



**BRUHAT BENGALURU MAHANAGARA PALIKE  
BANGALORE**

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CLIPPINGS**

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THE HINDU

# A bus for children to learn and play

*BBMP starts 'Wonder on Wheels' that will teach out-of-school children in the city*

**STAFF REPORTER**  
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) started a programme called "Wonder on Wheels" across the city on Monday by procuring 10 buses from Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC).

BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath launched the initiative at the BBMP headquarters, which, according to him, will be beneficial to 300-500 out-of-school children in the city.

The project is the initiative of Freethinking Foundation and is being undertaken with the BBMP. This is the continuation of the Montessori School on Wheels programme launched in May.

"Architects have remodelled the bus with a detachable amphitheatre and musical areas, among others. The bus is furnished with detachable seating, shelves and storage to allow for free creative movement. Art, craft, musical instruments, library books and audio-visual systems, and



A 'Wonder on Wheels' vehicle that was launched at the BBMP office in Bengaluru on Monday.

■ SUDHAKARA JAIN

■ Art, craft, musical instruments, library books and audio-visual systems, and permanent art and craft teachers will be present in the bus.

permanent art and craft teachers will be present in the bus," said in a release from the BBMP.

"The objective of the

programme is to provide innovative learning material, trained teachers and different environment to aganwadi children. Through this, the holistic learning ability of children can be enhanced. This programme will be extended across the city," Mr. Giri Nath said.

Each of these buses will accommodate up to 50 children, have two teachers

trained in Montessori schooling, a group D worker and study and play materials for children. Children can learn in English, Kannada and Hindi mediums in these buses everyday.

The BBMP will park the bus in gardens and parks to help children learn in the open, in a stress free environment and explore nature, says officials.



THE  HINDU

# BBMP begins demolition of illegal structures on SWDs

STAFF REPORTER

BENGALURU

Following the recent flooding and large-scale damages in the city, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) started an anti-encroachment drive to remove illegal structures that have come up on storm-water drains in several areas of the Mahadevapura zone.

The civic body came down heavily on the encroachers coinciding with the commencement of the 10-day monsoon session of the Karnataka State legislature on Monday. BBMP officials, along with marshalls and police department officials, began the anti-encroachment exercise at 15 places in Mahadevapura, which were allegedly causing flooding.

Raghavendra, Assistant Executive Engineer, (Mahadevapura Zone) said, “We

## It's BBMP's failure: HC

The High Court of Karnataka on Monday said that the failure of the BBMP to perform its statutory duties of removal of encroachments on storm-water drains has given rise to the recent situation of inundation of several parts of the city due to unprecedented floods caused after heavy rains. ▶ PAGE 2

.....  
have surveyed and identified the SWD encroachments to remove structures on drains that were choking the flow of rainwater.”

The BBMP is also removing structures on a school playground and garden which had encroached on storm-water drains. The civic body has identified and demolished the illegal struc-

tures in Challaghatta, Chinnappanahalli, Basavananagar, and SR Layout in Basavanapura ward in Mahadevapura zone. BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said all the properties marked as illegal encroachment had been served notices and action was being taken as per the Revenue Act.

“Both storm-water drains and lakes come under the ownership of the Karnataka Land Revenue Department. The survey is been conducted by the tahsildars, and they have also issued a notice, while BBMP is implementing the anti-encroachment drive.” “We will continue to mark the areas where encroachment has been reported, and will remove them in all the zones in the coming days,” he added.

**RELATED REPORTS** ▶ PAGE 2



THE HINDU

# BBMP identifies 15 buildings, including IT parks, that encroached upon SWDs

Properties include Bagmane Tech Park, Rainbow Drive Layout, Wipro, Eco Space

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

Days before heavy down-pour in the city led to flooding, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had identified at least 15 encroachments by various builders and IT parks in Mahadevapura zone.

The document, dated August 17, shows that properties built on various survey numbers in Mahadevapura zone had blocked the water flow on storm-water drains (SWD).

The properties mentioned in the document include Bagmane Tech Park, Rainbow Drive Layout, Wipro, Eco Space, Gopalan in Bellandur, Hoodi and Sonnehalli, Diya School, Adarsha, Columbia Asia Hospital, New Horizon College, Adarsha retreat, Epysion and DiyaShree, Prestige, Salarpuria and Adarsha and Nalapad.

A senior BBMP official confirmed to *The Hindu* that these properties on different survey numbers have encroached upon the SWD. "A notice has been issued to these builders and soon we



BBMP has started an anti-encroachment drive to remove illegal structures that have come up on storm-water drains in several areas of Mahadevapura zone of Bengaluru. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

will conduct an anti-encroachment drive against these properties. The survey was conducted last month and notices were served to these properties," he added.

Earlier this week, N.R. Ramesh, Bengaluru South District president of the BJP, had accused the IT firms and various builders of encroaching upon the SWD.

In a letter to industrialist Mohandas Pai, Mr. Ramesh alleged that Information Technology industries in the city are the reason for the

current situation of flooding.

Alleging that major IT companies have constructed their buildings on storm-water drains and their buffer zones, he had said: "The width of the primary drains and secondary drains of the rajakaluves have been completely encroached on or diverted during these constructions of IT companies."

On Monday, BBMP commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said, "We have given detailed instruction to all eight zones to clear the encroach-

ments on lake beds and SWDs and take action."

Meanwhile, the Bengaluru East tahsildar had also issued notice to 13 residents of the luxury Rainbow Drive gated community in the city, which was flooded after heavy rain recently, for alleged encroachment of a storm-water drain.

The authorities alleged that the residents' properties block major areas of the culvert, making the layout prone to flooding during the rain.



THE HINDU

# HC: Civic body's failure to clear drain encroachment caused flood

Court directs BBMP to immediately remove encroachments on storm-water drains

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Monday said that the failure of the BBMP to perform its statutory duties of removal of encroachments on storm-water drains has given rise to the recent situation of inundation of several parts of the city due to unprecedented floods caused after heavy rains.

Pointing out that the BBMP and the State government have failed to comply with the directions issued way back in June 2019 for surveying of storm-water drains and removal of encroachments of drains, the court directed the government to take quick steps for removal of all the encroachments immediately.

A Division Bench comprising acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice S. Vishwajith Shetty issued the directions during the hearing of a batch of PIL petitions filed since 2014 on the issues related to maintenance of city's lakes and storm-water drains.



The High Court Bench has directed the BBMP to take steps to ensure prevention of dumping of all kinds of waste and other pollutants into storm-water drains. ■ BHAGYA PRAKASH K.

The Bench also directed the BBMP to take steps to ensure prevention of dumping of all kinds of waste and other pollutants into storm-water drains and submit a status report to the court on actions taken for removal of storm-water drain encroachment by next date of hearing on October 12.

Earlier, during the hearing on the petitions on Mon-

day, advocate G.R. Mohan, appearing for one of the petitioners, Geetha Misra filed an application demonstrating the impact of water logging caused during rains.

While pointing out that the court on June 18, 2019 had issued directions for removal of the encroachments of storm-water drains by conducting survey, Mr. Mohan also referred to court's

June 2021 order, in which the court had taken note that the government and the BBMP had not complied with the 2019 order on removal of encroachments of storm-water drains.

It was alleged in the application that encroachments of storm-water drains is one of the main causes for flooding of low laying areas due to rains.



THE HINDU

## BBMP announces ₹10,000 compensation for 1,064 houses

Residents, however, allege that the rain damage survey was not carried out diligently on the ground

STAFF REPORTER  
BENGALURU

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagar Palike (BBMP) has announced ₹10,000 compensation each for the families whose homes were flooded in the recent rain. The civic body has identified 1,064 houses that were flooded in Mahadevapura zone and announced the compensation.

### Survey conducted

BBMP officials said: "We have surveyed the flooded area in our zone and found that 1,064 houses have been

**The compensation given by the government is very low. What can we do with ₹10,000 when we have lost materials of more than ₹1 lakh. Our furniture, television sets, and fridge have been damaged in the rain and flooding.**

PREMA KUMARI  
A resident of Bellandur

flooded, and they have also lost a lot of goods and groceries. We will be releasing

the compensation fund soon," the official added.

In May this year, the BBMP released compensation to 3,311 households in Bengaluru city that were flooded and suffered damages during the rains that month.

A compensation of ₹25,000 was announced by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, who also holds charge of the city.

That was the first time the civic body of Bengaluru paid compensation for flooding of homes due to rains.

Meanwhile, many residents have alleged that the rain damage survey was not carried out diligently on the ground and many households that were flooded and incurred losses were not covered.

Prema Kumari, a resident of Bellandur, said, "The compensation given by the government is very low. What can we do with ₹10,000 when we have lost materials of more than ₹1 lakh. Our furniture, television sets, and fridge have been damaged in the rain and flooding."

Shankar Prasad, another resident of Bellandur, said, "We have lost most of our belongings in this rain, including our two-wheelers and cars, but at least BBMP should give compensation for half of the damage caused as the ₹10,000 relief announced by BBMP will not cover the loss."

### Photo and geotag

The BBMP ward engineers were asked to carry out a survey of the rain damages in their wards and submit a report of each household with a photo and geotag.

THE HINDU

## No discrimination in removal of construction on rajakaluve: CM

'Eviction notices have been served on the violators'

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said there was no question of any discrimination in the removal of encroachments on rajakaluve in the city.

Talking to reporters at the Secretariat here on Monday, he said eviction notices had been served on those who had built buildings or houses on rajakaluve. Experts have attributed the recent flooding in the city to illegal

constructions on rajakaluve that block the flow of water into drains.

While the government blamed the erstwhile Congress government for allowing the illegal constructions, Congress leaders blamed the BJP for neglect of infrastructure.

Mr. Bommai said the recent floods affected not only IT/BT companies and workers, but also common people. Houses in low-lying areas too faced problems.

The work on removal of all encroachments would be completed, he said.

Replying to a question, Mr. Bommai said the government has sought directions from courts in many cases. The courts would be apprised of the situation. Several directions have been issued by courts in connection with flood-related cases in the past. This time, the encroachments would be removed on a big scale, the Chief Minister said.



# In a first, BBMP to distribute 'smart cane' for visually challenged

DARSHAN DEVAIAH B.P.  
BENGALURU

For the first time, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) will distribute 'Smart Cane', a handle-like device that can be attached to the white cane normally used by the visually challenged under a welfare scheme.

The welfare department of the civic body will provide smart cane to 943 visually impaired beneficiaries in the city.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, a senior BBMP official said, "This is the first time such an initiative has been taken up by the welfare department to provide a smart cane to visually impaired persons in the city free of cost. This unique scheme will help blind people who are from poor backgrounds who cannot afford such smart canes."

According to officials, the smart cane will be foldable and is capable of detecting obstacles in front. "The detection range of the sensor is up to 3 metres and users have the option to reduce the detection range with help of a switch. Users also can adjust the angle sensor according to the height of the user," officials explained.

The smart canes will be provided to beneficiaries who have registered for this scheme at the welfare department. The officials said that the smart cane is capable of conveying information about the obstacle distance with at least three different patterns of vibrations that vary with distance. "The smart cane is built in a rechargeable battery with 8 hours of use on a single charge. The sensor is detachable and it can be removed from the cane. The manufacturer of the product will give a 36 months warranty," the official added.

## Schemes to restart

After the COVID-19 pandemic hit in

## Technical specifications

- Foldable cane
- Capable of detecting obstacles in front
- Detection range of the sensor is up to 3 metres  
Users have the option to reduce the detection range with the help of a switch
- Users also can adjust the angle sensor according to their height
- Capable of conveying information about the distance of the obstacle with at least three different patterns of vibrations
- Built-in rechargeable battery with 8 hours of use on a single charge
- Sensor is detachable and can be removed from the cane



2020, most welfare schemes were on hold and the funds were all diverted for COVID-19 management. Now, the BBMP is clearing such welfare schemes by approving files, officials informed.

"No welfare scheme has been implemented since 2020. The schemes were all put on the backburner on account of the pandemic. Available funds were all diverted for COVID-19 management," BBMP's senior officials said.

Barring a few schemes, such as reimbursement of school fees of children of pourakarmikas and 'Onti Maney', others such as wheelchairs for the disabled, distribution of sewing machines, laptops and tabs, and self-help programmes for women and transgender persons have not been implemented. The officials added that such welfare schemes will be implemented soon.

Apart from the smart cane, the BBMP will also provide laptops to blind people under welfare schemes.

THE HINDU

# 1,433 transformers on footpaths yet to be relocated: Bescom

4,351 have been either shifted or replaced with spun pole structure, court told

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

The Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd (Bescom) on Monday told the High Court of Karnataka that so far 4,351 out of a total of 5,784 transformers on footpaths in Bengaluru city have been either shifted to different locations or replaced with spun pole structure.

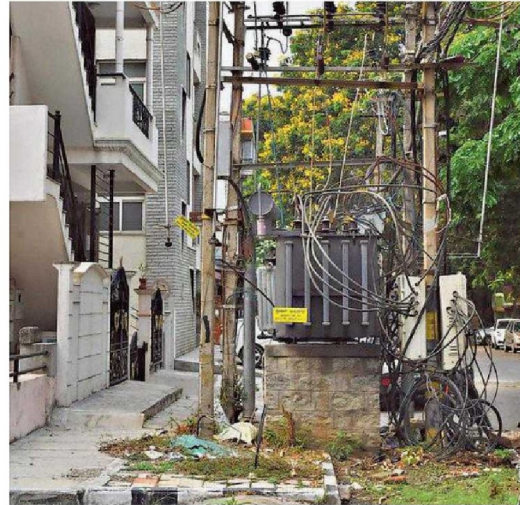
A submission in this regard has been made before a division bench comprising acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice S. Vishwajith Shetty during the hearing of a PIL petition, which had complained about danger posed to the public due to installation of transformers on footpaths.

The petition was filed by G.B. Athri, a retired Wing Commander of the Air Force.

**By Sept. 2023**

Meanwhile, the Bescom also told the bench that the remaining 1,433 transformers would be relocated or replaced with spun pole structure by September 2023 as the work order for this purpose has already been issued.

The transformers on the footpaths were identified by a coordination committee comprising officials of the Bescom and the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike on the direction issued by the court two years ago.



A file photo of a transformer on a footpath in Bengaluru.

THE HINDU

# Lokayukta officials trap Joint Commissioner of BBMP

His PA was caught red-handed with ₹4 lakh taken as bribe

**SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT**  
BENGALURU

Days after getting back its power to probe corruption cases, the Lokayukta sleuths on Monday cracked the whip and raided the office of the Joint Commissioner of the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and allegedly trapped his PA red-handed with cash amounting to ₹4 lakh.

Based on a complaint from S.M. Manjunath that S.M. Srinivas, Joint Com-

■ The accused had demanded ₹12 lakh for official work of amalgamation of khata and were caught while accepting an advance amount.

missioner of BBMP, west zone, was demanding bribe for an official favour of khata transfer, a team of officials led by Ashok K.V., Superintendent of Police, and Deputy Superintendent of

Police Antony Raj laid the trap and caught Umesh, a First Division Assistant, as soon as he received the cash on behalf of his boss.

The Lokayukta officials questioned the duo for over an hour before they were taken into custody. According to an official release, the accused had demanded ₹12 lakh for official work of amalgamation of khata and were caught while accepting an advance amount of ₹4 lakh at their office in Malleswaram.



# Tech parks, luxe villas among drain encroachers

Some have grabbed land in 13 places; BBMP to issue eviction notices

BENGALURU, DHNS

Marquee tech parks and plush gated communities are among encroachers of stormwater drains in Bengaluru's IT hub, which last week faced some of the worst waterlogging in recent memory.

Municipal authorities, accused of going soft on the rich and powerful, have started clearing encroachments in a big way after Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai ordered a crackdown on the root cause of the floods. Experts say silt accumulation and drain en-



A bulldozer clears an encroachment at AECS Layout.

What next?

If the encroached property is inhabited, the tahsildar can issue a notice under Section 104 (summary eviction of person unauthorisedly occupying land) of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act

## The violators

- Bagmane Tech Park
- Purva Paradise
- Rainbow Drive
- Wipro
- RMZ Ecospace
- Gopalan Enterprises
- Divya School
- Columbia Asia Hospital
- New Horizon College
- Adarsh Developers
- Epsilon
- DivyaSree 77
- Prestige Group
- Salarpuria Group
- Nalapad

Source: BBMP

## Will go after all usurpers: CM

With bulldozers roaring to clear drain encroachments, CM Basavaraj Bommai insisted that his government would go after all usurpers, including IT companies. Revenue Minister R Ashoka said 40 IT/BT companies have built offices on drains. "They talk too much. We're issuing directions to clear them as well," he said.

Details on Page 2

croachment are the biggest cause of flooding.

The encroachers include Bagmane Tech Park, Purva Paradise, Rainbow Drive, Wipro, RMZ Ecospace, Gopalan Enterprises, Divya School, Columbia Asia Hospital, New

Horizon College, Adarsh Developers, Epsilon, DivyaSree 77, Prestige Group, Salarpuria Group and Nalapad, according to a BBMP document.

These entities have encroached upon 10-50 guntas at places like Mahadevapura,

Junnasandra, Doddakannahalli, Hoodi, Bellandur, Sonnehalli, R Narayanapura, Ramagon-danahalli, Kadubeesanahalli, Devarabesanahalli, Yemalur, Marathahalli and Challaghatta, BBMP officials said.

► Tech parks, Page 5

## ORRCA seeks separate zone

The Outer Ring Road Companies Association (ORRCA) urged the government to declare 17 km of ORR stretch as a separate municipal zone.

Details on Page 2

# SWD encroachment: Act fast, HC tells Palike

To submit up-to-date status report by October 12

BENGALURU, DHNS

The High Court of Karnataka on Monday directed the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to take immediate steps for removal of all encroachments on storm water drains (SWD-Rajakaluve) and to submit an up-to-date status report.

"The City of Bengaluru has faced unprecedented floods and parts of the city were inundated with rain water. The aforesaid situation has arisen as the BBMP has failed to perform its statutory duties of removal of encroachments," a bench said.

The bench had granted six weeks time on June 18, 2019 to conduct a survey of SWDs as well as to remove encroachments. The petitioner stated that even after the lapse of 15 months, the BBMP has done nothing to clear the encroachments.

"It is brought to our notice that the aforesaid directions have not been complied with. Therefore, we direct the authorities of the State Government as well as authorities of BBMP to take immediate steps for removal of all encroachments on Storm Water Drains and to submit up-to-date status report and shall also take steps to ensure prevention of dumping of all kind of wastes and other pollutants into Storm Water Drains in this regard on or before next date of hearing," the bench said. The matter has been adjourned to October 12.

The bench directed executive engineer of BBMP (Bommanahalli Division) to remain present on the next date of hearing for non-com-



Coracles were pressed into service after a residential layout was inundated following heavy rains in Bengaluru recently.

DH FILE PHOTO

pliance of directions in regard to Puttenahalli lake. It was informed that the executive engineer has not submitted the compliance report despite the order dated July 20, 2022. The court was told that neither any action taken for removal of encroachment on Puttenahalli lake nor compliance report was submitted.

Meanwhile, the designated officers submitted compliance affidavit on steps taken to remove encroachments on Subramanyapura and Begur lakes. It was submitted that 81 private encroachments were found on Begur lake, of which

33 encroachments have been removed.

In respect of Subramanyapura Lake, it was informed that 1.17 acre of land is being utilised for a link road and an area of 3.39 acres of land is encroached upon by slum dwellers. The land was notified as a slum as per an order on March 18, 2005. "Neither encroachments removed nor anyone has appeared on behalf of the slum board. It is therefore directed that the Executive Engineer of Slum Board shall appear before this court on 12.10.2022," the bench said.

## Won't discriminate while clearing drain blockages: CM

40 IT/BT companies have built offices on drains: Ashoka

BENGALURU, DHNS

With bulldozers roaring to clear stormwater drain encroachments, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai insisted on Monday that his government would go after all usurpers, including IT companies.

"There's no question of discrimination," Bommai told reporters. "This time, encroachments will be cleared in a big way," he said.

"Those who have built structures on rajakaluves, those blocking the flow of water, layouts where homes have been built on drains or by reducing the width of the drains... any blockage should be cleared. This is the clear instruction we have given," Bommai said.

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI, CHIEF MINISTER

"Those who have built structures on rajakaluves, those blocking the flow of water, layouts where homes have been built on drains or by reducing the width of the drains... any blockage should be cleared. This is the clear instruction we have given."

When asked about encroachments by IT firms, he said: "When floods happen, everyone faces trouble - IT companies, commoners, motorists and those in low-lying areas. To prevent this, we need to clear encroachments."

Bommai said his government would "very seriously" inform the court on the encroachments. "Several cases have already gone to court and there are directions. The court is already hearing a case pertaining to floods. It also has the intention that (encroachment clearance) should be done seriously," he said.

Revenue Minister R Ashoka said 40 IT/BT companies have

built offices on drains. "They talk too much. We're issuing directions to clear them as well. Except Infosys, which said good things like Bengaluru is ours and should be saved, others spoke negatively. Once we demolish, we'll know who has done what," he said, adding that encroachment clearance will be a continuous process.

Ashoka said previous governments cleared encroachments only during rains and legislature sessions. "The commissioner has been asked not to do that. Structures will be demolished without discrimination because even a single encroachment affects lakhs of people," the minister said.



## Tech parks, luxe villas among drain encroachers

Tech parks, from Page 1

Some of them have encroached on the stormwater drain in 13 different survey numbers, officials said.

Among the most abiding images of the flooding was the waterlogged Outer Ring Road (ORR) near Ecospace. Some of the luxury villas that were marooned in the inundation were built on lands that were once stormwater drains. The villas cost up to Rs 10 crore.

The BBMP has promised to rebuild stormwater drains on recovered properties that are vacant or where temporary structures have come up. "If the property is inhabited, the tahsildar has been authorised to issue a notice under Section 104 (summary eviction of person unauthorisedly occupying land) of the Karnataka Land Revenue Act," a senior BBMP officer in charge of the encroachment eviction drive said.

Multiple sources insisted that the BBMP had so far gone soft on big builders because of confusion about the drain sketch, which is based on the 1904 maps. "There was also a lack of clarity because some of the builders and tech parks had received land from the Karnataka Industrial Areas Development Board (KIADB) along the drains," an official said.

A spokesperson for Wipro said the company has not received any notice from the BBMP. "Wipro abides by the laws of every jurisdiction where it does business and adheres to the highest standards of integrity. All Wipro buildings are as per pre-approved plans," the spokesperson said.

Bommai is learnt to have given clear instructions to the BBMP for removing all encroachments that are blocking the drains. The internal directions were given when engineers brought to Bommai's notice the names of big builders.

### 15 encroachments cleared

On Monday, the BBMP cleared encroachments from 15 places in its Mahadevapura zone, which was the worst hit by the flooding. Almost all zonal officers were on the ground, supervising the eviction drive. Some of the places where the encroachments were cleared were AECS Layout (three buildings, four compound walls), Challaghatta (vacant land, compound walls of a school and an apartment) and Basavanapura in KR Puram (a covered slab built by Cambridge College).

## Declare ORR as new municipal zone: ORRCA

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Days after the devastating floods in Bengaluru's IT hub, the Outer Ring Road Companies Association (ORRCA) has urged the government to declare the 17 km of ORR stretch and adjoining areas as separate municipal zone.

Taking a cue from the Electronics City Industrial Authority (ELCITA), the association proposed a governance framework for new municipal zone, involving public private partnership.

"The development of Outer Ring Road has been neglected over several years with no clear roadmap and execution strategy to revive the broken infrastructure on this stretch. The ORRCA, therefore, proposes that the 17-km stretch be declared a separate municipal zone," the letter, released to press after members met senior ministers last week, states.

The new municipal zone, the letter states, should have a clear five-year plan to transform the ORR stretch into a world technology corridor. "A committee of experts should be convened to develop a 2027 plan for the new municipal zone. Special ex-gratia grant and funding should be provided for developments in the corridor."

Some immediate actions suggested by ORRCA are detailed timeline of ORR metro project, completion of 19 arterial roads approved in 2019, traffic management during ORR Metro construction and consistent maintenance of ORR main carriageway & service roads.

The ORRCA has also demanded the approval of a high-density corridor project that was scrapped due to irregularities in tender process, development of arterial roads such as Hosur Road, Sarjapur, Old airport Road and ITPL, the comprehensive execution plan for management of lakes and rajakaluves, zero tolerance for any encroachments that disturb ecological balance and disrupts traffic.

Dr CN Ashwath Narayan, Minister for IT/BT, said the government will examine the proposal.

# At least 400 cases of illegal constructions pending with Lokayukta

**Staff crunch hitting inspection of sites, says BBMP**

**SNEHA RAMESH**  
BENGALURU, DHNS

Even as the Karnataka High Court has directed the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to take action against illegal constructions put up in violation of the BBMP bye-laws, illegal constructions continue to thrive in the city.

Thanks to BBMP's inaction against violators, over 400 cases have been pending with the Karnataka Lokayukta.

Officials say each of these cases clearly reveal the deficiency in the system.

"While the number of pending cases is 400, there are more which we have disposed of. Though there are 400 cases, each of them has to be looked into and we are sure more will surface in the process of investigation," said Justice B S Patil, Karnataka Lokayukta.

He explained that any case against officers are being probed to get more information and this has helped unearth many more cases.

"For example, when we get a complaint that a BBMP engineer is allowing the construction of an illegal building, we investigate how many buildings under the particular engineer's jurisdiction have violated the norms," Patil said.

He also expressed concerns over rampant illegal constructions in the city. "The engineers have many opportunities to inspect the buildings regularly and take action right from the time the foundation is laid. Allowing the construction of illegal buildings and taking action many years later does not work," Patil said.

However, sources from Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (B-

BMP), said staff crunch was a major problem. Asked why the people ended up knocking the doors of the Lokayukta when the BBMP had the powers to act against illegal construction, officials hinted at corrupt practices among engineers.

## Complaints ignored

"There are hundreds of under-construction buildings in the jurisdiction of a single engineer and this makes it impossible to inspect each them regularly. However, we have also seen instances where many of them tend to ignore such complaints owing to rampant corruption from top brass to the bottom rung officials," an official from the

Town Planning Department of BBMP revealed.

BBMP Town Planning Joint Director B Manjesh, while refuting such allegations, said that the chief commissioner, in a recent order, had fixed the responsibility of inspecting such buildings to engineers from the Town Planning Department.

"Earlier, the ward AEEs and AEs had to monitor constructions and this had increased their burden. Now, according to a recent order, engineers from the Town Planning department will be responsible to inspect the buildings right from the sanction of plan to issue of the Occupancy Certificate (OC). This move has now proved to be effective," he said.

## Survey taken up

Following the High Court orders, the BBMP has taken up a stage-by-stage survey of the buildings in the city. Shockingly, over 85% of the buildings constructed in Bengaluru, between January 2020 and June 2021, have violated the building bye-laws.

Surprisingly, the core zones of the city have reported 100% violations with all the buildings surveyed in the South and West zones violating the bye-laws.

According to the engineers, most of the violations were noticed in low-rise residential buildings. However, so far no punitive action has been taken against the violators.

# 3,194 transformers replaced with spun poles on B'luru footpaths, Bescom informs HC

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd (Bescom) on Monday informed the high court that 3,194 transformers have been removed from the footpath and replaced with spun pole structures. It was also submitted that tenders have been called for removing/replacing the remaining Distribution Transformer Centres (DTCs) from the footpaths.

The court is hearing a PIL filed by retired Wing Commander G B Athri in 2020. The petitioner has contended that the electrical installations such as DTCs on footpaths pose grave danger to human lives. It was submitted that the devices on footpath also amount to human rights violations.

In an affidavit, the Bescom stated that pursuant to the direction of the court, a joint inspection along with the BBMP

was conducted. The report has stated that 5,784 DTCs are required to be shifted from the footpaths or replaced with spun pole structures. The work is being carried out in two phases. The first phase was taken up in September 2017 and till September, 2019, out of 3,196 DTCs, 3,194 were replaced with spun pole structures and two were shifted to convenient places.

It was further stated that in the second phase, 2,588 DTCs

were taken up for shifting/replacement. As of August 2022, a total number of 1155 DTCs were replaced with spun pole structures. It was stated that the replacement of 1,433 DTCs is scheduled to be completed by September 2023.

A division bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe adjourned the hearing to January 9, 2023, and directed the Bescom to file further status report.





# Palike seeks post facto nod to extend delimitation deadline

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Two months after submitting the delimitation report of 243 wards to the state government, the committee headed by BBMP's Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath has requested post facto approval to extend the deadline till June this year.

The extension of six months from February was sought as the committee had submitted the report to the government in June, four months after its term expired.

The post facto approval was sought to anticipate objections over the legality of the delimitation report, which had drawn boundaries for the 243 wards from the previous 198 wards. The state government has already notified the 243 wards even though the parameters fixed to draw the boundaries have been challenged in the high court after three Assembly constituencies lost one ward each.

In a letter to the Urban Development department dated August 16, Tushar Giri Nath,



BBMP Chief Commissioner and head of the committee, sought an extension of the deadline by six months. The letter states that the government had initially given six months to complete the delimitation report. It was extended by another six months, citing the Covid-19 pandemic.

As the report was not submitted yet, the government gave the third extension of two months at the request of the delimitation committee. No extension, however, was sought although the BBMP submitted the report to the government only on June 9. The confusion of this kind could be due to the change of the BBMP chief commissioner in May this year.





## **BBMP flags off 'Wonder on Wheels' project**

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** To provide creative learning opportunities to the marginalised, the BBMP, in association with the Freethinking Foundation, has launched “Wonder on Wheels” project. Buses have been remodeled and redesigned to include a detachable amphitheatre, musical areas, art and craft, musical instruments, library books, and audio-visual systems. They will move around the city to attract children from marginalised community.



## **BBMP joint commissioner among two held for bribery**

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** In their first action after the abolition of the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), the Lokayukta police on Monday arrested BBMP joint commissioner (West) S M Srinivas and his first division assistant Umesh after they were allegedly caught red-handed accepting bribe.

According to Lokayukta police, the officials had demanded a bribe of Rs 12 lakh from the complainant Manjunath for amalgamation of khata. The amount was fixed at Rs 4 lakh after negotiations.

“We caught the second accused Umesh when he was collecting the bribe on Monday,” a press release issued by Lokayukta police said. The officials have been taken into custody.

The raid was led by Anthony Raj, DySP, on instructions from Ashok K V, SP Lokayukta Police.

The High Court had scrapped the formation of ACB a month ago. Later, the Lokayukta police opened their doors to complaints related to corruption and disproportionate assets.

## 'Didn't seek Pampa Mahakavi Rd name change'

JAGADISH ANGADI  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**he Kannada Sahitya Parishat on Monday said it had not requested a change in the name of a road now named after a revered Kannada poet.

Reports over the weekend said the Parishat had asked the BBMP to change the name of Pampa Mahakavi Road to Kannada Sahitya Parishat Road. The Karnataka Jain Association, besides a host of writers, had opposed the idea.

"We plan to beautify the road to create a Kannada atmosphere, but we have no proposal to rename the road," Mahesh Joshi, president of the Parishat, told *DH*. The plan is to display and sell Kannada books, play Kannada music and put up posters about literary stalwarts, he said.

Reports say the Parishat had re-

quested the BBMP to rename the road on which it is located. Joshi blamed "vested interests" for the controversy.

Connecting Basavanagudi and Chamarajpet, the road is named after Pampa, the 10th century Kannada poet who wrote Vikramarjuna Vijaya and Adi Purana, regarded as classics, and studied closely by students of Kannada literature.

When Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai visited the Parishat after its renovation recently, Joshi had handed him a memorandum.

"Some people who had gathered there



**Kannada Sahitya  
Parishat chief  
Mahesh Joshi**

wanted the stretch in front of the Parishat renamed, and suggested names like Kannada Sahitya Parishat Road, Pampa and Kannada Sahitya Parishat Road and Nadoja Pampa Mahakavi Kannada Sahitya Parishat Road. We can't stop people from making suggestions," Joshi said.

The Parishat's executive committee's approval is mandatory for any such request, Joshi said, deflecting criticism that he had, in an individual capacity, pitched for a name change.

His letter to the BBMP dated June 3 seeks measures to develop the stretch to create a "Kannada atmosphere".

Not everyone is convinced about Joshi's defence. "He is trying to cover it all up. If there was no such proposal, how did the controversy erupt?" said writer R G Halli Nagaraja.

► **Pampa Mahakavi Rd, Page 8**

## Didn't seek Pampa Mahakavi...

**Pampa Mahakavi from  
Page 1**

Well-known academics such as Baraguru Ramachandrappa, Rajendra Chenni and S G Siddaramaiah told *DH* Joshi should categorically state his intentions.

"How did the matter crop up now? Pampa is Kannada's Adikavi (first poet). The Sahitya Parishat is the first organisation set up to promote the cause of Kannada. You can't separate the two," Ramachandrappa told *DH*.

Writer Siddaramaiah said Joshi might go back on his word that the road won't be renamed. "He said he wouldn't amend the Parishat bylaws, but went ahead and did it. We oppose any move to rename the road," he said.



# Covid cases, deaths on the decline in state

NAVYA P K  
BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**he number of reported Covid cases in Karnataka has been declining over the past month, after a spike since June.

The state now has around 4,000 active cases. Whereas, until the third week of August, active cases hovered around 10,000. The TPR or test positivity rate - that is, the percentage of Covid-positive persons among those tested - has also declined. For example, on July 30, the weekly TPR was 6.05%.

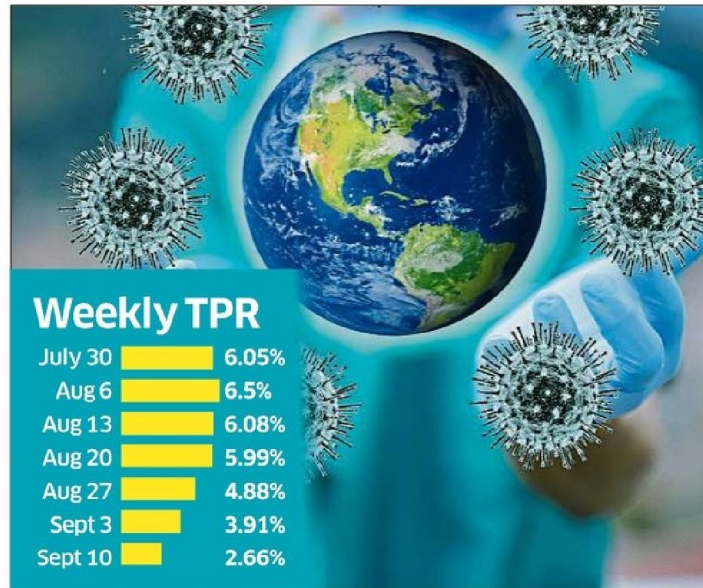
It declined through August, to around 4%. As on September 10, the weekly TPR had declined even further to 2.66%.

## Tests reducing

However, the number of tests has been reducing too. While the weekly test numbers were close to 2 lakh as of July end, it's now around 1.4 lakh per week.

Dr MK Sudarshan, chairperson of the state Covid Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), says testing numbers have declined since many who get mild infections are refusing to get tested.

"Since people are not following Covid-appropriate behaviour or getting tested, the Omicron variant is circulating widely. But because of immunity due to past infection or



## 'Continue Covid-appropriate behaviour'

Though the test numbers are lower now, the TPR indicates that cases are reducing, says Sudarshan.

"As per policy, only symptomatic people are getting tested. So, the number of infections is definitely reducing. If asymptomatic people also get tested, the TPR may be even lower."

Currently, only a small section of asymptomatic people are getting tested

- those in the high-risk groups and also primary contacts of infected people.

Covid deaths have also been decreasing, says Sudarshan. "The number of deaths had declined between March and May, but increased from June. Now it has reduced again."

He adds that the public should follow Covid-appropriate behaviour, until the pandemic is declared to be over.

## 317 new cases, five deaths

**BENGALURU, DHNS:** Karnataka recorded 317 new cases of Covid-19 on Monday, which takes its active caseload to 3,945, according to the state government's official bulletin.

The day's test positivity rate stood at 3.39%. Of the 317 cases, 218 were recorded in Bengaluru. Five deaths were reported on the day — three from Mysuru, and one each from Bengaluru and Udupi. With this, total Covid deaths in the state have reached 40,222.

A total of 9,325 tests were conducted on the day. As many as 638 people were discharged, taking the total recoveries to 40,14,665.

vaccination, most people are getting only mild infections and are recovering through self-medication," he says.

"They are not getting tested. We are getting the current test numbers after a lot of coaxing and persuasion."



# IT cos, residential enclaves among 15 on SWDs: BBMP

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

**Bengaluru:** BBMP has identified encroachments of SWDs by 15 well-known entities. Most are in Mahadevapura area. The encroachments were identified by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) about a fortnight before last week's rain havoc in the tech corridor of Mahadevapura-Whitefield.

These structures are built on more than 104 survey numbers. CM Basavaraj Bommai on Monday said that the drive against encroachments in the city will not stop until the last encroachment is cleared and no encroacher, including IT/BT firms, will be spared.

"Eviction notices have been served on those who have built commercial buildings or houses on stormwater drains (SWDs). We will clear all of them. There is no question of

## FIRMS WON'T BE SPARED: BOMMAI

**As per BBMP's Aug 17 letter, list of encroachers and area:**

Bagamane Tech Park, Purva Paradise and others in **Mahadevapura**; RBD in **Junnasandra, Halanayakanahalli, Doddakannahalli**; Wipro in **Doddakannahalli**; EcoSpace in **Bellandur**; Gopalan in **Bellandur**; Gopalan in **Hoodi**; Diya School & others in **Hoodi**; Gopalan & others in **Hoodi, Sonnehalli**; Columbia Asia Hospital in **Ramagondanahalli**; Adarsha in **R Narayanapura**; New Horizon College in **Kadubeesanahalli**; Adarsha Retreat in **Devarabeesanahalli**; Epsilon & DivyaShree in **ABK & Yemalur**; Prestige, Salarpuria, Adarsha in **Marathahalli** and **Kariyamma Aghara**; Nalapad in **Challaghatta**

**"We will clear all encroachments. There is no question of sparing anyone. Even IT/BT companies will not be spared —CM Bommai**



► **BBMP awaits tahsildar's order to raze 13 villas, P 2**

sparing anyone," the CM said.

Revenue minister R Ashoka elsewhere said that around 40 IT companies have encroached SWDs and lakebeds and the government has taken a firm decision to clear all

► **ORR association demands separate municipal zone, P 2**

encroachments. "The CM has given strict instructions to evict all encroachments and we are doing it. The drive will go on non-stop," he added.

► **'Walls being razed', P 2**



# Walls, gates & roads being razed: BBMP

► Continued from page 1

**B**BBMP chief commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said walls, gates, roads and security rooms of encroachers are being demolished. BBMP will raze bigger buildings after the jurisdictional tahsildar issues notices in accordance with prescribed legal procedures.

According to the list prepared by the assistant executive engineer of Mahadevpura zone on directions from the zonal commissioner, encroachments have been attributed to over 15 entities including Bagmane Tech Park, Purva Paradise, RBD, Wipro, Ecospace, Gopalan, Diya School, Epsilon, DivyaShree, Prestige, Salarpuria, New Horizon College, Adarsha Retreat, Columbia Asia Hospital and Nalapad among others. These properties are located in Mahadevpura, Junnasandra, Halanayakanahalli, Doddakannahalli, Bellandur, Hoodi, R Narayanapura, Ramagondanahalli, Devarabisanahalli, Yemlur, Marathalli, Kariyamma Aagrahara, Kadubeesanahalli and Challaighatta.

The list accessed by **TOI** shows that the encroachment in Ecospace, Bellandur is spread over at least 16 survey numbers, while the encroachment by Wipro at Doddakannahalli is found in 5 survey numbers and New Horizon College in Kadubeesanahalli in 8 survey numbers. Epsilon, Divyashree, Prestige and Salarpuria have

## Common people too affected: CM

**T**he CM said the recent floods affected not just IT/BT companies and its workers but also the common people. Houses in low-lying areas too have faced problems.

Asked if the government will file a caveat in the court anticipating the encroachers going to court against the eviction drive, the CM said the government has sought directions from courts with flood related cases in the past.

been found to have encroached drains based on village maps. Adarsha Retreat in Devarabisanahalli is found encroaching SWDs in 8 survey numbers.

## Encroachment cleared in 15 places

The BBMP on Monday razed 15 encroachments. At AECS Layout lying between Chinnappanahalli and Munnekolalu lake, a compound wall of Sai Eye Hospital and three buildings located opposite a supermarket and four compound walls were razed.

At Challaighatta, 7 compound walls belonging to Gopalan School, Mahavir Apartment complex and Spicey Garden others were pulled down. The palike has also cleared a slab constructed on SWD inside Cambridge College premises.



# ORR association seeks separate municipal zone, five-year plan

**Demands Steps For Upkeep Of Lakes & Drains**

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## ORRCA'S KEY ASKS

- The new municipal zone should come up with a five-year plan to transform the IT corridor into a world-class one
- Come up with a governance framework akin to a PPP model to ensure accountability and oversight by IT/BT ministry
- Detailed timelines for completion of ORR Metro project
- Completion of 19 arterial roads approved in 2019 to decongest ORR

**Bengaluru:** After the infrastructure woes in the IT corridor battered the image of Brand Bengaluru, the Outer Ring Road Companies Association (ORRCA) members met IT minister CN Ashwath Narayan on Monday with a proposal to declare the 17-km stretch a separate municipal zone. It's the second time in less than a week that ORRCA members have raised their grievances with the Karnataka government and come out with an action plan to decongest the IT corridor that's home to the arms of many Fortune 500 companies and Indian unicorns.

The proposal says that a committee of experts should be convened to develop a 2027 plan and to oversee the creation of a separate municipal zone. The new zone, it says, should have a clear five-year plan to transform the stretch into a world-class technology corridor.

It has also suggested that a governance framework of a new municipal zone should comprise a public-private partnership (PPP) to ensure accountability and have an oversight by the IT/BT ministry. It has also sought a special ex gratia grant and funding to develop the tech corridor.

The ORRCA members had earlier written to chief minister Basavaraj Bommai on how the flooding had resulted in a loss of Rs 225 crore on August 30. That number would have risen significantly after the subsequent days of heavy rains.

ORRCA has also suggested a few long-term solutions with medium-term infrastructure blueprint within a timeframe of 2-3 years, including executing the high-density corridor project and developing arterial roads like Hosur Road, ITPL and Silk Board, Sarjapur and KR Puram for smooth traffic flow across the city.

It has also asked for a comprehensive plan for management of lakes and rajakaluves. ORRCA has advocated a zero-tolerance policy for encroachment and those that disrupt traffic, and a comprehensive plan to improve civic amenities to support the needs of the corridor.

As immediate priorities for the next two months, the association has suggested restoration of the major IT

park Ecospace and the impacted rajakaluves. It has asked the government for detailed timelines of the ORR Metro project, and sought that ORRCA be involved as part of the coordination group chaired by the additional chief secretary. It has also sought the deployment of additional traffic personnel on ORR and the opening of the Whitefield Metro station apart from consistent maintenance of the ORR main carriage and service roads.

# BBMP awaits tahsildar's order to demolish 13 villas

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**Bengaluru:** A huge team of BBMP officials with machinery were on Monday found waiting for the KR Puram tahsildar's official order to take up demolition of 13 villas, which are allegedly encroaching two rajakaluves at Rainbow Drive Layout, off Sarjapur Road.

Special commissioner KV Trilok Chandra confirmed that he had been expecting the order to be dispatched any time since Monday morning, but did not receive it till the end of the day despite several enquiries made with the tahsildar, Ajit Kumar Rai.

## RAINBOW DRIVE LAYOUT UNDER LENS

In the last five months alone, the layout spread over 35 acres has witnessed four instances of flooding, forcing residents to employ tractors and boats to commute. In 2014, the then KR Puram tahsildar had ordered the demolition of nearly 40 houses sitting on two stormwater drains (SWDs) that scythe through this layout — one leading to Halanayakanahalli Lake and



**FLOODING ZONE:** Rainbow Drive Layout on Sarjapur Road, spread over 35 acres, witnessed four instances of flooding in the last five months

another to Junnasandra Lake. However, the residents went to court and secured a stay order. The high court later directed the revenue department to issue notices and initiate action, if residents failed to provide evidence that their structures weren't encroachments. However, revenue authorities failed to act.

Six years later, the revenue department again carried out the survey and marked 35 houses as encroachments. A few days ago, the tahsildar started issuing notices to property owners to vacate their homes. Trilok Chandra said, "I had learnt that the order would be passed on Monday. I was waiting to receive the same to commence demolition, but it was not dispatched."

The Rainbow Drive Layout houses 390 homes. Layout residents argue that their houses have not been built on drains and no rajakaluve passes through their locality. They claim revenue maps show that these are not SWDs but irrigation channels.

Anand Natarajan, president of the layout's residents' association, said he was unaware of the demolition order and notices issued to owners. He maintained that multiple authorities have confirmed that there are no stormwater drains passing through the layout. N Rajendra, another resident, said that about 13-20 houses were served notices by the tahsildar and many are fearing their properties will be demolished any day.



# Flood water recedes, but slum-dwellers face woes aplenty

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**Bengaluru:** Every time clouds gather over Bengaluru skies, Naseema, a slum-dweller in Munnekolala near Marathahalli, is gripped by anxiety. An unprecedented downpour on the night of September 4 had washed away almost all of her family's belongings.

Not just Naseema, around 1,000 families staying in shanties made up of tarpaulin,



bamboo sticks, and cardboard in and around the Munnekolala slum, are still surrounded by heaps of plastic materials, beer bottles and black slush. Most of them hail from West Bengal and work as pourakarmikas, segregating garbage for a living. Over 300 children haven't gone back to

schools since their textbooks were washed away in the waist-deep water that entered their homes.

"It was a nightmare. Water roared in from all sides on late Sunday night. We rushed out, dragging our half-asleep children and whatever belongings we could grab. We just wanted to get out alive with our family. We've lost almost everything, including household goods, vessels, rice and other provisions," a tearful Naseema said.

Most of the slum-dwellers have no means to rebuild their lives and are now staring at an uncertain future. They pay an average of Rs 8,00-Rs 2,000 as monthly rent for their shanties depending on size. The families are now somehow managing with relief assistance provided by NGOs but say they are yet to receive help from either BBMP or the state government.

Abubakar Dafadar, a slum-dweller, said: "We earn Rs 10,000 salary a month for

## REHABILITATION PROPOSAL

On Monday, Karnataka State Commission for Safai Karamcharis chairman M Shivanna visited wards 81 and 149 in Mahadevapura. "Pourakarmikas are currently living in a private land in an unhygienic condition. I will submit a report to the state government to permanently rehabilitate them in a government-identified land," he said. BBMP chief commissioner Tushar Giri Nath was unavailable for comments.

## NGOS DISTRIBUTE EDU, RATION KITS

Many organisations have extended support to the affected. Appanna of All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU) said: "We initiated a fund-raiser for relief efforts in Munnekolala, BEML Layout - Doddanekkundi, Kanakanagar, Devarabeesanahalli, Mahadevapura and also in an area in Dasarahalli, and were able to raise about Rs 3 lakh for distribution of ration and education kits. Over 500 education kits comprising schoolbag, notebooks, pens, pencils, and sketch-pen sets were distributed. We've also distributed about 200 ration kits."

Another NGO, Thanal Serve India, is also distributing food packets and helping with education of the kids. Mitti Cafe, an NGO that runs a chain of institutional cafés, managed by young adults with physical and intellectual disabilities has been serving food to many slum-dwellers across the city. "We've distributed more than 30,000 food packets in the last five days to slums in Bellandur, Whitefield, BEML Layout and Munnekolala," said Ayesha Allam, one of the directors of Mitti Cafe.

segregating garbage and Rs 2,000 goes into rent. Even our clothes and LPG cylinders were washed away and we

don't know what to do next."

Asked why he didn't go to school, Akash R, a class 3 student replied: "My father

asked me not to go to school because our house was flooded. He wanted me to stay back and help him. My text-

books have been ruined."

Akbar Ali, another resident, said: "We don't have money to rebuild or relocate.

## TIMES VIEW

Natural disasters know no divide between the rich and the poor and yet the suffering is not always of the same magnitude. Last week's torrential rain left a slum inhabited by pourakarmikas in Munnekolala ravaged. These people clean our streets and segregate our garbage for a living but find themselves abandoned in crises. The city's civic body hasn't even set up a relief camp for these residents caught in the floods. While rainwater may have receded, the challenges remain. BBMP should, on priority, organise medical camps for the families living in inhospitable conditions to prevent disease outbreaks.



**ENDLESS MISERY:** The slum in Munnekolala, Marathahalli is surrounded by slush, garbage and beer bottles. Most students there aren't being able to attend schools

Our home stinks because of the sewage water which entered everywhere. It's tough to sleep in peace at night."

## HC: Take steps to remove SWD encroachments

**Bengaluru:** The high court on Monday directed the authorities of the state government and the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to take immediate steps for removal of all encroachments on stormwater drains (SWDs) immediately and submit a status report.

A division bench headed by Acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe also said these authorities should ensure prevention of dumping of all kinds of waste and other pollutants in SWDs on or before the next date of hearing.

“Bengaluru has faced unprecedented floods and parts of the city were inundated. The situation has arisen as the BBMP has failed to perform its statutory duties of removal of encroachments. A division bench of this court by an order dated June 18, 2019 had issued directions against the government as well as BBMP concerning survey of stormwater drains and removal of encroachments on drains. However, they have not been complied with,” the bench noted. On the Puttenahalli lake, the bench pointed out that despite directions issued on the last occasion, no action has been taken for the removal of encroachments.

In respect of Subramanyapura lake, it was pointed out that 1 acre and 17 guntas land is being used for a link road and there is an encroachment of 3 acres and 39 guntas by slum-dwellers, which is notified as a slum as per order dated March 18, 2005 and gazetted on April 14, 2005. TNN



# Many posts lying vacant in govt hospitals; services hit

## No Concrete Steps Taken To Fill Posts

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**Bengaluru:** Shortage of manpower at government hospitals in Bengaluru has compromised healthcare for weaker sections of society, recent inspections of the facilities by the Karnataka Lokayukta have revealed.

Teams from Lokayukta found that these posts were lying vacant for quite some time and no concrete steps had been taken to fill them up.

### LOKAYUKTA INSPECTION

At Vani Vilas Women and Children Hospital, KR Road, 18 of the 77 sanctioned posts of doctors (teaching and non-teaching) are vacant. There were only two nurses to look after 60 in-patients, which created problems in attending to newborns and providing post-natal care for new mothers.

The team said women doctors were over-stressed and burdened as they were also tasked with examining Pocso survivors. There were no dedicated staffer to attend to Pocso/rape survivors' examination. Many doctors were also found to be continuing into

### TIMES VIEW

**A**n ever-looming shortage of staff in several government hospitals has been severely impacting patient care. Be it delayed service or overworked healthcare workers, patients suffer the most in these situations. The pandemic has, in many ways, tested the limits of medical workers' resilience and it's important that they have a healthy working atmosphere to deliver the best. Though the Lokayukta findings don't come as a surprise, they should serve as a wake-up call for the authorities.

night shifts after attending to outpatients. "There were complaints from patients that there was a delay in doctors attending to them. In-patients and their attendants too complained that doctors were not making proper rounds," the team observed. At Vani Vilas, 413 Group A to D cadre posts were also vacant.

At Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Chest Diseases, nine of the 17 sanctioned doctors' posts and 238 of the 299 non-teaching posts were vacant. At Minto Hospital, four of the 13 posts of doctors, 38 of the 56 posts of nursing staff, eight of the 71 group D posts were yet to be filled. At Gosha Hospital, Shivajinagar, services of outsourced nursing staff were being utilised. "The deficien-

### BBMP OFFICER, AIDE ARRESTED FOR ACCEPTING ₹4 LAKH BRIBE

**T**hree days after the government officially abolished the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the police wing of Lokayukta swung into action on Monday and arrested two BBMP officials, including a joint commissioner, west zone, after laying a trap for them.

The trapped officials are SM Srinivasa, joint commissioner and KAS officer, and his personal assistant Umesh, a first division assistant. Umesh was caught accepting a bribe of Rs 4 lakh on behalf of Srinivasa.

According to Lokayukta police, they registered the first case on Monday after getting back the power of registering FIR and investigating cases under the Prevention of

Corruption Act. Manjunath, a private individual, approached Lokayukta police and filed a complaint against Srinivasa. He

alleged that he had approached the BBMP joint commissioner for amalgamation of khatas related to his sites at survey no. 78 in BBMP ward 128 near Nagarabhatti. The suspect demanded Rs 12 lakh to do his work, and after much bargaining settled for Rs 4 lakh.

Manjunath subsequently approached Lokayukta police. A team of police rushed to Srinivasa's office in Malleswaram on Monday. Umesh allegedly received Rs 4 lakh on behalf of Srinivasa from Manjunath around 3.30pm, and police arrested the officials. **TNN**



SM Srinivasa & Umesh, the accused

cies are required to be addressed to ensure quality healthcare system in the hospital. Forty posts of various cadres are lying vacant and no steps have been taken to address the issue," said the team.

At Sanjay Gandhi Institute of Trauma and Orthopaedics, Byrasandra, 437 posts were vacant. Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health, Bengaluru, had 66 vacant group A posts against the sanction-

ed strength of 128 and 105 group C posts against 304 sanctioned posts.

Director of medical education Dr BL Sujatha Rathod, under whom most of these hospitals come, told **TOI** they will look into the issue and ensure that the vacancies are filled. She admitted that there needs to be more posts than the sanctioned ones as infrastructure and sub-specialties have increased over time.



**When civic apathy peaks and flood-affected are denied rightful relief, IISc student's unique water filter provides life-saving mouthfuls for slum dwellers**

# LIFE STREAMING

**Charcoal, layered cloth, cotton used in 25-litre drum**



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**A** student at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) designed a unique water filter, using coconut shell charcoal activated using table salt, to help communities affected by the recent floods in Bengaluru.

**“The water filter can be used as a long-term solution; it is highly cost-effective**

— Sharik Sengupta, Interdisciplinary Centre for Water Research, IISc

Sharik Sengupta from the Interdisciplinary Centre for Water Research at IISc, also an activist of the All India Students Association (AISA), created the tech. It can filter almost 6,000 to 8,000 litres of extremely bad

quality water to a level suited for domestic usage, he told Bangalore Mirror.

Sengupta pointed to the abysmal condition the communities in slums are living in since the floods. “We have provided

the water filter to a community in Munnekolala in Marathahalli that had no access to clean water. The people told us that for drinking they are either buying bottled water or collecting

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>**



# Drinking water for flood-ravaged

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

rainwater. For other domestic use, they were using water from a pond. The so-called pond is more like a hole dug into the ground which is now flooded. You can see worms and tadpoles in the water. It was contaminated."

Sengupta added that the filter has been provided to the community which has families of construction workers, sanitation workers who only have access to murky and contaminated water.

"These are migrant workers who come here and help the city to develop; but we channel all the rainwater to their dwellings. It is ironic," he added.

The slum area, where the filter was provided, floods within 10 minutes of rainfall; AISA activists were informed as the residents do not have access to safe water for domestic usage.

"We, as people working in science, should always be on our feet to put the solutions on the ground when it is most needed. We cannot always wait for the government to work on our suggestions and then later be disappointed about it," Sengupta further added.

With the help of volunteers



from different departments at IISc, Sengupta was able to create the tech. The main component in this filter is charcoal which is a porous substance and really good at filtering water or even air, he explained.

"We increased the number of pores and made finer pores to make an even better filter. We bought charcoal as it is pretty easy to find in the market. Then we did the activation process ourselves by cooking the charcoal overnight. Thereafter we put the activated charcoal in a filter which is a 25-litre water drum. We stuffed the charcoal layered in cloth and cotton to filter out the larger parti-

cles," he explained.

The filtration rate of the filter is 0.5 litres of water per minute. The average cost of the project is somewhere around Rs 2,000 for two filters that can filter 6,000-8,000 litres of water. Smaller filters for personal use can be made for a cost of Rs 100.

BM asked Sengupta if the technology can be used as a long-term solution: "It can definitely be used as a long-term solution; it will be highly cost-effective. However, I cannot get enough volunteers to make so many filters in the long run. This was an emergency response," he said.

## BBMP's healing touch after downpour of woes

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TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

**T**he BBMP health team has swung into action and carried out a door-to-door check-up of over 100 apartment complexes to ensure that the people affected by the recent floods are healthy and safe. As floods could cause many underlying health issues by affecting one's mental health and infections that include water borne or vector borne diseases, the BBMP decided to get its health team on board to keep a check on the victims.

ASHA workers were deployed for fever surveillance including IEC activities on prevention of vector borne

and water borne diseases in the Mahadevpura zone and hygienic measures and environmental sanitation activities were conducted.

The BBMP health team carried out a door-to-door health survey, fever surveillance including IEC activities to identify and reduce source of breeding by field level workers to prevent any disease spread in flood-affected areas.

Several camps were put up close to the slum areas to check upon the people's health. The doctors in the camps kept monitoring the health of the individuals. "The cases of diarrhoea can sporadically increase after a sudden disaster, including other water borne diseases. Hence we decided to deploy a team and check on the peo-



Fogging is important to keep vector-borne diseases at bay

ple fast to detect the diseases fast. We have so far finished the door to door health check-ups in 100 apartment complexes. Most of the people were healthy and there was nothing to

worry about," added Dr KV Thirlok Chandra, Special Commissioner (Health & Information Technology).

This apart awareness campaigns were initiated to avoid spread of vector and water borne diseases. "We initiated awareness campaigns to educate the people about the do's and don'ts. Meanwhile teams are even carrying out fogging and spraying to avoid any mosquito breeding in areas. More resources were added so that the process of fogging and bleaching is enhanced to prevent vector borne disease," added a health officer from Mahadevpura zone.

Meanwhile health professionals pointed out that it is important to even check on individuals' mental health after the sudden disaster. As

many would have lost their belongings or even place of stay, it would be hard for them to get over the trauma. "Flooding has left people without homes and caused great financial loss. Daily rains, difficulty in accessing health care needs is affecting people's health. Repeated infections, worsening of existing illnesses, losing close family members, friends affects us. Sometimes this can lead to new onset mental health conditions. Many times existing illnesses can get worse," said Dr. Girishchandra, Sr. Consultant - Psychiatry, Aster CMI Hospital.

He added that losing a home is traumatic as it can be perceived as threat to life. "People must look after themselves and also should come forward and ask for help and heal."



# Under World

Residents say no to skating rink/  
basketball court under Sivananda  
flyover; want parking space



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**A**mid concern over the build quality of the Sivananda steel flyover, BBMP has now come up with a new proposal — a skating rink and basketball court under the structure.

Soon, residents opposed the plan citing safety risk and distraction for passing motorists. They demanded a parking facility instead.

A senior BBMP official, meanwhile, confirmed the proposal; he said it will be completed in 15 days. "We are trying to create a space that could be used by the public. We are exploring new ideas to utilise the portion under the flyover and prevent misuse. A small portion will be converted into a skating rink cum basketball court. We may also build a public toilet," he added.

The proposal of a skating rink/basketball court under the flyover, according to the BBMP, is aimed at occupying the space to prevent it from being misused; with most spaces under the flyover serving no specific purpose, the proposal is to engage citizens with activities and utilities to ensure its upkeep.

Residents noted that further commotion under the flyover will distract vehicle users and cause accidents. They also highlighted that children using the facility while vehicles passing on either side will be a huge safety risk.

"The construction of the steel flyover began in 2017. The work was completed a month ago. Soon after reopening, the flyover was found unfit for vehicles and closed again. Now, they have started construction below the flyover. We have learnt there

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>**

# Under the flyover blues

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

is a proposal to build a skating rink/basketball court in the area. This will become a distraction for vehicles passing the stretch. The situation is likely to make it an accident spot with an increase in distracted drivers. Children running around in the area could also lead to accidents," Ramalingam, a resident in the area, told BM.

Another resident said the space will add to the traffic woes of residents. "Already there is high traffic; this will also create the need to find additional parking spaces. We have spent five years with a flyover in construction; moreover, we don't know how many residents would use it. How can a skating rink with traffic moving on either side be

considered safe for children? With the heavy flow of traffic, we are concerned about the safety of children," said Sunil KN. Another resident, Nagesh added that children skating under the flyover could get grievously injured if they hit the foundation of the structure. Residents also complained that now people visiting the facility will also need parking spaces. They stressed that BBMP should consider building a parking facility instead.

After spending Rs 40 crore on the 492 m long flyover, it had to be closed-down shortly after the inaugural due to alleged construction defects. Later, traffic was allowed only on one side of the flyover.

Sivananda flyover was completed over a period of five years.



# Art, craft and life lessons, on the go

Palike launches Wonder on Wheels for children from anganwadis from East Zone

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**T**he Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has joined hands with Freethinking Foundation and Women and Child Development Department to launch Wonder on Wheels, a creative learning opportunity exclusively for marginalised children, especially those from anganwadi centres in and around Bengaluru East Zone. This comes after the School on Wheels initiative that was rolled out for the benefit of slum children.

"We have provided a remodelled bus to Freethinking Foundation for this purpose. We also provide two teachers, one Group D employee and a bus driver to the foundation to ensure providing Montessori education for anganwadi children," said BBMP Assistant Commissioner (Education) Umesh D S.

Freethinking Foundation will be responsible for running the activities and provisioning of activity teachers. It will collaborate with other private and public institutions to conduct other activities on the bus.

"We will provide a teacher trained in the Montessori method and volunteers to train children in art and craft. We will also ensure training for the teachers provided by the BBMP. We have already launched two Wonder on Wheels on our own. Wonder on



Children from anganwadi centres pose for a photo on Day One of the initiative being rolled out

**Our target is to launch around 10 Wonder on Wheels to cater to the needs of anganwadi children in other zones such as Bengaluru West, South, North, Yelahanka, Mahadevapura, Dasarahalli, Bommanahalli**

—Sunoj Philip, managing trustee, Freethinking Foundation

Wheels was launched, in association with the BBMP and Child Welfare Department today, on a pilot basis. The buses will be stationed at BBMP Zonal Commissioner (East) Office and will visit two to three anganwadi centres per day," said Freethinking Foundation managing trustee Sunoj Philip.

He said the initiative would

be extended to other areas in a couple of months. "Our target is to launch around 10 Wonder on Wheels to cater to the needs of anganwadi children in other zones such as Bengaluru West, South, North, Yelahanka, Mahadevapura, Dasarahalli and Bommanahalli in future."

Welcoming the BBMP for launching this initiative,

Nagasimha G Rao, Director of Child Rights Trust said that it would benefit anganwadi children to a great extent to learn art and craft. "I want to appreciate all those involved in launching Wonder on Wheels. It will help more and more children to have Montessori education since the Wonder on Wheels visits anganwadi centres. It will also encourage other parents to bring their children," said Nagasimha G Rao.

BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath inaugurated the Wonder on Wheels. He helped one of the children cut the ribbon and board the bus.



## Opposition to road name change bid

With the proposal mooted by Karnataka Sahitya Parishat, the nodal agency for promotion of Kannada language has run into a controversy with the Karnataka Jain community opposing the idea of renaming the arterial AdiKavi Pampa road of the Chamarajpet locality in Bengaluru.

The president of Karnataka Sahitya Parishat, Mahesh Joshi has sent a proposal to the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to rename AdiKavi Pampa Road as 'Kannada Sahitya Parishat Road'. Karnataka Jain Association has registered a strong protest in this regard.

The association has stated that such a move is an insult to the Jain poet. Kannada litterateurs have also objected to the proposal. **IAN S**

## ORRCA springs into action

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**T**o make commuting easier for employees, the Outer Ring Road Companies Association (ORRCA) met the Minister for IT and Higher Education Ashwath Narayan on September suggesting steps to improve ORR and its arterial roads.

### Short term

The association requested immediate action (next 30 days to 2 months) on a few issues ailing ORR. The resolution/ restoration of Eco Space and the impacted rajakaluves, sharing a detailed timeline of the ORR metro project and for ORRCA to be included in the coordination group. It stressed that 19 arterial roads approved in 2019 need to be completed within 6 months. ORR main carriageway and service roads are to be constantly maintained to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

### Medium term

Within the next 2-3 years, the association wants the cancelled high-density corridor to be approved and implemented. Development of key arterial roads like Hosur Road, Sarjapur, Old Airport Road, ITPL, Silk Board, and KR Puram is key along with a comprehensive execution plan for the management of lakes and rajakaluves and ensuring a zero-tolerance policy against encroachments disturbing ecological balance/ disruption of traffic.

### Long term

The association proposed that the 17-km ORR stretch should be declared a separate municipal zone. The new municipal zone will then develop a 5-year plan to convert the IT corridor into a world technology corridor. A committee of experts will prepare the 2027 plan. The governance framework of the new municipal zone will be a public-private partnership with supervision from the IT&BT ministry. It has also requested a special ex-gratia grant and funding for the development of the corridor.



# Gets curiouser: Who moved my bollards?

**Cyclists wonder why the last barrier that protects them from fast and furious traffic is also being stripped away from them**

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**A**s the civic body is currently in the process of removing bus priority lane bollards, cyclists commuting on the Outer Ring Road (ORR) stretch have noticed that bollards demarcating cycle lanes too are disappearing. The Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT) says the matter needs to be investigated as they haven't issued any order for scrapping of cycle lanes or the bollards for it.

If the sole barrier protecting cyclists on the cycle lane from the zipping traffic on ORR disappears, cyclists' lives will be in danger. The cyclists' community said that cycling infrastructure has become the most dispensable in the city. According to them, whether it be floods or ORR congestion, cyclists are inflicted with inconveniences.

Shilpi Sahu, a cyclist, told BM that bollards have been disappearing slowly on-and-off. "When the cable work for Metro work began, the bollards were removed and never put back. Primarily, I have noticed between Marathahalli and Bellandur; almost 90% of the cycle lane bollards have disappeared.

They dug up the entire service lane. The roads are in a pathetic state, bollards have gone and cycle lanes are not being maintained. The bare minimum infrastructure for cyclists is being destroyed after utilising the public money. Even though there is misuse of cycle lanes, it has still remained beneficial to countless cyclists," she added.



File pic of how the brand new cycle lane looked when it was set up on ORR

**“ We had discussed the removal of BPL bollards after several complaints from motorists. But, the cycle lanes and bollards are being removed without our knowledge**

She added that with cycle lanes with bollards, only the paint demarcates the lane and it's not a protection measure. According to cyclists, BBMP's tipper autos are also blocking the lanes. "Officials make plans to decongest the cities by infusing crores of rupees but fail to maintain basic infrastructure," said Sahu.

Another cyclist Shrilesh said removal of bollards has increased his commute time. A number of IT pro-

fessionals have adopted cycles as a work-commute option after the cycle lanes were introduced. Shrilesh is a regular cycle commuter from Sarjapur signal to Bellandur. "The bollards ensured the safety of the cyclists. For more than five months, I have been noticing the bollards are getting removed. I commute to my office and my 7-km work-commute time has increased from 20 to almost 40 minutes. There aren't any proper footpaths either to walk to the office," added Shrilesh.

Cyclists urged officials not to equate bus priority lanes with those for cycles as buses can safely move with or without bollards, but cyclists are under threat from fast-moving vehicles.

Expressing distress over the turn of events, Bengaluru bicycle mayor Sathya Sankaran said that cycling infrastructure is the first casualty to city problems. "Commitment to cycle lanes needs to be ensured even in tough times like floods. Sudden need to solve traffic problems cannot be solved by compensating with cycling and walking. We object to whimsical decisions to remove cycle lane bollards without consultation with the cyclists," he added.

He added that without bollards, the cycle lanes become part of the road. "Without any protection, the purpose of cycle lanes is lost. If bollards are being removed, we want more permanent solutions like concrete barricades," added Sankaran.

However, DULT clarified that neither the cycle lanes have been scrapped nor have they issued any orders for removal of bollards. "We had discussed the removal of BPL bollards after several complaints from motorists. But, the cycle lanes and bollards are being removed without our knowledge. We need to identify who is responsible for removing the bollards first," said V Manjula, DULT Commissioner.

Cyclists also complain that they are not being permitted to use the shortcut routes adjacent to lakes. Cyclists said that BBMP has different rules and timings for using lake premises. With traffic getting worse, cyclists complain that guards are stopping them during visiting hours. In Agara lake, both pets and cyclists are not allowed.



# SWD work leaves road in poor shape

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**A**n incomplete storm water drain (SWD) work has left a service road in the HBR Layout in a pathetic state, leading to residents struggling to commute.

While solid waste and stormwater drain management remain high on the priority list for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), the residents of this layout still await a solution for these two issues.

The service road of HBR Layout 5th block has been in a sorry state for months now.

Vikram Mailar, resident and member of the core working committee of Bengaluru NavaNirman Party (BNP) said, "BBMP started the SWD wall reconstruction and cleaning process in May 2021 and is yet to complete the work. BBMP has neither disclosed the details regarding the money allocated for this work nor has it made public the expenses incurred so far. This issue was brought up in ward meetings, and residents made calls to the concerned officials at the BBMP regarding the issue which was also discussed on the ward committee WhatsApp group. It was escalated to the Joint Commissioner, Zonal commissioner Ravindra and Chief Commissioner, Tushar



The service road in HBR layout is in shambles due to incomplete SWD work

Girinath. Though all are aware of the situation, none have taken it seriously. With heavy rains in the last few weeks, the condition of the road has further deteriorated."

The residents alleged that in spite of the repeated complaints made to the authorities it has gone unnoticed.

George T, resident of the 5th block said, "Though many complaints regarding the horrible condition of East and West service roads at 5th block HBR layout were put up to the BBMP officials and East zone Commissioner, no action has been taken so far. Residents of the 5th block in the HBR layout are having a hard time using the service road every day. The service road has been in extremely deplorable condition at least for the last 6 months. The road is slushy and has turned into a garbage dump. People are dumping all sorts of waste here. It's a tragedy."

Residents demand swift action from the authorities. Another resident, Sasi Nair said, "We need stringent laws to make garbage dumpers fall in line. When footpaths and roads are filled with waste, pedestrians have no choice but to suffer the nightmare. Despite several complaints, why are authorities not taking any action? In addition, residents do not have any details on the funds allocated and expenditure on these construction works."

# After the rain: Citizens repair their hood

**In Countryside Layout, citizens repair road and plan fixing concrete wall**

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**R**esidents of Countryside Layout are leaving no stone unturned to restore their neighbourhood to normalcy after the recent rains battered the city. The felt it was no use waiting for the civic authorities and decided to take matters into their own hands.

Around 30 four-wheelers were damaged beyond repair due to waterlogging in the layout. "All the four-wheelers that were inundated



Road leading to Countryside Layout being repaired by citizens

in water are damaged. The residents have incurred the loss of around Rs 1.5 crore at an average cost of Rs 5 lakh each for the vehicles," said Countryside Layout Welfare Association president Pendela Sampath

Kumar.

The residents were also up in arms against those responsible for breaking the compound wall of their layout to let out the water from the neighbouring layout. "We have de-

cided to issue a notice to those responsible," said Sunil Srivatsav, a resident, adding that water has receded from the layout that was inundated a week ago.

"The entire road is damaged. As of now, we spent Rs 1.5 lakh for wet mix at the entrance to facilitate entry and exit of vehicles without any hassles. The contractor gave an estimation of Rs 25 lakh for the restoration of the road inside our layout," said Sampath.

It is said that the residents have to spend money to reconstruct the compound wall. "The wall became weak and shaky. We have decided to have a concrete wall which is expected to cost us Rs 45 lakh," he said.

Some of the residents have lost household items such as washing machines, TV sets, refrigerators, and clothes when their homes are inundated with rain water. "Fifteen

**“We already spent Rs 1.5 lakh for wet mix to pave the road for easy movement of vehicles**

—Sampath Kumar, President, Countryside Layout Welfare Association

houses are inundated with rain water. Each of the residents have lost Rs 3 lakh worth household items due to water logging," said a resident, adding that water level would have been less if the compound wall was not broken.

On September 4, Fire & Emergency Services and Namma Teams volunteers had to press boats into service to evacuate the residents to safer places on September 5.



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### Garbage trouble

**Muniyappa Layout**



It has been more than one month since no one has collected this garbage on 4th Cross, Patel Muniyappa Layout. It keeps piling up.

### Pavement peril

**Brunton Road**



The pavement on Brunton Road is in a poor state.

### Illegal flex board

**Malleswaram**



Flex banners advertising hair transplants and other services are tied illegally to electric poles and trees all over Malleswaram 8th Cross. These are found in front of homes, creating a lot of inconvenience.



# B'luru tree census: Can we count on BBMP forest dept?

3 years after HC order, Palike is yet to zero in on research institute for census

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**W**hen it comes to the much-awaited tree census, none of the research institutes in the city appears to be good enough for the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP).

In 2019, the forest department of BBMP signed an MoU with the Institute of Wood Science and Technology (IWST) to conduct the survey but later cancelled it.

After that, the Palike reached out to the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) to conduct the same census. After months of discussions, UAS submitted a Rs 5.5 crore proposal for conducting the survey scientifically. The idea was to geo-tag all the trees, record the age and species, calculate canopy area and tree girth and come up with suggestions on location and area-specific tree species plantation.

However, this time too, the contract has not taken off and the BBMP is back to square one.

"The varsity had submitted a proposal a few months ago but we have decided to not sign the MoU. They had quoted a Rs 5.5 crore proposal and we thought we need not spend so much money on the census. BBMP will be doing it with inputs from the tree authority. There will not be signing any MoU with any organization for the census. However, we will surely take their support in terms of resources and ideas," said a senior official from the forest department.



As part of the counting process, every tree in the city was to get a physical QR code

**“We are currently focusing on developing a mobile application to record the data**

— BBMP official

Interestingly, it has been over three years since the Karnataka High Court ordered the BBMP to conduct the census expeditiously.

While the Palike plans to survey all the city trees by itself, there is no denial by the officials that the department has a manpower shortage.

"BBMP's forest department has no manpower. We will reach out to the Karnataka Forest Department and request at least 20 personnel for six months on a deputation basis. A letter regarding this will be sent to the PCCF soon," said the official.

The census will now be

conducted like a public initiative and will invite volunteers with the right bend of mind. The participants will be trained to conduct the census scientifically with the help of experts from the Karnataka Forest Department.

As part of the process, every tree in the city will also get a physical QR code.

"Each tree will be given a unique ID that will be placed

on the tree trunk using a plastic or aluminium medium. All the Bengaluru trees will be geotagged in this fashion and there will be a database for future reference," informed the official.

Notably, even the internal deadline to start the pilot was the first week of August.

"We are currently focusing on developing a mobile application to record the data. The mobile applications and plans are almost ready and last-minute corrections are being made. We will soon start the census on a pilot basis in one ward, preferably the IISc campus. The pilot will help us understand the requirements in terms of manpower and approach. Once we lock in the approach and resource requirement, we will open it for the rest of the wards. We will be able to start the pilot sometime next week," said the official.

Once the pilot is completed, the census is expected to take six months to complete.



BM's report on May 7



# Lost, forgotten, found: Old stormwater drains

**Palike to use these channels to restore city's natural drainage system**

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**T**hanks to the recent rains, Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has unearthed old stormwater drains which were 'lost' over a period of time.

These rajakaluves were missing from maps maintained by the Revenue Department as well. During the recent flash floods, a close scrutiny of the area revealed that these drains were one of the main reasons for the flooding. Now, the civic agency wants to identify this missing drain link so that the encroachments can be demolished all along its way and there is no hindrance to the flow of rainwater in the future.

Confirming this, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath said, "We are now in the process of identifying newer encroachments which were not part of the earlier list. As these drains have not been used for a very long time, even the Revenue Department had failed to map them and hence the ownership of those lands was given to the locals."

For the last few days, earth-excavating machines have begun removing encroachments. Locals have alleged that the encroachments have begun with only smaller houses while bigger houses and villas which had encroached drains have been given notices.

Many cite the earlier instances when in August 2016, the Siddaramaiah Government had taken up a demolition drive when 141 houses



A stretch on the Outer Ring Road during a heavy downpour which brought life to a standstill in B'loru

**Many homes encroaching upon these drains have been issued notices by the authorities**

which had encroached 29 acres of rajakaluves were demolished. However, the drive was mysteriously stopped.

Now, many are wondering whether the current drive is just an eyewash or a constructive move. Chief Minister Basavaraj S Bommai said, "I have directed officials to remove all those encroachments. During the recent heavy rainfall in Bengaluru, we have seen as to how many were affected. A few of the cases are in court and we will appraise the court on the need to remove encroachments."

Nath added that so far, they had given detailed instructions to engineers and allocated responsibilities to each officer. "The drains and lakes fall under the jurisdiction of Karnataka Land Revenue Department. Hence, we have to remove these structures following the rules laid down by the Revenue Department Act."

"Currently, a surveyor is accompanying our engineers and marking the encroachments on the basis of the maps available with the Revenue Department. The mapping is followed by issuing of notices by the respective tahsildars."

The Bengaluru East Tahsildar Ajith Rai Saroke has issued notices to a few villas in Rainbow Drive for encroaching drains. The notice says that the building owner and the developer have to remove the

encroachment within seven days of the issuing of notice failing which, the authorities will take up the demolition drive for which the residents have to cough up expenses of demolition.

The BBMP Chief Commissioner added that many encroachments have been removed so far. As of Sunday, 21,963 square feet of encroachments have been removed in 34 cases. The encroachments include temporary sheds, houses and compound walls.

"We had a meeting with zonal commissioners on Monday as well. So far, out of 696 encroachments, we have removed 34. The remaining structures will be razed as per the list. There is no need to issue fresh notices to those people who had earlier received one from the Revenue department," Nath said.



# Fever catching them young, again & again

2 years of social isolation has affected immunity of kids so infections rising: Docs

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It's the beginning of exam season with school children gearing up to face mid-term exams in offline mode after two years of online classes. For parents, more than ensuring that their wards study well for exams, ensuring that they don't fall ill is turning out to be a bigger task. Many parents and doctors say that many are reporting recurring viral fever and surprisingly some of them are falling ill two to three times a month.

"Off late, we are seeing many parents who say that since schools have opened, kids are constantly unwell. Parents want to know if it is normal for kids to get fevers every week. Parents are now asking us if they can get something to boost immunity," said a doctor.

Experts say that the two years of lockdown reduced the immunity of most people. Dr Chetan Ginigeri, Lead Consultant at Paediatrics and Paediatric Intensive Care, Aster CMI Hospital said, "The last two years of lockdown has downregulated the immune systems. Now kids are mingling with each other, schools have opened, monsoon is unrelenting and construction and waterlogging are also a norm. All these factors make children, especially those from one to eight years very susceptible to viral infections. There is an almost 200 per cent increase in outpatient numbers, especially with respiratory tract infections. This trend is likely to continue till February 2023."

As the viral profile is diverse with flu, H1N1 and more variants of the same are in circulation - recurring respiratory infections in the same child are causing the same symptom complex and increasing school absenteeism, Ginigeri added.

Fortunately, most children who have repeated infections don't have



Since schools reopened, parents say kids are falling ill repeatedly

any serious problems, says Dr Chirag Khant, a consultant at Rainbow Children's Hospital.

"Around 20 per cent of paediatric outpatient visits these days is because of recurrent infections. Several viruses are currently circulating including influenza, Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and SARS CoV 2. Children have a relative immune deficiency until

their immune systems mature at the age of five years and they tend to get four to eight infections each year. Children's bodies build up immunity with each viral infection and over the years as antibodies build up infection rate comes down."

Many parents seek advice to build up their child's immunity.

"Sleep, proper nutrition and

## FOLLOW THESE TIPS

- Continue to follow precautions like masking and hand hygiene
- Keep schools open, and have kids return to classes as soon as they can
- Schools need to plan for absences and bridge the gaps
- Catch up on any missed out routine vaccines
- Understand danger signs and seek medical attention
- Weather it out, we are in unprecedented times.

appropriate vaccination are very important in preventing and fighting off infections. There is no role of any supplements. Few parents resort to self-medication with antibiotics for these illnesses. Antibiotics don't cure viral illnesses and are usually not required unless a child develops complications like ear infections or pneumonia. Antibiotic overuse not only leads to resistance but can also adversely affect the gut microbiome," said Dr Khant.

It is a busy time for paediatricians in the city and across the country.

"Currently, we are swimming in high tides of cough, cold and fevers," said Dr Rajath Athreya Senior Consultant and HOD Paediatrics and Neonatology, Sakra World Hospital.

"Children's immune systems have never met them up close and thus haven't been schooled to ward them off. From New Zealand to Japan and from France to India, there are reports of unusual or unseasonal surges of respiratory viral and bacterial infections in kids that are testing healthcare systems. The hygiene hypothesis is also at play and may see an increase in allergies and asthma too," he added.



been instructed to clear encroachments and follow the eviction process. MLA Satish Reddy said, "Encroachments are being cleared in more than 20 places in my constituency. It doesn't matter if it's an IT park or house. If the owners are poor, we will make alternative arrangements for them." BDA, Society Layout and Golf Club have also encroached many lakes, which are artificially filled up with debris and turned into layouts.

# House owners blame corrupt civic officials

Express anger, allege nexus between babus, netas for encroachment of drains, illegal layouts that caused floods



A bulldozer razes the encroached part of a building as part of BBMP's demolition drive at AECS layout in Bengaluru on Monday | EXPRESS

MOHAMMED YACOOB @Bengaluru

STANDING five-storey tall, Sai Krishna Vihar, painted blue, will soon be reduced to rubble. The property, built 12 years ago, was listed for demolition due to the flooding in Mahadevapura zone in August-end and early September. The owner, Govardhana Rao, stood shocked and lashed out at the BBMP, saying notices were not issued to him, and that his property was not built on drain.

Pulling out tax receipts and his building plan approved by BBMP, he said he has a Rs 1.2 crore loan on the property, and has paid taxes, besides power and water connections, despite which officials are after his building. "If this five-floor building is demolished, we will have nothing left for the family I have nowhere to go. I am clueless," said a shocked Rao.

Expressing anger over the nexus between officials and politicians that has led to the encroachment of drains and formation of illegal layouts and buildings at AECS Layout, Natesh Gowda, a resident, said the formation of layouts on drains happened many years ago, and the owners who had purchased sites and built homes are innocent. "The government and BBMP are responsible for this encroachment. They (officials) approved the plan, they collected taxes and now they are demolishing our properties without notice. Innocent people are suffering," said Gowda. He questioned why no official has been pulled up, suspended, questioned or served notice.

Anil Reddy, another resident, defended the drive and even lauded area MLA Aravind Limbavali, terming him 'Bulldozer Baba of Karnataka'. "We were upset and had protested as many homes were flooded during the recent rain. There are encroachments on drains, which led to flooding. We want our layout to be free of encroachments. Officials said they will carry out the drive on Tuesday as well," said Reddy.

## Won't spare anyone: Tushar

ENS @ Bengaluru

TAKING a tough stand against encroachments in the wake of the recent flooding in parts of the city, BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath on Monday said that no encroachers will be spared, even if people approach the High Courts.

He said that the BBMP is following the courts' directions, so cases can be filed and hearings will continue, and clearance of encroachments will also continue. He added that the courts will also see what the BBMP is doing and that its orders are being followed.

Speaking to reporters, he said detailed instructions have been issued to officials to clear encroachments on storm water drains and lakes. The exercise and demolishing drive is being done as per court order chronology. He said that notices have

been served to those who have encroached drains and lakes, as these properties stand on revenue department land. No notices have been served to those which stand on footpaths and roads, as these are BBMP properties and have been illegally occupied.

On the question of maps that are being shown by people and the ones which were produced before the courts, Girinath clarified that the original survey



maps were being verified and the ones which have been approved by the government and courts are being used as the base. On the issue of builders approaching the Lokayukta, Girinath said people can do so, and accordingly action will be taken. On the issue of criminal cases filed so far, he said they can be filed and heard at Karnataka Land Grabbing Prohibition Special Courts.

## Court takes stock of lake encroachment

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE petitioner has also brought to the notice of the court that the direction issued by a division bench of the high court in an order dated June 18, 2019, was not complied with even after 18 months having passed. In the order, the court had directed the State Government and the BBMP to carry out a survey of SWDs and removal of encroachments. While doing so, the court had granted six weeks time to both the State Government and the BBMP to place on record the steps taken for implementation of the said directions. However it was not complied with, the applicant told the court through her counsel G R Mohan. Meanwhile, responding to directions issued in an order dated July 15 and 20, 2022, designated officers of Subramanyapura Lake and Begur Lake filed a compliance affidavit before the court on Monday. As per the affidavit, 81 private encroachments were found on Begur Lake of which 33 have been removed.

With regard to Subramanyapura Lake, it is pointed out that the land measuring one acre and 17 guntas is being utilised for the purpose of a link road and there is encroachment of 3 acres and 39 guntas by slum dwellers. It was pointed out that the removal of encroachment by the slum dwellers has to be done by the Slum Clearance Board. The court then directed the Executive Engineer of the Slum Board to appear before it on October 12, 2022.

As for Puttenahalli Lake, it was pointed out that despite instructions, Executive Engineer of Bommanahalli Division of BBMP has not submitted the compliance report. Despite the July 20, 2022 order, neither any action has been taken for removal of encroachment nor a compliance report has been submitted following which the court directed the Executive Engineer concerned to appear before it on next date of hearing.

### THE BLACK LIST

- 1 Bagmane Tech Park, Purva Paradise - Mahadevapura
- 2 Rainbow Drive-Junasandra, Doddakanahalli and Halayaknahalli
- 3 Wipro-Doddakanahalli
- 4 Gopalan - Bellandur, Hoodi
- 5 Adarsha - R Narayana
- 6 Columbia Asia Hospital - Ramagondanahalli
- 7 Epsilon and DivyaSree - Yemalur
- 8 Prestige, Salarpuria and Adarsha - Marathahalli and Kariyama Aghara
- 9 Nalpad group - Chalaghatta

## 'Went ahead as per orders'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

REDDY said eight properties were identified for demolition in Maruthi Layout near AECS Layout and residents were informed about it on Saturday. "We faced objections from some owners, but we went ahead as we have directions from our seniors and the Karnataka High Court," Muni Reddy said.

Chief Engineer Basavaraj Kabade, who was monitoring the drive, said, "Today, only compound walls and gates were demolished and after serving a notice under Section 104 of Karnataka Land Revenue Act, the BBMP will ask the house owners to

vacate as our JCB will raze the walls and pillars that stand on drains and in buffer zones. No encroacher, be it VVIPs, will be spared."

The BBMP also released a list of 15 big names including IT Parks, New Horizon College, Wipro, realty firms like Gopalan, and Aadarsh that have allegedly encroached the SWDs. Confirming it, Trilok Chandra said the names on the list are only of encroachers on SWDs and that clearance of encroachments on lakes will start after this. Interestingly, Mohammed Nalpad, President, Indian Youth Congress, Karnataka, had protested in front of Eco-Space after the heavy flooding.

### ORRCA MEMBERS DEMAND SEPARATE ZONE

The members of Outer Ring Road Companies Association (ORRCA) have sought that the government declare 17 km of the ORR stretch and adjoining areas as a separate municipal zone. The members said the same proposal was made at last week's meeting between IT-BT Minister Dr C N Ashwath Narayan and heads of multinational and tech companies. The demand follows the flooding and damage to property from the recent rain in the city.

However, the members were unable to explain how the declaration of a separate zone would ensure that there is no flooding. They demanded that the zone should have a clear five-year plan to transform their hub into a world technology corridor.



DURATION OF PANDEMIC	CASES REPORTED	DEATHS	DISCHARGES	B' Urban: 218	C' nagara: 1	Dharwada: 0	Kolara: 2	Shivamogga: 0
2 YEARS, 187 DAYS	317	5   1	638   486	B' Rural: 1	Chikkaballapura: 2	Gadag: 0	Koppala: 0	Tumakuru: 0
	379	POSITIVITY RATE	MORTALITY RATE	Bagalakote: 0	Chikkamagaluru: 5	Hassana: 2	Mandya: 5	Udupi: 5
	TALLY	5.85 %   5.89 %	0.99%   0.99%	Ballari: 2	Chitradurga: 1	Haveri: 0	Mysuru: 12	Uttara Kannada: 1
TODAY	40,58,557	ACTIVE CASES	RECOVERY RATE	Belagavi: 2	D' Kannada: 1	Kalaburagi: 4	Raichuru: 5	Vijayapura: 0
YESTERDAY	40,58,178	3,945	98.91%   98.90%	Bidar: 0	Davanagere: 0	Kodagu: 31	Ramanagara: 17	Yadagiri: 0
		4,271						

## Bescom to HC: Steps taken to shift 2,588 transformers



EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE  
@ Bengaluru

BANGALORE Electricity Supply Company Ltd (Bescom) has informed the Karnataka High Court that steps have been taken to shift 2,588 transformers from footpaths, out of the total

5,784 in the city.

In an affidavit filed before a division bench of Acting Chief Justice Alok Aradhe and Justice S Vishwajith Shetty, the Bescom stated that shifting of 1,155 transformers out of 2,588 was in progress as on September 9, 2022 and work orders

have been issued for shifting the remaining 1,433 transformers. In the first phase, Bescom shifted 3,194 transformers.

The court was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by Wing Commander (retd) G B Athri seeking directions to Bescom to take steps to shift trans-

formers and other electrical installations from footpaths in a time-bound manner as it posed serious danger to pedestrians.

The court then directed the power supply agency to file a status report on the steps taken by January 9, 2023.

# LOKAYUKTA TRAPS JC WEST, OFFICE STAFFER

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

IN a first case after restoration of powers under the Prevention of Corruption Act, the Karnataka Lokayukta police snared a KAS officer at Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and a first division assistant, accepting a bribe of Rs 4 lakh from the complainant.



The accused officials are SM Srinivas, Joint Commissioner, West Division, and Umesh, First Division Assistant, attached to his office. They are first and second accused respectively.

The Lokayukta police arrested them after laying a trap, when Umesh was receiving the bribe of Rs 4 lakh on behalf of Srinivas. They had made a demand for Rs 12 lakh for amalgamation of khata of a site. Manjunath, a city resident, filed a complaint against the accused officials. Investigation is under way.

The trap was laid by the team headed by Superintendent of Police KV Ashok and DySP Anthonyraj, following instructions by Lokayukta Justice BS Patil.



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**AFTER THE DELUGE**

# *Anti-encroachment Drive Kicks off in City*

PTI

**Bengaluru:** The Bengaluru civic body on Monday began a demolition drive within days of the havoc caused by rain-triggered floods in parts of the city with chief minister Basavaraj Bommai asserting that the anti-encroachment offensive would be done on a big scale. A team of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) initiated the exercise at eight places, which were allegedly causing flooding in

and around Bellandur in Mahadevapura zone.

According to official sources, the BBMP identified at least 10 places in the Mahadevapura zone, which were choking the flow of rainwater, including a building, playground and garden of a prominent private school which encroached the stormwater

drain. The next challenge before the authorities is to raze an elite apartment right next to the school, they added.

"Notices have been served to the dwellers of the apartment to vacate it. We are waiting for their response," a BBMP official said.

The CM said there will be no partisanship in the drive to remove the alleged encroachment of the stormwater drains that were said to be majorly responsible for the floods in Bengaluru recently following heavy downpour.

Meanwhile, the Outer Ring Road Companies' Association (ORRCA) said they started their offices on Monday as usual as there was no waterlogging on the roads or in the offices.

ORRCA general manager Krishna Kumar Gowda said they were also waiting for a response from the government after they submitted a comprehensive proposal on September 7 to improve the infrastructure on ORR and arterial roads in the short, medium and long term.



## CORONA METER

**CASES ON MONDAY** **2,328<sup>^</sup>**

**ACTIVE CASES**  
**46,112 (-1,093)<sup>o</sup>**

**Recovered**  
**43.93 m**  
**(+3,409)**

**Deaths**  
**528,177**  
**(+12)**

**TOTAL CASES** **44,502,899**

Source: State bulletins, PTI; <sup>^</sup>21 states/UTs (excl. Kerala, AP, UP, Punjab, Assam, Uttarakhand & Jharkhand) as of 10:51 PM; <sup>o</sup>net of recoveries/deaths (Change since 12am, 12 Sep)

4 Main Metros	CASES ON MON	ACTIVE CASES
B'luru Urban	218	2540
Mumbai	128	1666
Chennai	84	2198
Delhi	63	619

Source: State bulletins, PTI

**VACCINE DOSES ADMINISTERED IN INDIA**  
**2156.20 m (+1.97 m)**

1 <sup>st</sup> dose...	2 <sup>nd</sup> dose
<b>1025.45 m</b>	<b>945.40 m</b>
<b>(94.58%)</b>	<b>(87.20%)</b>

(% 12yr+ population)

**BOOSTER DOSES**  
**TOTAL 185.35 m**

Source: dashboard.cowin.gov.in, 10:51 PM

### GLOBAL COUNT

**Total Cases**  
**613.98 M**

**Deaths**  
**6,517,057**

**Recovered**  
**592.81 M**

**Vaccine Doses Administered**  
**12688.64 Million**  
(204 countries/areas)

www.bloomberg.com

Source: worldometers.info, 10:51 PM

### NEW INFECTIONS IN 5 WORST-HIT COUNTRIES\*

Japan	89911
Russia	52829
Taiwan	32100
S. Korea	28214
France	16422

\*as of Sun