.

The speakers focused on education, engineering, enforcement and emergency

care in road safety. Anucheth acknowledged the problems with ensuring a complete contactless fine system and said there was a need for an extensive plan and a collaborative effort involving RTOs and other agencies to make it seamless.

Prof Veeraragavan called for adopting scientific methods to collect accidents and traffic-re-

lated data. He stressed that databases related to traffic should be centralised and easily accessible to people as well.

Speaking about Road Safety Audits (RSA), he said, "Often, these audits are done after a road reports many fatalities. They should be carried out before a road is opened for vehicles."

Veeraragavan lamented that audits are often neither implemented nor employed.

Dr Chandra focused on the importance of emergency care and autopsy units in ensuring road safety and said autopsy units should work in tandem with the police and identify the root cause of accidents.

"As we identify reasons behind accidents, we are able to give police valuable inputs when there is a certain pattern in the accidents occurring in a particular jurisdiction, often helping discover black spots," he said.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3A, Feb, 10, 2024**



# Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project will be ready by Dec 2027: M B Patil

**K-RIDE signs pact with German bank for Rs 4,561-cr loan; airport line in two phases**

BENGALURU, DHNS

**R**ail Infrastructure Development Company Ltd (K-RIDE) on Friday signed a supplementary agreement with Germany's KfW Development Bank for a Rs 4,561-crore loan for the Rs 15,767-crore Bengaluru Suburban Rail Project (BSRP).

K-RIDE Managing Director M Manjula and KfW's Country Director Wolf Muth signed and exchanged the documents in the presence of Infrastructure Development Minister M B Patil. The primary agreement on the €500 million (Rs 4,561 crore) loan and a €4.5 million grant (Rs 36.75 crore) was signed between the union government's Department of Economic Affairs and KfW on

December 15, 2023.

Patil said the agreement specified how the loan would be utilised, its terms and conditions, repayment schedule and obligations.

According to him, the loan will be utilised for the construction of viaducts and stations on Corridor 3 (Kengeri-Whitefield, 35.52 km) and Corridor 4 (Heelalige-Rajanukunte, 46.88 km), works related to the Devanahalli depot, Signalling and Telecommunications, Platform Screen Doors, Automatic Fare Collection, solar panels, security equipment and Man Machine Interface.

"The government is committed to ensuring transparency and accountability in the utilisation of the loan proceeds. Robust monitoring mechanisms will be put in place to track expenditure and ensure funds are used efficiently to maximise socio-economic benefits for our citizens," he said, as per the release.

K-RIDE has opted for a variable interest rate (EURIBOR plus 0.45%) because interest rates are currently high. EURIBOR (Euro Inter Bank Offered Rate) is the average interest

rate of loans given in euros. K-RIDE will start repaying the loan in 2029, after a five-year moratorium, well-placed sources told *DH*.

Patil stressed that the target was to complete all four corridors of the BSRP by December 2027.

He exuded confidence that Corridor 2's first phase (Yeshwantpur-Chikkabanavar) would be ready by June 2025 and the second phase (Benniganahalli-Yeshwantpur) by June 2026. He further said Corridor 4 would be completed by December 2026 and Corridor 1 (KSR Bengaluru-Devanahalli/Airport, 41.4 km) by December 2027.

Corridor 1 has been split into two phases for better execution. In the first phase, the Yelahanka-Devanahalli section will be completed by December 2026 while the KSR Bengaluru-Yelahanka section will be ready by December 2027, he added. Besides KfW, K-RIDE is expected to sign an agreement with the European Investment Bank (EIB) for a €300 million loan in May. The airport line (Corridor 1) will most likely be financed by the

EIB loan, official sources in K-RIDE said.

"The EIB team is awaiting the board approval, which is expected by March-end. The date of signing the loan agreement will be known after that," sources said.

Of the four corridors, groundwork has started only on Corridor 2 while K-RIDE has awarded the contract for Corridor 4. "Work is going on at 32 places across Corridor 2, including between Benniganahalli and Banaswadi. The pace of work is being doubled every month or two. Most land acquisition has also been firmed up for Corridor 2," the sources told *DH*.

K-RIDE is still waiting to get 115 acres of railway land for Corridor 4. While L&T Ltd was awarded the contract on December 30, 2023, the groundwork hasn't begun because the railway land wasn't available, the sources said. K-RIDE expects that the groundwork will start in two months. K-RIDE plans to invite Corridor 1 tenders soon and finalise the alignment for the airport link, the sources added.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3B, Feb, 10, 2024**

# Fast tracks or fancy coaches?

In a push for Vande Bharat, the Railways is prioritising rolling stock over infrastructure and safety

PRIYAN R NAIK

In the Interim Budget 2024-25, the Indian Railways received a 5.8% year-on-year increase with key focus areas specified. A highlight was the news that 40,000 train coaches were to be transformed to Vande Bharat standards. Why this disproportionate attention to rolling stock when the focus should first be on track infrastructure?

Notably, the 'Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train' corridor project is making significant progress with the completion of 100 km of viaducts, 230 km of pier work, and building bridges over six rivers. The rolling stock of 24 E5 Series Shinkansen train sets is yet to be procured from Japan. The development of dedicated high-speed rail infrastructure, tracks, stations, and signalling systems to support the operation of these trains is a critical component of the bullet train project and is taking precedence over the acquisition of rolling stock.

Similarly, in Bengaluru's Namma Metro Phases 1, 2, 2A, 2B, and 3, which are fully commissioned, under implementation, and in the planning stage, respectively, metro construction and metro infrastructure, including tracks, stations, and signalling systems, take precedence over procuring rolling stock from metro coach makers like BEML. Only because rolling stock comes after infrastructure sequentially, Bengalureans today are putting up with delays in supply of Chinese coaches that are to be used on Namma Metro's purple, green, and yellow lines.

Why, then, in the case of the Vande Bharats, are we putting the 'cart before the horse', clamouring for rolling stock before laying new tracks, doubling the number of lines on existing routes, and deploying automated train safety technology—the indigenously developed Kavach warning system—to guard against on-track collisions? We know the Vande Bharats have a design speed of 180 km/h but operate at a maximum of 130 to 160 km/h for very brief stretches en route, primarily because of restrictions related to signalling, track infrastructure upgrades, and fencing.

As of January 2024, 82 Vande Bharat trains are already in operation. I travelled on Vande Bharat's Bangalore-Mysuru route and, on the way back, took a Shatabdi. The Shatabdi was as good

as the Vande Bharat when it came to comfort. No doubt, the Vande Bharat's acceleration due to the powering of every second coach was better; the jerks were lesser because four power units are distributed across the train; and the riding comfort was greater with fewer jerks as compared to the Shatabdi. Additionally, the Shatabdi needed to operate its brakes earlier and took longer to regain maximum speed; the higher acceleration and faster braking no doubt helped the Vande Bharat cut short travel time by 10-15 minutes.

The Vande Bharat unfortunately compromises on the number of toilets, with a curved bathroom door that's difficult to close. On the Bidadi to Mysuru stretch, the train, with its aerodynamic design, automatic doors, one-touch lights, plush interiors, and a TV screen that repeatedly screened the inauguration and 'flagging off' of more Vande Bharats, mostly operated at 98 km/h! Yes, it did touch 100 km/h, but only for a brief minute or so during the entire journey. I asked the bearer, who was serving tea to passengers, whether he noticed any difference in the two trains; except for reaching earlier, the rest was all the same, he said.

While the Vande Bharat is tested for 180 km/h and the Shatabdi is tested for 160 km/h, both trains are in equal need of track upgradation, signalling systems, and infrastructure, which is currently a work in progress. At almost half the cost of Vande Bharat, the Shatabdi Express, due to its use of Linke Hofmann Busch (LHB) coaches, has the capability of achieving 160 km/h. When track upgradation is going to take another decade, how can either train breach the 160 km/h limit except on limited stretches? Why then upgrade to Vande Bharat standards by dumping the Shatabdis when there is a scope to save 50% costs by letting the Shatabdis run?

There's so much excitement because more Vande Bharat variants, including sleepers, metros, and freight trains, are to follow. Why is similar enthusiasm lacking for track upgradation and infrastructure? Why prioritise rolling stock before attending to infrastructure upgrades? Is it because it constitutes the less glamorous part of railway activity? Instead of turning the Vande Bharat story into a public relations and event management exercise, shouldn't the railways first exploit the Vande Bharat to full speed, giving passengers not only a good travel experience but also a substantially reduced travel time between destinations?

*(The writer is a former Executive Director and Member, Board of Directors, BEML)*

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.6, Feb, 10, 2024**



# ‘Namma Metro is Bengaluru’s lifeline, will expand in a phased manner’

**New MD opens up about new lines, bridging last-mile gaps and raising non-fare revenue**

**MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI**  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**M**aheshwar Rao, the 1995-batch IAS officer born in Udupi and educated in Hyderabad, Singapore and Harvard, is in the hot seat as the managing director of Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRL).

Ever since he took office a month ago, Rao has been a busy man. He’s visiting metro sites and reviewing projects daily. With a network of over 74 km and 66 stations, Namma Metro is India’s second-largest and is on the cusp of greater things. It’s constructing 102 km of new lines and will soon start work on another 82 km. It has proposed another 129 km in what could be Phase 4.

Rao took time off his busy schedule to speak to *DH* about all things Namma Metro. Here are the edited excerpts:

**Namma Metro began operations over 12 years ago. Has it fulfilled people’s aspirations and achieved the desired ridership? What challenges does it face?**

Namma Metro started operations with a 6.7-km line in 2011 and currently operates a network of 74 km. From just 35,000 earlier, it now serves more than 7 lakh passengers daily. Namma Metro has become the lifeline of Bengaluru and is reaching the desired ridership. Since metro networks are capital-intensive,

they have to be built in a phased manner but last generations.

**How is the BMRL addressing complaints about poor last-mile connectivity, integration with other transport modes and extending service hours?**

We have taken many initiatives to provide hassle-free last-mile connectivity from metro stations. As per an MoU signed with us, the BMTC operates 148 feeder buses on 42 routes covering 32 stations. We have signed agreements with the Bengaluru traffic police to run prepaid auto fare booths at five stations and will soon open more.

We have also coordinated with DULT to set up pedal ports and cycle stands at 10 stations to promote public bicycle sharing. Parking space (1,09,995 square metres) has been provided at 53 stations (60 locations) for 14,531 two-wheelers and 2,641 four-wheelers. Three new parking lots will come up at Green Line extension stations and 16 on the Yellow Line.

Safety is our top priority. We run trains from 5 am until midnight (trains start at 7 am on Sundays).

We get only a few hours to maintain trains. We extend the services on special occasions.

**What is the realistic deadline for opening the Yellow Line (RV Road-Bommasandra and the Green Line extension (Nagasan-dra-Madavara)? Both lines**

are nearing completion and will be opened once approval from the Commissioner of Metro Rail Safety (CMRS) is obtained.

**How has been the progress on the Blue and Pink lines? When can people expect to take the metro to the airport?**

On the Pink Line (Kalena Agrahara-Nagavara), the construction of stations is 75% complete and tunnelling is 91% complete. On the Blue Line, the civil work progress is 52% for Phase 2A (Silk Board-KR Pura) and 32% for Phase 2B (KR Pura-Airport).

**What is the status of Phase 3 (JP Nagar 4th Phase-Hebbal & Magadi Road-Kadabagere)?**

After submission, discussions, reviews and replies to the comments received from various ministries and departments, the approval of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) is in the advanced stage. Pre-construction activities,

including land acquisition, shifting of utilities and the enumeration of trees, have been taken up.

**What about Phase 3A (Sarjapur-Hebbal)?**

The draft DPR is under scrutiny and will be submitted to the government once the process is completed.

**The BMRL has proposed extending the metro to satellite towns and constructing an additional line under Phase 4. Has any feasibility study been taken up for Phase 4?**

Based on letters from various representatives for the extension of metro rail corridors and with the state government’s approval, the BMRL will soon invite tenders for the preparation of feasibility studies and finalise the lines.

**The BMRL achieved its first-ever profit after interest in 2022-23. How has been the financial progress in this fiscal year? What are the plans to increase non-fare revenue?**

We expect to see profit after interest this year, too. We plan to increase non-fare box revenue through innovative financing where we invite corporate companies to fund metro construction in exchange for naming rights, advertisements, commercial space and direct connectivity.

We also lease the space at metro stations for advertisements and shops/kiosks. Fifty such kiosks are operational at 16 stations. We are identifying vacant large land parcels to develop and lease them for commercial development.

**“**  
We plan to increase non-fare box revenue through innovative financing where we invite corporate companies to fund metro construction in exchange for naming rights, advertisements, commercial space and direct connectivity.

**-M Maheshwar Rao,  
Managing Director,  
BMRL**



**Source: Deccan Herald, p.4, Feb, 11, 2024**





Mahadevapura, Marathahalli, Doddanekundi, Horamavu, Varthur, Bommanahalli and RR Nagar are among the areas facing acute water shortage.

DH PHOTO

# Water tanker prices go up drastically as city stares at a water crisis this summer

Suppliers say borewells have dried up

SNEHA RAMESH  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Even before the summer officially sets in, water tanker prices have skyrocketed in the city, leaving residents grappling for water. The situation clearly shows that the city might be staring at a huge water crisis this summer.

Numerous apartment complexes and surrounding areas awaiting Cauvery water supply heavily depend on water tankers for their needs. The price for water from a 12,000-litre tanker has risen from approximately Rs 1,200 a month ago to at least Rs 1,800 now, with some areas seeing prices as high as Rs 2,000. Dealers of water tankers predict that the cost of water could increase to Rs 2,500 during the peak summer season.

Water tanker suppliers said that dry borewells had made it difficult for them to get water to supply and as a result, the prices were shooting up.

"Now, we have to travel nearly 40 km to get the tanker filled since the majority of the borewells within the city are dry. This increases the expenses on fuel as well. Hence, the prices have increased drastically," said Ramesh Reddy S, owner of Sri Rama Water Supply Works which operates in Doddanekundi.

The suppliers also pointed out that the number of orders they can take in a day has reduced since they now have to spend more time refilling the tankers.

"Earlier, we could complete at least 12 trips. Now, since there is a huge rush to get water refilled owing to the limited number of operational borewells, we can hardly complete three or four trips a

RESIDENT, RR Nagar

To get a 20-litre can of water, we need to wait for more than an hour. If this is the condition at the beginning of February, what will happen in March and April?

day," said Praveen, from Lakshmi Water Supply, which operates in Varthur and Bommanahalli.

Owing to such problems, many residents complain that the tankers take over three days to reach even if they are ready to shell out money.

"The prices have increased drastically but we also do not have an alternative since the borewells in our area have gone dry. However, even if we agree to pay the hefty amount, getting a tanker on time is difficult owing to the demand," said Sandhya KP, a resident of Kalkere.

Many tanker suppliers said they had now stopped taking new orders and had decided to supply only to regular customers. "We do not have the bandwidth to take any new orders. We only want to retain old customers," Reddy said.

Mahadevapura, Marathahalli, Doddanekundi, Horamavu, Varthur, Bommanahalli and RR Nagar are among the areas facing the acute shortage.

Rajesh, a resident of Sharada Layout, RR Nagar, said: "We never experienced this level of water scarcity. Apartment complexes in our area are digging borewells recklessly, causing the groundwater table to fall. Many in our locality now depend on water tankers that charge Rs 1,600 to Rs 1,800 for 6,000 litres."

A resident of BHEL 2nd Stage, RR Nagar, said the availability of water at public water points had also decreased. "To get a 20-litre can of water, we need to wait for more than an hour. If this is the condition at the beginning of February, what will happen in March and April?" the resident said.

Source: Deccan Herald, p.4, Feb, 11, 2024



# Railway Board okays Rs 874-cr automatic signalling for Bengaluru

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** The South Western Railway (SWR) will instal automatic block signalling over 639.05 km in the Bengaluru area at a cost of Rs 874.12 crore.

Automatic signalling helps boost line capacity, run more trains at shorter intervals and increase the speed of trains.

The Railway Board recently approved six projects related to automatic signalling, the SWR said on Saturday.

According to the SWR, the Bengaluru and Mysuru railway divisions have reported a continuous surge in demand for more commuter and freight trains.

Automatic signalling will help run more trains from Bengaluru to Chennai, Mysuru, Hubballi and Hyderabad. A vital step in modernising and optimising rail infrastructure, it allows the early optimum utilisation of fixed assets such as platforms by ensuring the early clearance of coaching trains from stations.

Trains can depart promptly, reducing delays and improving overall efficiency. In sections where line capacity has exceeded 100%, automatic signalling helps run more passenger and freight trains. The average speed of trains be enhanced as block sections are cleared faster, the SWR said.

Of the six lines chosen for automatic signalling, the SWR has

## THE SIX LINES

- KSR Bengaluru-Yeshwantpur-Yelahanka (17.75 km)
- Yeshwantpur-Arsikere (160.65 km)
- Lottegollahalli-Hosur (63.6 km)
- Whitefield-Jolarpettai (119 km)
- Baiyappanahalli-Channasandra-Penukonda (139.8 km)
- KSR Bengaluru-Mysuru (138.25 km)



invited tenders for the KSR Bengaluru-Yeshwantpur-Yelahanka section at a cost of Rs 17.51 crore.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.4, Feb, 11, 2024**





## Rly ministry sanctions final location survey for 287-km new line around B'luru

**NEW DELHI, DHNS:** The Ministry of Railways has sanctioned the final location survey for 742 km railway lines in and around Bengaluru in a bid to provide seamless service between the city and its suburbans, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told Rajya Sabha replying to a query by member Lahar Singh Siroya.

The FLS projects that have received approvals are: New double line circular rail network (287 km) around Bengaluru city connecting Nidavanda-Doddaballapur-Devanahalli-Malur-Heelalige-Hejjala-Solur-Nidavanda; quadrupling Bengaluru-Tumakuru line (70 km); doubling Chikbanavar-Hassan (180 km); quadrupling Bengaluru-Mysuru line (135 km) and quadrupling Bangarpet-Jolarpettai (70 km).

On the Bengaluru suburban rail project (BSRP), the minister said, "Karnataka Rail Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (K-RIDE), a company controlled by Government of Karnataka (51% equity), is

executing the suburban rail project. The Union Cabinet Committee of Economic Affairs had sanctioned 148.17 km-BSRP in October 2020."

The minister further said, the BSRP has four corridors and the tender for corridor 2 has been awarded and the work is under progress.

The tender for corridor 4 has also been awarded recently and the resource mobilisation is underway. The survey and geo-technical investigation for corridors 1 and 3 have been completed, Vaishnaw said.

Replying to a query on the estimated time to complete BSRP, the minister said, "It depends on various factors like time taken to acquire land by state government, forest clearance and deposition of cost shared by the local government, other statutory clearances, geological and topographical conditions, law and order situation among others. All these factors vary from project to project, site to site and affect the completion time and cost of the project," he added.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.5, Feb, 11, 2024**



# Tunnel roads and towers can wait

The authorities must switch from the grandiose to the sustainable to safeguard Bengaluru's long-term well being

A RAVINDRA

In his Republic Day speech, Karnataka Governor Tawarchand Gehlot made a grand announcement: "In order to find a permanent solution to the congestion of Bengaluru city, it is proposed to construct tunnel roads in select places. The preparation of a Detailed Project Report (DPR) with the help of an international agency for the construction of a two-kilometre tunnel road has been initiated." He further added that the process of inviting tenders for the white topping of major roads at a cost of Rs 2,000 crore has also been initiated.

While the intended project aims to construct underground tunnel roads that include 12 high-density corridors, it raises concerns about the state government's priorities for Bengaluru's development. Despite the importance of improving the city's infrastructure, the projects undertaken seem to neglect basic needs, adding to people's misery. The purpose of tunnel roads, ostensibly to facilitate smoother automobile flow at higher speeds, may inadvertently contribute to the proliferation of vehicles—currently, 12 million—contradicting the stated objective of resolving congestion.

Tunnel roads are feasible only on a few major arterial roads, like Ballari Road, Tumakuru Road, Hosur Road, and Old Madras Road, not on all roads where vehicles ply. The authorities would be well advised to go around residential areas of the city (most of them have turned commercial), with narrow streets where it is difficult to negotiate even two cars. The influx of SUVs exacerbates the problem, along with the escalating need for parking spaces, which now extend beyond commercial zones to cover roads and walkways.

The real solution lies not in building tunnel roads and corridors but in addressing mobility comprehensively and accommodating different types of commuting: walking, cycling, driving, and parking. A well-considered mobility policy and a comprehensive implementation plan are necessary. Not that policies are lacking. The National Urban Transport Policy formulated by the central government in 2006 and revised subsequently, has clearly spelt out that priori-

ty must be accorded to public transport and has suggested measures to strengthen the public transport system, such as equitable allocation of road space, providing safe access to public transport from non-motorised transport, adopting modern technologies, appropriate pricing to make public transport viable, integrated public transport system that allows seamless travel between systems managed by different operators such as the metro rail and private operators and creating public awareness—all essential for making the entire transport system function smoothly.



The BMRC (Metro Rail) brought out a Comprehensive Mobility Plan for Bengaluru in 2020 with a vision of an efficient and sustainable transportation system for equitable mobility access and minimising negative externalities. It defined three goals:

- 1) Increase the mode share of public transportation.
- 2) Regain road infrastructure for the public good, and
- 3) Reduce the transportation sector's contribution to air pollution and GHG emissions.

The emphasis, both in central and state policy goals, is clearly on 'public good', which involves not only encouraging public transport but limiting the number of private vehicles that contribute to congestion and pollution. The decision to build tunnel roads contradicts these policy goals. Experts from the Indian Institute of Science have opined that the tunnel project is bound to be a disaster as it will neither reduce congestion nor reduce air pollution. On the other hand, Metro will be 40 times more efficient, as it will reduce the number of cars on the road and will bring down both pollution and accidental deaths. In terms of cost, met-

ro is cheaper at Rs 243 crore per km compared to tunnel roads at Rs 500 crore per km.

This leads to the pressing issue of the environment, which must seriously engage the government. According to the WHO, India accounts for about 25% of the over seven million premature deaths caused by air pollution across the world. More private vehicles on Bengaluru roads would worsen air pollution, affecting a city already grappling with high rates of asthma and other respiratory diseases. The proposal of white topping the roads, apart from the high cost (nearly Rs 10 crore per km compared to asphalt roads costing Rs 70-90 lakh), will result in generating more heat.

It is strange that we are taking up climate-unfriendly projects when Bengaluru is one of the C-40 cities, which aims at limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C and building healthy, equitable, and resilient communities. BBMP must focus its attention on implementing its own Blue Climate Action Plan (BCAP) rather than wasting its time and resources on fancy projects, the latest of which is starting a medical college. The irony is that BBMP has proposed to transfer the schools and colleges it is presently running to the Education Department but does not mind taking responsibility for medical education, little knowing its implications.

Not satisfied with tunnels and white-top roads, the government has planned to put up a 250-metre-high Sky Deck in the IT city, which will be the tallest tower in India, a luxury project that will delight the rich and the elite with revolving restaurants and bars!

With the alarming effects of climate change looming large and natural resources depleting, more construction activity will only adversely impact the environment. Of late, the concept of building 'less for more' is gaining significance, calling for compact and efficient designs to optimise space and resource utilisation, minimise environmental impact, and at the same time increase the efficiency of infrastructure and transportation.

It's time for Bengaluru's experts and concerned citizens to devise an action plan, urging decision-makers to reconsider unsustainable urban development. The goal should be an approach that safeguards public health, makes communities more resilient to climate change, and aligns with the city's long-term well-being.

*(The writer is a former chief secretary, Government of Karnataka)*

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.6, Feb, 12, 2024**



# Bengaluru looks to regain top rank in city bus numbers

MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**he Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTc) has invited tenders to purchase 820 diesel buses as it looks to expand its fleet and increase operations.

On February 9, the BMTc called tenders to buy 820 fully built Bharat Stage 6 diesel buses. February 17 is the last date to submit the bids.

GT Prabhakar Reddi, the BMTc's Chief Traffic Manager (Operations), told *DH* that the 820 diesel buses would be procured with state government funds. Only 20 buses have been procured from Tata Motors on a trial basis, he added.

This is the last in the series of bus purchases that the city transporter has planned in the short term. The purchases are expected to help Bengaluru regain the top spot in the number of city buses. Delhi has 7,135 city buses, the most of any city in India.

In October 2022, the BMTc floated tenders to buy 840 diesel buses, but had to put the process on hold because of a petition filed in the High Court of Karnataka.

The petition argued that the BMTc was purchasing buses with a floor height of 1,000 mm, making them unfriendly to people with disabilities. In March 2023, the court allowed the BMTc to go ahead with the bus purchase after the transporter stated that the vehicles provide full accessibility to passengers us-

ing wheelchairs. However, the assembly elections delayed the process.

The BMTc later decided to float fresh tenders. Another BMTc official said the tender would be finalised in two months and the buses would come in the second half of this year. The BMTc spends Rs 78/km on a diesel bus, but earns only Rs 66. Volvo buses cost Rs 105/km, but earn only Rs 70/km.

The BMTc, which had 6,688 buses by March 31, 2023, has rolled out a plan to buy or lease 2,211 vehicles. These include 921 non-AC electric buses, 840 diesel buses, 320 AC e-buses, 120 midi-buses, and 10 AC double-decker e-buses.

In December 2023, the operator inducted 100 of the 921 non-AC e-buses from TML Smart City Mobility Solutions Ltd and expects to get the rest in the next few months.

The BMTc has already called tenders to lease 320 AC e-buses, 120 midi-buses and 10 double-decker buses. Many of these buses will likely hit the road later this year, according to a BMTc official.

The BMTc has to phase out nearly 700 overage buses, including nearly 300 Volvo buses, by March. A bus that runs 11 lakh kilometres or turns 15 years ago has to be scrapped, as per the BMTc rules.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy had earlier said the BMTc needed 10,000 buses to better serve the growing mobility needs of Bengaluru and its catchment areas.

## Double-decker buses

The BMTc has invited tenders to lease 10 double-decker buses on a Gross Cost Contract (GCC) model. The contractor will have to supply, operate and maintain the bus while the BMTc will pay it on a per-kilometre basis. A pre-bid meeting will take place on Monday while the last date to submit the bids is March 4.

The buses will be procured with funds from the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) and the State Urban Transport Fund (SUTF) from the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT). In January 2023, the

BMTc called bids to buy five double-decker e-buses and almost finalised the tender in favour of Ashok Leyland-backed Switch Mobility, the lone bidder.

However, the state government scrapped the tender and asked the BMTc to lease the buses instead.

The new buses will run on three routes (Shivajinagar-Majestic via Vidhana Soudha, Attibele-Majestic and Silk Board Junction-Tin Factory Junction).

Double-decker buses were common sights on Bengaluru's streets until the late 1990s.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3A, Feb, 12, 2024**



# Pilot on satellite-based toll collection on Bengaluru Mysuru Expressway

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The Union government has decided to implement as a pilot project of the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) based barrier less free flow tolling on access-controlled 10-lane Mysuru-Bengaluru Expressway (Highway).

In a reply to a question by Rajya Sabha member Lahar Singh Siroya recently, Nitin Gadkari, Transport Minister, stated that it has been decided to conduct pilots of satellite-based toll collection on roads including Bengaluru-Mysuru NH-275 in Karnataka.

"The government has



A toll booth on Bengaluru Mysuru Expressway. BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

appointed a consultant to provide advisory services on the implementation of new technologies like GNSS based barrier-less free-flow tolling. GNSS has the capacity to retrieve the positioning of the vehicle on the Na-

tional Highway and calculate the user fee based on the distance travelled," Mr. Gadkari said.

On February 7, Mr. Gadkari told the Rajya Sabha that the technology, which has been under the govern-

ment's consideration for over three years, will allow barrier-free movement of cars, which will not be required to stop for toll payments.

He said the photo of the registration plate of the vehicle will be captured and the toll amount will be debited based on the actual length of the highway traversed by the vehicle. This will replace the radio frequency identification-based Fastags that were rolled out in 2016 and made mandatory from January 2021. A total of 8.13 crore Fastags have since been issued, and a penetration of 98% has been achieved, according to the Minister.

**Source: The Hindu, p.2, Feb. 12, 2024**

# Water crisis hits hard: Many RO water ATMs close or raise prices

Poor monsoons  
lead to reduced  
borewell yields

**SNEHA RAMESH**  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Reduced yield from borewells that have gone dry, owing to poor monsoons, has pushed many Reverse Osmosis (RO) units or water ATMs in the city to either shut down or increase their prices. These units, which provide 20 litres of drinking water for just Rs five, were a lifeline for many who could not afford to have water purifiers at home.

While the units in a few places have shut down, others have doubled their prices to manage the increasing costs of power and water.

For instance, the RO unit at Doddabommasandra has been shut down for 20 days now, leaving many residents in



RO units, which provide 20 litres of drinking water for just Rs 5, were a lifeline for many who could not afford to have water purifiers at home. DH PHOTO/ B K JANARDHAN

the area disappointed. "From street vendors to those preparing snacks on the roadside, many of them would collect water from here. It was helpful for many of us who cannot afford water purifiers or spend heavily on packaged drinking water," said Paapamma, a fruit vendor

who runs her business opposite the RO unit in Bommasandra.

Another resident of Yeshwantpur, who runs a chaat shop, said that he has been visiting multiple RO points since he cannot afford packaged water.

"I run a chaat shop and

## BBMP to conduct a zone-wise survey

Following complaints of closure of RO units, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has decided to conduct a survey across the city and plan remedial measures.

Acknowledging the problem, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath told *DH* that they plan to rejuvenate these borewells. "We will identify the RO units that are facing such problems. In a

few cases, we will have to push the borewells a little deeper to reach the lower groundwater levels. A few borewells may just have to be cleaned or repaired. We will take up remedial measures," he said.

Yeshwantpur, RR Nagar, and Kengeri were the areas most affected. At least 12 RO units in Yeshwantpur have shut shops in the last month, sources said.

hence need at least five cans of water a day. I cannot afford to spend hundreds of rupees on packaged water. I now visit two or three units, hoping that at least one of them is open," said Suresh M, a chat vendor in Yeshwantpur.

Of the seven RO units this reporter visited, three were shut, and one had reduced the

water quantity to provide only 10 litres of water for Rs five.

"Borewells are our only source. The quality of water from tankers is not good, and they are also not affordable. Hence, when the borewells dry up, we have no option but to temporarily close down the units," said an operator of one of the RO units in Rajajinagar.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.2, Feb. 13, 2024**



# Bidadi industry bodies seek connectivity to NICE road

## Call To Ease Congestion On Mysuru Rd

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**Bengaluru:** With Mysuru Road witnessing heavy traffic flow and congestion, various industry bodies including Karnataka Small Scale Industries Association (KASSIA) have urged the state govt to provide NICE road connectivity to Bidadi Industrial Township.

A representation to this effect was made to chief minister Siddaramaiah by an industry delegation led by KASSIA president Shashidhara Shetty in the hope that the long-pending demand will find a mention in the state budget to be presented on Friday. "The region has been waiting for this connectivity for several years. With the increase in traffic within Bengaluru city, it is important to take measures to ease congestion and enable convenient mobility for road users. The NICE Road, in its original form,



**JAMMED:** A file photo of traffic on Mysuru Road leading to Bidadi Industrial Township

### 'Metro to reach Bidadi'

Close on the heels of industrial bodies seeking a revival of the NICE connectivity to Bidadi Industrial Area, deputy CM DK Shivakumar on Monday told media persons in Ramanagar that the state govt is committed to the development of Bidadi. "We all belong to Bengaluru. Bidadi will soon be part of Greater Bengaluru and the Metro will definitely be extended up to Bidadi as we are in the process of preparing a DPR," Shivakumar announced.

was supposed to connect Bengaluru and Mysuru as part of the Bangalore-Mysore Infrastructure Corridor," the delegation stated and added: "We wish the original plan of NICE Road would be implemented in phases so that infrastructure development happens all along the propo-

sed Greater Bengaluru."

The industry representatives opine that linking NICE Road with Bidadi Industrial Township, in the backdrop of the newly-laid Bengaluru-Mysuru highway and the upgrade of Kanakapura highway, will be a game-changer from the mobility point of view.

### BIDADI, A MICROCOSM OF B'LURU

Distance between Bengaluru and Bidadi Industrial Area: 34km

Distance from Kengeri: 18-19km

Total travel time: Up to 2 hours (one way)

No of industries: 250-275

Total workforce: 30,000 (including indirectly employed people)

Goods vehicles: 2,500 a day (including 150 container trucks)

Expected vehicles by 2025: About 4,000, including 500 container trucks

Shetty said, "About 13 km of road is required to be built and connected with the NICE intersection near the cloverleaf to Bidadi. Of late, there has been a considerable increase in industrial production as plants have scaled up operations. This has resulted in the movement of more vehicles including freight and cargo containers along with the workforce from Bengaluru city. All of this has choked the existing service road because not all of them can afford the Bengaluru-Mysuru access-controlled highway, which costs Rs 128 per day. Hence, we urged the government to revive what had been planned earlier and link it up to Bidadi."

Rajendra S, president of the Bidadi Industries Association, told TOI: "Currently we have about 250 to 275 industries of various sizes within an international standard township. Every day, 25,000-30,000 strong workforce commutes between Bengaluru and Bidadi and up to 3,000 goods vehicles including more than 500 container trucks ply. If there is an alternative road, this would reduce the burden on existing Mysuru Road."

**Source: The Times of India, p.2, Feb. 13, 2024**



# Namma Metro link to KIA will be completed by June 2026: Gehlot

The Governor says that a feasibility report is being prepared for construction of a tunnel, which is intended to reduce traffic congestion

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

**K**arnataka Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot emphasised the development of infrastructure in Bengaluru and Tier II cities in the State. Work on Bengaluru metro rail project Phase 2A – from Central Silk Board to Krishnarajapura (19.75 km) and Phase-2B Krishnarajapura to Kempegowda International Airport – is in progress, and is expected to be completed by June 2026.

In his address to the joint session of both the Houses of the State legislature on February 12, the Governor said, “Bengaluru metro Phase 2, Reach 5 new line from Ragigudda to Central Silk Board stretches 19.15 km, out of which 3.3 km with 16 stations would be constructed in double decker model. At present, 98% progress has been achieved and the stretch is scheduled for commissioning by July 2024.” Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project has been taken up in collaboration with the State Government and Indian Railways.



A file photo of Namma Metro. The Governor informed the legislature that work on Namma Metro Phase 2A is in progress.

Civil work of Baiyappannahalli-Chikkabanavara (25 km) corridor is in progress. The tender for civil work of Heelalige - Rajanukunte (46.24 km) corridor has been finalised. The work will begin soon, the Governor said.

A feasibility report is being prepared for construction of a tunnel, which is intended to reduce traffic congestion in Bengaluru.

## Upcoming airports

Construction of airports in Hassan and Raichur would be completed within the stipulated time. Shivamog-

ga airport began operations in 2023. Vijayapura airport would be completed and made operational in 2024.

Mr. Gehlot said Cauvery Water Supply Phase-5, consisting of supply of 775 MLD additional drinking water to 110 village areas included in the BBMP, is intended to be commissioned in March 2024.

Indira Canteen 2 scheme has been formulated with a view to eliminate the hunger of students, labourers, and working class people. In Phase 2, he said, 188 new canteens with food items will be launched in new towns and local bodies where no canteens had been constructed. Construction has already commenced.

## New tourism policy

Mr. Gehlot said the Department of Tourism has formulated a blueprint to implement schemes under a new policy. The tourism policy and agenda will soon be announced, including effective measures to promote educational trips by school children to zoos, forest tours, and adventure tourism.

**Source: The Hindu, p.3, Feb. 13, 2024**

# Tankers cater to 25% of demand for water in Bengaluru: DKS

Proposed Mekedatu project is the only solution for tackling drinking water problem, says Dy. CM

## IN THE ASSEMBLY

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

**D**eputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar informed the Karnataka Legislative Assembly that tankers are catering to close to 25% of the demand for water in Bengaluru. Mr. Shivakumar also holds the Bengaluru Development portfolio.

Replying to a question by C.K. Ramamurthy of the BJP during question hour on Tuesday, Mr. Shivakumar said there has been a steady rise in the demand for water, as nearly 10 lakh people migrate to Bengaluru every year.

Tankers have been supplying water from bore-



Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar informed the Legislative Assembly that there has been a steady rise in the demand for water, as nearly 10 lakh people migrate to Bengaluru every year. FILE PHOTO

wells. However, it is the responsibility of the government to ensure supply of drinking water to residents of Bengaluru, he said. The proposed Mekedatu project, the building

of a balancing reservoir across river Cauvery, is the only solution for tackling the drinking water problem of the burgeoning city of Bengaluru.

Water tariff has not been

increased for 11 years. Increase in power tariff and other costs have led to an increase in the cost of supplying water to residents of Bengaluru, Mr. Shivakumar said.

He said that the government would prioritise irrigation and water management projects over other works such as building roads. Replying to questions on irrigation projects such as Yettinahole, Yagachi dam, Upper Bhadra and Upper Krishna Project in the Assembly, Mr. Shivakumar, said priority would be given for development of irrigation projects and filling up tanks. Other works such as roads would be taken up later and the issue has already been discussed with the Chief Minister.

**Source: The Hindu, p.4, Feb. 14, 2024**



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# Trial run of traffic control system aided by Japanese MODERATO tech begins

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) has initiated the trial run for a new traffic signalling system at the Kensington Road and Murphy Road junction near Ulsoor. The system incorporates Japanese MODERATO (Management of Origin-Destination-Related Adaptation for Traffic Optimisation) technology.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-funded project is being implemented by DULT. The new traffic signals installed in the central business district (CBD) are expected to alleviate congestion on major roads



The new traffic signals installed in the CBD are expected to alleviate congestion on major roads. FILE PHOTO

by incorporating pedestrian crossings.

“The signals at these two junctions have been temporarily activated for a

week to verify installation and switching procedures. The actual testing of the signals will commence in the last week of February,” a DULT official said.

The proposal to introduce these signals was put forth in 2014, but actual work commenced in July 2021. Despite the initial aim of completing the project by October 2022, various delays resulted in the project missing several deadlines.

Officials said that the Adaptive Signal Control Technology (ASCT) aims to tackle congestion problems and improve waiting time efficiency at intersections. Initially planned for 29 junctions, the project now encompasses 28, with

the exclusion of one junction due to ongoing Namma Metro construction.

The key components of the ASCT include signal arms and aspects catering to both motorists and pedestrians. Additionally, the system incorporates an automatic traffic counter and classifier to measure vehicle movement, along with a queue-length measurement system at critical junctions to monitor the build-up of queues.

“An integral part of the project is the utilisation of a central control software, named MODERATO, which enables real-time optimisation of signal phasing and timings across all junctions,” an official explained.

**Source: The Hindu, p.4, Feb. 14, 2024**

# IAMAI urges Transport Department to reconsider uniform pricing for taxis

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU

The Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) has urged the Transport Department to reconsider their announcement of uniform pricing for taxis and requested for a consultation with industries to address the concerns that led to the decision. The IAMAI represents over 600 digital service providers, including many ride-hailing apps.

In a notification issued on February 3, the State government stated that cab aggregators were not al-

lowed to charge any extra fees beyond the officially set ones. The new fare structure ranged between a base price of ₹100 and ₹130 for vehicles of different values. This structure basically means that there is no place for surge pricing.

In a letter to Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy, the association has said that the removal of dynamic pricing will have “a chilling impact” on Karnataka’s mobility ecosystem. It is also noted that the State government notification has not considered the demarcation between city taxis

which are hailed on streets and app-based operators according to the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act 2019.

“It is important to note that the Central government took into consideration the fact that web-based transportation aggregation companies are different and more tech-enabled than normal street ride hailing. Hence, the inclusion of aggregators under Section 93 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 which provided special license conditions on platforms. In fact, the Karnataka Transport Department also acknowledged this difference

by introducing separate rules and fare notification specifically for aggregator operations,” the letter said.

Owing to the convenience apps provide with regard to doorstep pick-up, GPS tracking and other tech enabled features, the members have said that the fares of aggregator taxis should not be identical to traditional taxis. While street-hailed taxis are not subjected to GST, the rides booked through aggregator apps are, according to the letter.

The removal of dynamic pricing can also impact the demand and supply, while

also undermining the livelihood of drivers, who depend on the flexibility that they get in peak hours and non-peak hours, the association said.

“We request you to kindly reconsider and revise the notification to the extent of providing a dynamic pricing on the fares for matching supply with demand for ride hailing aggregator operations. Our prayer for dynamic pricing is beneficial for the drivers and the customers looking for adequate compensation and enhanced services respectively,” the letter said.

**Source: The Hindu, p.6, Feb. 14, 2024**



# At Rs 1,700 cr, 134 roads to be white-topped in Bengaluru

**So far, Palike has white-topped 102 km of road**

BENGALURU, DHNS

As the first and second phases of white-topping project are nearing completion, the BBMP has taken up fresh projects at an estimated cost of Rs 1,700 crore. A total 134 roads will be white-topped in the city. While BBMP's project cell is responsible for white-topping 64-km of white-topping at an estimated cost of Rs 800 crore, the road infrastructure cell of the civic

body will be white-topping around 70 roads at an estimated cost of Rs 900 crore.

While Rs 800 crore is provided by the state government, the BBMP has set aside Rs 900 crore from the excess property tax it aims to collect in the next three years for the white-topping project. It has earmarked another Rs 100 crore for asphaltting roads in Bommanahalli and Mahadevapura. So far, the BBMP has white-topped 102 km of road in Bengaluru.



## Roads identified for white-topping

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Tannery Road</li> <li>■ Mosque Road</li> <li>■ DJ Halli Main Road</li> <li>■ Hennur 80 ft Main Road</li> <li>■ Nagawara Main Road</li> <li>■ CBI Road</li> <li>■ Dinnur Main Road</li> <li>■ V Nagenahalli Road</li> <li>■ Lower Agram Road</li> <li>■ MG Road</li> <li>■ Residency Road</li> <li>■ City Civil Court Road</li> <li>■ Thimmaiah Road</li> <li>■ Narayanpillai street</li> <li>■ MEI Road</li> <li>■ Malleshwaram 8th Main Road</li> <li>■ Jayanagar 22nd Cross Road</li> <li>■ SP Road</li> <li>■ Sarjapur Road (Jakkasandra to ORR)</li> <li>■ Jawaharlal Nehru Road (Uttarahalli)</li> <li>■ 100 ft Ring Road (Jalahalli)</li> <li>■ Holiday Village Road</li> <li>■ Kodipalya Road</li> <li>■ Bull temple Road</li> <li>■ Gandhinagar Cluster roads</li> <li>■ Race Course Road</li> <li>■ West of Chord Road</li> <li>■ Attiguppe 14th Main Road</li> <li>■ Railway Parallel Road</li> <li>■ Pampa Mahakavi Road</li> <li>■ Chamrajpete 5th Main, 7th cross and 2nd Main roads</li> <li>■ BTM Layout (29th Main and 80 feet Road)</li> <li>■ L&amp;T Road (Ballari Road)</li> <li>■ Sahakaranagar 20th Cross</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Road</li> <li>■ Rajiv Gandhi Nagar railway parallel Road</li> <li>■ Jakkur Road</li> <li>■ Hennur Bagalur Road</li> <li>■ Cgal Road</li> <li>■ Sanjaynagar Main Road</li> <li>■ Sultanpalya Main Road</li> <li>■ 1st Main Anand Nagar</li> <li>■ Kensington Road</li> <li>■ Cubbon Road</li> <li>■ Palace Cross Road</li> <li>■ Ambedkar Veedhi, KR Circle</li> <li>■ Main Guard Road from Cubbon Road</li> <li>■ Swami Vivekananda Road</li> <li>■ LR Nagar Main Road</li> <li>■ Palmgrove Road</li> <li>■ Bazaar Street</li> <li>■ Anepalya Main Road</li> <li>■ CV Raman Nagar roads</li> <li>■ Hennur Road</li> <li>■ Kammanahalli Road</li> <li>■ Nehru Road</li> <li>■ Govindapur Road (Veeranapalya)</li> <li>■ Netaji Road</li> <li>■ MM Road</li> <li>■ Shampura Road</li> <li>■ Lazer Road</li> <li>■ Sultan Road</li> <li>■ Chamrajpet 3rd Main, 4th Main</li> <li>■ Sirsi Road</li> <li>■ Mahalakshmi layout (12th Main Road)</li> <li>■ 10th cross, Rajajinagar</li> <li>■ Dr Rajkumar Road</li> <li>■ Loop Road from Ananda</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Rao circle</li> <li>■ Link Road from Sampige orad</li> <li>■ Platform Road</li> <li>■ Subedar Chatram Road</li> <li>■ 8th Main, Malleshwaram</li> <li>■ Jeevaraj Alva Road</li> <li>■ Nagarbhavi Main Road</li> <li>■ 80ft Road, Chandralayout</li> <li>■ Vijayanagar club Road</li> <li>■ Hosakerehalli Main Road</li> <li>■ 80ft Road (Vidyapeeta circle)</li> <li>■ Subram Chetty Road (Net-kallappa circle)</li> <li>■ 10 Main Road (Bandi Mahakallamma temple Road)</li> <li>■ 50 ft Road (from Mount Joy Road)</li> <li>■ JC Road</li> <li>■ KH Road</li> <li>■ Uttarahalli Main Road</li> <li>■ Kanakapura Main Road</li> <li>■ 9th Main Road, Subramanyapura Road</li> <li>■ Maruthinagar Main Road</li> <li>■ 1st Main Road (Wipro park junction)</li> <li>■ Eijpura Main Road</li> <li>■ Bagalur Main Road</li> <li>■ Jakkur Road</li> <li>■ Allalasandra Main Road</li> <li>■ HMT Road</li> <li>■ Amma Ashram Road</li> <li>■ Kengeri (Hoysala circle to Robin Theatre)</li> <li>■ Tunganager Main Road</li> <li>■ Pattanagere Main Road</li> <li>■ ORR Road (Jalahalli cross to Laggere)</li> </ul> |
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Source: Deccan Herald, p.3A, Feb, 15, 2024

## ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ 15 ದಿನಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆ ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರು | ಬತ್ತಿದ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳು | 110 ಹಳ್ಳಿಗಳಿಗೆ ತಲುಪದ ಕಾವೇರಿ ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ದರ ದುಪ್ಪಟ್ಟು, ಬಾಡಿಗೆದಾರರ ಗುಳಿ

■ ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ

ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ ವಿಧಾನಸಭಾ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಮಧ್ಯದ ನೀರಿಗೆ ಹಾವಾಕಾರ ಉಂಟಾಗಿದೆ. ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರು 15 ದಿನಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆ ಬರುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಕೊಳವೆಬಾವಿಗಳು ಬತ್ತಿ ಹೋಗಿವೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಬೀದಿಗಳಿಂದ ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನೀರಿನ ದರ ದುಪ್ಪಟ್ಟಿದೆ. ನೀರಿನ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯಿಂದಾಗಿ ಹಲವು ಬಾಡಿಗೆದಾರರು ಬೇರೆ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಿಗೆ ಗುಳಿ ಹೋಗಿರುವಂತಾಗಿದೆ.

ರಾಮಮೂರ್ತಿ ನಗರ, ಹೊರಮಾವು ವಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹಲವು ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳು 110 ಹಳ್ಳಿ ಸೇರ್ಪಡೆಯಾಗಿವೆ. ಈ ಪ್ರದೇಶಕ್ಕೆ ಇನ್ನೂ ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರು ಬಂದಿಲ್ಲ. ಹಳೆ ವಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳಾದ ಎಸ್ ಎಂಎಲ್, ವಿಜ್ಞಾನ ನಗರ, ವಿಜಯಪುರ, ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ, ಬೇವೂರು, ಎ.ನಾರಾಯಣಪುರದ ಮಧ್ಯದ ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರಿನ ಸಂಪರ್ಕ ಇದ್ದರಾದರೂ ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಹೇರಿದ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ. 15 ದಿನಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆ ನೀರು ಬಡಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ನೀರು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಸಾಕಷ್ಟು ಹೊತ್ತು ನೀರು ಬಾರದು, ಪ್ರಭೌ ಕೊಡ ಇರುವುದಿಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬುದು ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳು ದೂರಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅಂತಹಾಲ್ ಪಾಲ್ವಳ್ಳಿ ಇಳಿಬಿದ್ದು, 1200 ಅಡಿ ಕೆರೆದರೂ ಬೇಮುಂಟು ಸಿರಿ ತಿಟ್ಟು ಹೋಗಿ ಎಲ್ಲವಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಜನರು ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನೀರಿನ ಅಪರೂಪವೆನಿಸಿತು.



ಎಸ್.ಎಂ.ಎಲ್ ವಾರ್ಡ್ ಪಾಲ್ವಳ್ಳಿ ರಸ್ತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಿವ್ಯಾಕ್ಷರದಲ್ಲಿ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿ ವಾಟರ್ ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನಿಂದ ನೀರು ಒಡೆದು ಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಮುಗಿಬಿಡುತ್ತಿರುವ.

**ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರು ಬೈಪ್ ಅಳವಡಿಕೆಯಾದರೂ ನೀರಿಲ್ಲ**

110 ಹಳ್ಳಿ ಸೇರ್ಪಡೆ ಯೋಜನೆ ಅಡಿ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಗೆ ಸೇರ್ಪಡೆಯಾದ ರಾಮಮೂರ್ತಿ ನಗರ, ಹೊರಮಾವು ವಾರ್ಡ್‌ಗಳ ಬಹುತೇಕ ಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರಿನ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಕ್ಕೆ ಬೈಪ್ ಅಳವಡಿಸಿ ವರ್ಷಗಳೇ ಕಳೆದಿವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರು ಇನ್ನೂ ಬಂದಿಲ್ಲ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮನೆಗಳ ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳು ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅಪರೂಪವಾಗಿದೆ.

**ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿ ನೀರು ದುರ್ಲಭ**

ಸಮಗ್ರ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಪ್ರದೇಶಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಜಲಮಂಡಳಿಯಿಂದ ವಾಟರ್ ಎದುರು ಬಾಂ ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನೀರು ಪೂರೈಸಲಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ಬಂದಾಗ ಬಂದಿಗಿಯಿಂದ ನೀರು ಒಡೆದಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಳ್ಳುವಂತಾಗಿದೆ. ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ನಾನಾ ಕಾರ್ಯ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸುವವರಾದ ಹೊರಗುಡ್ಡದವರಿಗೆ ಈ ಸೌಲಭ್ಯವೂ ಸಿಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಕಾವೇರಿ ನೀರು ಸಮರ್ಪಕವಾಗಿ ಪೂರೈಕೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದು, ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ನೀರಿನ ಒತ್ತಡವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳು ಪರವಾನಗಿವಂತಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದಿ ಕಾಲಿಗಳು ಹಾಗೂ ಜನಪ್ರತಿನಿಧಿಗಳು ನಿರ್ಲಕ್ಷ್ಯ ತೋರುವುದು ಸರಿಯಲ್ಲ.

-ಡಿ.ಕೆ.ರಮೇಶ್ ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಪುರ ನಿವಾಸಿ

ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಮಧ್ಯದ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿ ಕೊರೆಯಲು ಮೂರು ಕೋಟಿ ಎಂಬತ್ತೈದು ಲಕ್ಷ ರೂ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಆಗಿದೆ. ಇನ್ನೊಂದು ವಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಕೊಳವೆ ಬಾವಿ ಕೊರೆಯುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಮನೆಯಿಂದ ಉಚಿತ ನೀರಿನ ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮಾಡಲು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

-ವಿಜಯ್ ಎಚ್.ಎಂ. ಬಿಡಿಎಂ

**ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಮನೆ ಬಾಡಿಗೆ:** ಕೆಲ ತಿಂಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆಯಷ್ಟೇ ಐದು ಸಾವಿರ ರೀಟರ್ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯದ ನೀರಿನ ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ಬೇರೆ 500 ರೂ. ಅನುಮಾನವಿತ್ತು. ಈಗ 1000 ರೂ.ಗೆ ಏರಿಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ. ಕೊಳವೆ ಬತ್ತಿದ ಮನೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನೀರಿನಾಗಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಹಣ ವ್ಯಯಿಸುವಂತಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಎರಡು, ಮೂರು ಮನೆ ಬಾಡಿಗೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಮಾರೀಕರು ಎರಡು ದಿನಕ್ಕೊಮ್ಮೆ ಒಂದು ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನೀರು ಹಾಕಿಸಬೇಕಿದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ನೀರಿನಾಗಿಯೇ ಸುಮಾರು 15000 ರೂ. ಹಣ ವ್ಯಯಿಸಬೇಕಾಗುತ್ತದೆ. ಹೀಗಾಗಿ ನೀರಿನ ಬೆಲೆ ಬಾಬಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಹಣ ಕೊಡಿ, ಇಲ್ಲವೇ ಮನೆ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಹೋಗಿ ಎಂದು ಬಾಡಿಗೆದಾರರಿಗೆ ಬಡಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಹೇಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಬಾಡಿಗೆದಾರರು ಹೆಚ್ಚುವರಿ ಹಣ ಪಾವತಿಸಲಾಗದೆ ಕೊಳವೆಬಾವಿ ಇರುವ ಮನೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಬಾಡಿಗೆಗೆ ತೆರಳುತ್ತಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

**ಅಪಾರ್ತಮೆಂಟ್ ನಿವಾಸಿಗಳಿಗೂ ತಕ್ಷಣ ಬಿಡಿ:** ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರದ ಹಲವೆಡೆ ಐಟಿ, ಬಿಟಿ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳು ಭಾರಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ತಲೆ ಎತ್ತಿದ ಪರಿಣಾಮ ಅಪಾರ್ತಮೆಂಟ್ ಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆಯೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿದೆ. ಟ್ಯಾಂಕರ್ ನೀರು ದುರಾಪಯೋಗದಿಂದ ಒತ್ತಡವಿಲ್ಲದೆ ವಾಟಿ ಸಮಸ್ಯೆಯಾಗುತ್ತಿ ಮುಂಚಿತವೇ ದರ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. 2.3 ಸಾವಿರ ರೂ. ಇದ್ದದ್ದು ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ 3.4 ಸಾವಿರ ರೂ.ಗೆ ಏರಿಕೆಯಾಗಿದೆ.

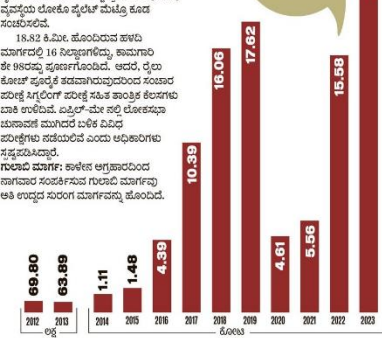
Source: Vijayakarnataka, p.12, Feb.15, 2024



ನಮ್ಮ ಮೆಟ್ರೋ: 2026ಕ್ಕೆ ಐದು ಮಾರ್ಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಬಾರ •ವಾರ್ಷಿಕ ಸಂಚರಿಸುವವರ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 50 ಕೋಟಿ ದಾಟುವ ನಿರೀಕ್ಷೆ

● ಬಾಲಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪಿ.ಎಚ್.

ಪ್ರಯಾಣಿಕರ  
ಪ್ರಮಾಣ



ನೋರಲೆ ಮೆಟ್ರೊ, ರೈಲು

The map illustrates the Mumbai Metro network, featuring several lines:
 

- Green Line:** Connects the western suburbs to the city center.
- Purple Line:** Connects the northern suburbs to the city center.
- Blue Line:** Connects the eastern suburbs to the city center.
- Orange Line:** Connects the southern suburbs to the city center.
- Yellow Line:** Connects the southern suburbs to the city center.

 The map also shows various stations and transfer points, with a legend in the top right corner indicating the line colors and their corresponding names in Marathi.

ನೀಲಿ ಮಾರ್ಗ ಶೀಘ್ರ ಶುರುವಾಗಲಿ

ರಾಜನೀತಿಗರಹಿಂದಿನ ಜನಾಂಗೀಕರಣದ ಗೆರೆ ಮುಟ್ಟಿದ್ದರಿಗೆ ತೆರಳುತ್ತಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಒಂದೊಂದರ ಗುಟ್ಟು ಉಳಿದುಬಾಕಾದವು. ಅಲ್ಲದೇ ಮಾತಾಡುತ್ತವೆರೆಗೆ ಭಾಷಣದ ಹೊರಗುತ್ತಿದ್ದಂತೆ, ಮಾತುಗಳಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ ಮುಟ್ಟಿ ನೀರಿ ಮಾರ್ಗ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣಗೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತದೆ. ಆ ಮಾರ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಟ್ಟಿ ರೈಲು ಸಂಚಾರ ಆರಂಭಗೊಂಡಂತೆ ಇನ್ನೂ ಕಡಿಮೆ ಆದದ್ದಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ ವಸೆಯಿಂದ ಕುಣಿಯಲಿಗೆ ತಲಬಾಬು ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾಗಲಿದೆ.

నయనా యు.పి., కామరూపము

ವಾಹನ ದಟ್ಟಣೆಯಿಂದ ಪಾರು

 'ಹೊಸಪೇಟೆಯಿಂದ ಬೈಯಪ್ಪನಹಳ್ಳಿ-ಗೆ ತೆರಳಲು ನನಗೆ 2 ಗಂಟೆ ಬೇಕಿತ್ತು. ಮೆಟ್ರೋದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂಚರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಮುಕ್ಕಾಲು ಗಂಟೆ ಸಾಕಾಗುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಪಾಪನ ಬಟ್ಟೆಯಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಮೆಟ್ರೋ ಒಳಗಿಂದ ಹಾದುಹೋಗಿ ಬೈಯಪ್ಪನಹಳ್ಳಿ

ಮೆಟ್ರೋ ನಿಲ್ದಾಣದಿಂದ ಒಂದೇ ಕಿಲೋಮೀಟರ್ ದೂರದಲ್ಲಿರುವ  
ಸಿ.ವಿ. ರಾಮಸ್ವಾಮಿರಾವ್ ಟೆಕ್ನಾಲೊಜೀಸ್ ನಮ್ಮ ಕಛೇರಿ ಇದೆ.  
ಸದಸಿಂಹ್ ಬಿ.ಎಲ್., ಇನ್‌ಫಾರ್ಮೇಷನ್ ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್  
ಸೈನ್ಸ್



ತೆರಹದ ಉದ್ಯೋಗಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಟ್ಟರಿ ಬಹಳ  
ಉಪಯೋಗವಾಗಿದೆ.  
ನೇತ್ರಾವತಿ, ಸಹಾಯಕ ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕಿ, ಸಹಕರಿ ಕಲಾ ಕಾಲೇಜು

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| <p><b>57</b> </p> <p>ಹನಿರು ಮತ್ತು ನೇರಳೆಗ ಮಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ<br/>ನಂಚಿಸುವ ರೈಲುಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ</p> | <p><b>618</b></p> <p>ಪ್ರತಿ ದಿನ ನಡೆಸುವ<br/>ಟ್ರಾನ್ಸಿಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ</p> | <p><b>21</b> </p> <p>ಸೇವಾಡೆಗೊಳಲು<br/>ತಯಾರಾದಿರುವ ರೈಲುಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ</p> |
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[illegible]



# E-waste: Is Bengaluru taking steps towards responsible disposal?

SHRADHA TRIVENI  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**he IT capital of India, Bengaluru, is not far behind when it comes to generating e-waste. Ranked third in the country in generating e-waste, the city generates 10.1% of the country's generation.

Given that e-waste generation is certain to go up given that IT is entering every sphere of existence in the city, several organisations are in the forefront of collecting and recycling e-waste. However, experts suggest that the awareness about informed disposal of e-waste must begin at the school level if sustainable lifestyle should be realised and health and environmental fallouts of unscientific management of E-waste are to be mitigated.

DH spoke to multiple stakeholders in e-waste management in Bengaluru, to find out what needs to be done before e-waste becomes an onerous burden.

Gurudatta Bangarpet, Director, Rashi E Waste Solutions, told DH that refurbishment is the first step towards managing E-waste.

"We closely work with the corporate sector, which is a bulk E-waste generator. When they send an initial list of electronic waste to us, we inspect



**Authorised recyclers make sure that the metal content in the e-waste is extracted with no damage to the environment.** DH FILE PHOTO

whether the item can be refurbished, before sending it to the recycling plant. I believe refurbishing is the first step in the recycling process," he said.

## Contact authorised recyclers

E-waste is rich in metallic content. Authorised recyclers make sure that the metal content in the e-waste is extracted with no damage to the environment, maximum resources are recovered from the waste, and minimum sent to landfills. Burning of e-waste by the informal sector causes health hazards and degrades the air quality, said Krithika Viswanathan, Marketing Lead, Saahas Zero Waste.

Earlier in 1990s and 2000s, there was a higher usage of precious metals like gold, silver, platinum and palladium in the production of electronic items but it has been replaced by other metals and alloys today.

While bulk e-waste generators contact organisations such as Rashi and Saahas themselves, individuals, unaware of the e-waste disposal methods, hoard old and unused electronic items at home or dispose them along with plastic waste. Viswanathan suggests that individuals must always contact authorised recyclers for managing their E-waste. She asserts that selling it to the informal sector would result in air pollution due to the burning.

## Creative alternatives

A unique initiative by Ewa Eco makes flower pots from the waste generated by recycling e-waste.

"We manufacture flower pots from the waste generated in the process of recycling e-waste, which would otherwise go to the landfills. Using wires, cables and shredded parts of keyboards, we make planters which are sold at minimal price," said Gurudatta.

Ewa Eco is the brainchild of Sanjay Jangam, a retired Navy commander who collaborates with Gurudatta Bangarpet's Rashi E-waste solutions.

**Source: Deccan Herald, p.3A, Feb, 15, 2024**

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