

### City in Numbers

# 1,772

NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS IN CITY THIS YEAR

**Kiran Mazumdar Shaw**  
@kiranshaw

We need to deal with outstation buses that take up 25% of road btwn Madivala n silk board flyover - must b moved



**Visit This | Art exhibition**  
Bengaluru-based contemporary artist Naina Maithani Kulkarni's latest works are displayed in an exhibition titled 'Empyrean Realms'. Her abstract acrylics on canvas deal with memories, sensations and inner reflections. At Kynkyny Art Gallery, Infantry Road, today, from 10 am to 7 pm. The exhibition will be on till July 16. Entry free.

**SHORT TAKES**

**BMTC to Add Ten Buses to Airport Fleet**



The Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) will add 10 Volvo buses to its existing Vayu Vajra fleet plying from the Bengaluru International Airport to various points in the city. A BMTC official said the utility saw an increase in the number of commuters plying from the airport to, especially, Electronics City. The fleet operates close to 500 trips.

**BBM Student Commits Suicide**



A 20-year-old student committed suicide by hanging from a ceiling fan in a hostel on Saturday night. Sophia, 20, was a final-year BBM student. Her mother visited the college some days ago and learned that Sophia had been missing classes. The young woman left a 6-page note before hanging herself, Amruthahalli police said.

**2 Accidents: Motorist, Auto Driver Killed**



Two persons were killed in separate incidents on Sunday. Pappu Singh, 39, was mowed down while riding a motorcycle by a truck on the Nagarbhavi-Nayandahalli outer ring road. An auto rickshaw driver, Imtiaz, lost his life when a coconut tree fell on his moving auto near Basavanagudi.

Send your feedback to [ebengaluru@timesgroup.com](mailto:ebengaluru@timesgroup.com)

**A MASSIVE SCAM? KR Puram's fund abuse raises questions on infra projects**

# Will ₹7.3k-cr Bounty Go Down the Drain?

Bharath.Joshi@timesgroup.com

**Bengaluru:** Questions loom whether the state government's ₹7,300-crore bounty can really improve Bengaluru after gaping irregularities in KR Puram have exposed how infrastructure funds can be misused in the absence of a foolproof monitoring.

Last month, the state cabinet approved an investment of ₹7,300 crore for Bengaluru over the next two years under the Chief Minister's Nagaroththana scheme. The KR Puram assembly constituency, one of Karnataka's largest, received ₹797.26 crore since 2013 under Nagaroththana and other ward-level projects, special and central grants. Add to this ₹45 crore the segment got under a special package in March. A large sum was meant to improve and asphalt roads in nine wards of the constituency.

Documents available with ET show that payments were made for projects that were, evidently, never taken up. Sample this: In 2013, the Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Limited (KRIDL) bagged a contract to improve roads in Akshayanagar 1st block, for which payment was made in July 2014.

As recently as December 2015, KRIDL was paid for "improved" roads in Akshayanagar 2nd block. In reality, the said roads do not have any asphalt. A similar story follows in Kalkere, Subhas Nagar, TC Palaya, Anandapura among other areas.

Interestingly, the action plan drawn up for KR Puram under 2015-16 special grants includes improvement of roads at Akshayanagar and Kalkere — the same ones that were previously improved. "False works? How is that possible? Will people spare me? All works have been duly tendered," KR Puram MLA BA Basavaraj told ET. "Yes, there have been shortcomings. But if there are false works, I won't spare officers."

Former BJP councillor NR Ramesh, who has filed complaints with various agencies seeking a probe, called it a massive scam. "KRIDL was paid ₹123 crore for works of which, I believe, not even 10% were executed. So clearly, fake bills were generated," he said. A big chunk of city development funds are routed through the BBMP, whose Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad denied pilferage.

"For every work, the project management consultant prepares a project report as per government guidelines. A third-party agency inspects works along with our own officers. Then the bill is paid," he said. "We are making works details public so citizens can see for themselves. Unfortunately, they aren't getting involved."

**CLAIM, COUNTERCLAIM**

Documents show that payments were made to Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Limited (KRIDL) for projects that were never taken up. Here's what politicians say:

**More Funds, More Muck?**

TOP FIVE CONSTITUENCIES THAT RECEIVED NAGAROTTHANA FUNDS

| Constituency        | 2013-14   | 2014-15    | 2015-16 (PWD) | 2015-16 (Ward-level) | Total      |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|---------------|----------------------|------------|
| Rajarajeshwarinagar | ₹19.80 cr | ₹100.14 cr | ₹38.45 cr     | ₹52 cr               | ₹210.39 cr |
| Byatarayanapura     | ₹25 cr    | ₹44.90 cr  | ₹72.29 cr     | ₹33.34 cr            | ₹175.53 cr |
| Mahadevapura        | ₹25.55 cr | ₹60 cr     | ₹55.03 cr     | ₹34.05 cr            | ₹174.53 cr |
| KR Puram            | ₹40.10 cr | ₹38.50 cr  | ₹51.44 cr     | ₹37.56 cr            | ₹167.60 cr |
| Dasarahalli         | ₹30.80 cr | ₹29.30 cr  | ₹36.87 cr     | ₹29.72 cr            | ₹126.69 cr |

**WILL PEOPLE SPARE ME?**

False works? How is that possible? Will people spare me? All works have been duly tendered. Yes, there have been shortcomings. But if there are false works, I won't spare officers

BA BASAVARAJ, KR Puram MLA

**FAKE BILLS WERE MADE**

KRIDL was paid ₹123 crore for works of which, I believe, not even 10% were executed. So clearly, fake bills were generated

NR RAMESH, Former BJP councillor

**BACK TO THE FUTURE?**

## BBMP Shines with Good Q1 Results, Nagaroththana Casts a Long Shadow

ET By Invite



SRIKANTH VISWANATHAN

BBMP's Q1 results came in as the best news of the season for Bengalureans amidst tepid monsoons and the loss of the Royal Challengers in the finals. With the service delivery up 10% sequentially (as measured by the composite service delivery index) and 80% of its projects meeting budgeted cost and time estimates, first quarter 2020-21 proved to be BBMP's best quarter ever since it first published quarterly results in October 2016. Revenue collections for Q1 2020-21 were up 15% at ₹2,700 crore on the back of strong property tax collections, and an uptick in advertising revenues riding on a robust city economy. Capital expenditure on construction and desilting of 500-km of stormwater drains at ₹400 crore in Thanisandra and ₹200 crore on TenderSURE roads in Whitefield led the investment pipeline for Q1, with total capex showing a sequential growth of 12%. Revenue expenditure was up 3% primarily on account of sharper focus on mosquito fogging, with dengue cases

down 20% year on year.

Releasing Bengaluru City Q1 results at the customary press conference in Town Hall, the Metropolitan Mayor commended BBMP's leadership and said quarterly competition among service delivery agencies for servicing Bengalureans was proving to be effective. "These results reinforce our faith in reinstating Bengaluru as the best city in India to live and work within the next three years, arresting the city's decline for a decade and more. The era of radical transparency in the operations of BBMP, BWSSB, BDA and BMTC that we ushered in during 2016 has paid rich dividends, and created a strong partnership between

Bengalureans and the city government," he said. The Bengaluru City Dashboard, the quarterly performance snapshot of civic agencies, was presented by civic

agency heads as part of the quarterly press conference. The Mayor's reference to higher levels of citizen participation was borne out by a record 523,647 downloads of the City Dashboard from the city government's website. Commenting on the partnership between communities and the BBMP, Ms Sneha Nandihal, cofounder of I Change Indira Nagar, one of Bengaluru's largest community associations, said, "Quarterly reports that show where money has been spent in neighbourhoods and

give details of status of civic projects in a user-friendly mobile app, with reasons for delays and cost over-runs have helped BBMP reclaim its credibility with us".

The controversy over the state government's Nagaroththana grants disbursed to the BWSSB during 2016-17 continued to rock the State Assembly with opposition members demanding an independent chartered accountant's audit of the BWSSB. "The Open Works platform implemented by the BBMP in 2016 shows details of every civic work on a map, with pictures, names and contact details of contractors and engineers, scanned copies of all project documents. Nagaroththana works of the BBMP are covered under the platform. We need other civic agencies to do the same as well," said Chandrima, a civic analyst with a city NGO.

The BBMP implemented the much-rewarded Open Works platform after the controversy over the utilisation of Nagaroththana grants in 2016. The platform provides in an open data format details of every single civic work and every single rupee spent by the BBMP in Bengaluru city.

PS: Rewind to 2016. This is a future we Bengalureans can quite easily claim for ourselves. But will our civic agencies start putting out quarterly performance reports from October 2016? The state should set the example with a Nagaroththana grants quarterly report.

(The author is Coordinator - Advocacy and Reforms at Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy)

# BBMP Likely to Drop Indoor Stadium Plan on Citizens' Protests



Schoolchildren want a field day

**Our Bureau**

**Bengaluru:** The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) may drop the controversial plan to convert a public playground located along the fourth main road in Indiranagar 1st Stage into an indoor stadium, following stiff resistance from citizens.

City Development Minister K J George announced last week that the ground would be developed as an indoor stadium jointly by BBMP and Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation. "Nobody is rigid about it. There

was a demand from some users of the basketball court that it needs better infrastructure. I will recommend to the minister (George) to drop the plan if residents do not want an indoor stadium," BBMP Commissioner N Manjunath Prasad told ET on Sunday. Residents also dug out a government order that called on the civic body to drop any building plans on the ground.

ET, on July 6, was the first report that citizens would launch a campaign against the indoor stadium plan. More than 200 schoolchildren from Holy Shepherd and Kairalee Niketan schools staged a protest at

the playground on Saturday. This was the ground residents fought to reclaim after the civic body allowed a private cricket coaching academy founded by former cricketers Venkatesh Prasad and Sujith Somasundar to occupy a portion of it.

Apparently, the Urban Development Department had asked the BBMP to drop the indoor stadium plan five months ago through a government order dated

February 25, 2016. "I am aware of this. I'll dig into the documents. If the playground is meant to be an open space, we will not bother going ahead with the indoor stadium plan. Perhaps, we will make the place neat and leave it at that," Prasad said.

Meanwhile, the residents' association of Time Apartment in Indiranagar has offered to take up maintenance of the ground. "We are skeptical about anything authorities say. They should allow us, the community, to maintain the playground," said Sneha Nandihal from I Change Indira Nagar, a residents collective.

**Good Samaritan** Your Monday Morning Mood Enhancer

## Found a Clean Spot? Thank this Student

Five months before Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched his Swachh Bharat Abhiyan in October 2014, a law student in Bengaluru decided to take matters in his own hands.

Amith Amarnath was tired of listening to people complain about garbage and do nothing about it. So, along with six friends, he decided to register a non-profit called 'Youth for Parivarthan' that went from place to place conducting spot-fixes and clean-up drives. "We joined hands with the BBMP and started work. Our motto is Stop Complaining, Start Acting," says Amarnath.

"They started at a children's play area in Banashankari II Stage. "We got mixed reactions. While some appreciated it, others demotivated us saying that it was a one-time effort and things would go back to square one," recounts the 22-year-old, who is now working with law firm HS Sonmath & Associates. "What they don't realise is that maintenance is a collective responsibility."

Along with his core team and a group of volunteers, he identified public areas and footpaths ridden with garbage. They pooled their money to buy paint, brushes and other material for the 'Parivarthan Drive'. As word of their activity spread, Amarnath started receiving email and Facebook requests from volunteers.

Since 2014, Youth for Parivarthan has carried out 68 spot-fixes, in Jayanagar, Halasuru, Shivajinagar, Vinayaka Nagar, Uttarahalli, SG Palaya and Padmanabhanagar. They have close to 1,200 members, of which 400 are active. On an average, at least 30-40 people turn up for every spot-fix. "During a clean-up, we go door-to-door telling people what we are doing. Many join us. Those who don't, provide us with food, water and juice." Each spot-fix takes six to eight hours.

Money has not been an issue,



Amith Amarnath

Amarnath explains. "But we ask locals to contribute because if they spend money, they will have a sense of ownership." Every new member pays a one-time membership fee of ₹100. They have not approached anyone for grants so far.

Amarnath says that since 2014, there has been a tremendous shift in the city's mindset towards cleanliness. Which is why, perhaps, of the 68 spot-fixes Parivarthan has carried out, almost 30 were public requests. "We have also seen a 72% success rate. In a few areas like Chennammaanakere Achukattu and Uttarahalli, where things fell back, we plan to visit them again

**ON PUBLIC DEMAND**  
**Of the 68 spot-fixes Parivarthan has carried out, almost 30 were public requests**

and ask the local corporator to ensure that the place remains clean," he says.

Prabhavati Ramesh, councillor, Putehalli, says that she approached Amarnath to remove black spots from the ward. "Amith and his volunteers beautify the spot, paint, plant greens and sometimes also put up seating in the area so that it can be utilised by people. They have cleared 10 spots — almost 70% — in the area," she said.

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At least 30-40 volunteers turn up for every spot-fix

# Waffle, Why Not!

The criss-cross patterned treat with a line-up of delightful toppings is becoming an all-day dining option in Bengaluru. Here's what getting this Belgian-classic a growing number of fans. **Smita Balram** finds out

**WAFFLE WANT**

- **First it was the cupcake and doughnut onslaught.** Now, it's waffles all the way in Bengaluru's five-star hotels, premium restaurants like Café Noir and Monkey Bar, dessert lounges like Movenpick Ice-Cream on Lavelle Road and Haagen Daaz at 1MG Mall, to exclusive places like Waffle Waale at Royal Meenakshi Mall, Belyum at Phoenix Mall to Waffle Stories, the first waffle-only place, at Orion Mall.
- **Offering over 500** customisable options, Waffle Stories opened three branches in two years. Partner Pranitha Darshak says, "Idea clicked when I was looking for a fun go-to place for just waffle last monsoon. People are bored of cupcakes and doughnuts."
- **According to Bodhanwala,** waffles find most takers on week-ends. "I easily sell 80 waffles between Saturday and Sunday. It's a 9-5 treat."
- **Monkey Bar sells** 30 to 40 portions a week. As waffles go practically with everything from bananas to bacon, butter and honey to fried chicken, they find its versatility the winning point.

**WHAT IS A WAFFLE?**

Cooked between two plates, waffle is leavened batter made using flour, butter, sugar, yeast, milk and eggs. The warm and fluffy resultant is decorated with sweet or savoury toppings. The former usually is with syrups, fruits and whipped cream. Savoury waffles with meat and veggie toppings are gradually foraying into the top-drawer menus.



**HISTORY**

Theories trace its roots to Belgium. The word 'waffle' first appeared in English in 1725. Chef and restaurateur Xerxes Bodhanwala, who serves sour-dough waffles at his eatery Red Fork, says, "Like our idli, waffle was popular street food in Belgium served typically as hot waffle with icing sugar. It was later Americanised with whipped cream, ice-cream, syrups and fruits."

PRICE ₹150 to ₹500

**WAFFLE-BEVERAGE PAIRING**

A cup of hot coffee is the most sought-after beverage to wash down a heavy-duty waffle

**WHAT MAKES THE WAFFLE TICK?**

ASLAM GAFOOR, Food & beverage expert

Waffles command a place of their own. It's not a cupcake/pastry/ice cream. Easily customised and accessorised, and reasonable pricing makes it a hangout meal

**POPULAR TOPPINGS**

- MAPLE SYRUP
- MELTED BUTTER
- FRUITS - STRAWBERRIES, BANANAS,
- BLUEBERRIES
- HONEY
- WHIPPED CREAM
- CHOCOLATE SAUCE

**DINER DIARY**

PAVITRA GHANSHYAM, radio jockey and voice-over artist

Waffle is all-weather comfort food. I love it topped with dollops of cream, strawberries and maple syrup. I have even named my dog Waffle

**WAFFLE WINNERS**

- **Red Fork** - Sour-dough waffle with vanilla ice-cream, maple syrup and butter; Or fully-loaded with green apple/poached pears/cookie-crumbs, marshmallows and ice-cream
- **Waffle Stories** - Nutella/Kitkat /Snicker/ Savoury made using Italian seasonings and toppings in cheese, mayonnaise, salad
- **Monkey Bar** - Maple and chilli marinated fried chicken with black pepper waffles, bacon floss, bourbon honey and green Sriracha
- **Movenpick** - Swiss chocolate obsession

**FUTURE**

Indianisation could be the improvisation. "Future could see sour-dough waffle served with chutney or stew like a dosa," says Xerxes Bodhanwala.