

Talking point: Some cities hire bouncers to protect doctors, but B'luru isn't that paranoid yet

Attack by MP adds to nervousness of doctors

Meghana Choukkar

BENGALURU: Uttara Kanna-da MP Ananth Kumar Hegde's assault on doctors in Sirsi has brought the focus back on the vulnerability of medical personnel.

On Tuesday, Hegde thrashed two doctors and a hospital staffer, angry that his mother had been made to wait for the treatment of a fracture.

Doctors, nurses, paramed-ical staff and even security guards fear assaults by relatives of patients in case of an un-favourable treatment outcome.

Tall, muscular men walking around hospital corridors is not an uncommon sight in Mum-bai, New Delhi, Pune, Hyder-abad and Chennai.

Fed up of the constant at-tacks they come under, hospi-tals there are hiring bouncers. They are not meant to inti-midate patients but to protect doctors from physical harm. "It is a costly affair, so in Maha-rashtra five to seven hospitals form a group and hire bounc-ers. When there is an alert from a hospitals, they rush there," a city doctor said. The practice is not followed in Bengaluru yet.

At heart institute

"People barge into ICUs and when the guard tries to stop them, they attack him," said Dr C N Manjunath, director of Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardio-vascular Sciences and Re-search. Patients have unreal-istic expectations from doctors, he reckons. "Doctors are easily

Attacks in flashback

DECEMBER 2016
Kin of accident victim ransack Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences (HIMS) and attack doctors and staff.

SEPTEMBER 2016
Relatives of a patient attack staff and ransack Apollo Hospital, Ban-nerghatta Road, after death of seven-year-old girl admitted for fever.

MARCH 2015
Family of an H1N1 patient dam-age property and attack doctors at Mahaveer Jain Hospital, Vas-anthnagar, after her death.

JUNE 2013
Vinay Kulkarni, Minister for Mines and Geology roughs up a paediatrician at the Karnataka Institute of Medical Sciences, alleging medical negligence.



Junior doctors continue their protest for the fourth day at Hassan Institute of Medical Sciences (HIMS) on Wednesday condemning the recent attack on doctors by the relatives of an accident victim. DH PHOTO

accessible, unlike government officials. So when something goes wrong, people immedi-ately vent their anger on them," said Dr Veeranna, general sec-etary of the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Karnataka chapter. If the family believes doctors have been negligent, they should take legal recourse and complain to the authori-ties. Why beat them up, he wondered.

"Most hospitals have securi-ty guards but they stand at the entrance. If people attack the

doctor in his consultation room, he has no protection," said Dr Rajashekar S Bellary, president of IMA, Karnataka. At Jayadeva Hospital, attacks were so frequent that female doctors refused to work on the night shift.

To tackle this, the hospital appointed a gunman and sta-tioned him in the Outpatient Department (OPD) during the day and the casualty ward at night.

But not all hospitals can af-ford to hire gunmen and extra

security guards, Dr Bellary said.

Rural service

Frequent attacks on doctors is one reason why many are re-luctant to work in taluk and dis-trict hospitals, said Dr Manju-nath.

"Such incidents are demor-alising. If this goes on, common people will suffer because doc-tors will be scared to take up emergency cases, fearing harm," he said.

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Up to
₹50,000
penalty and 3 years in jail for assaulting medical staff

2X In case of vandalism, offender pays an additional penalty and twice the price of the equipment

Hospital in danger? Here's a support group

A support group has come into existence to help hospitals facing threats of violence.

The Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association, abbreviated to PHANA, runs a crisis support cell.

It has divided hospitals into seven zones, to match the po-lice divisions in Bengaluru, and uses a Whatsapp group for each.

When an attack is imminent,

members from hospitals in the vicinity rush to the spot.

Simultaneously, the jurisdic-tional police are alerted.

"The idea is to match the num-bers of the attackers, be-cause often it is not just rela-tives. Local goons also join the mob. When we get there, we don't take the hospital's side. We just tell people not to at-tack, and to approach the right authorities," said Dr Nagendra Swamy, former president of

I am deeply hurt by the actions of the MP. I will speak to DC of Uttara Kannada and take action because it is my duty to protect doctors. We are trying to provide more doctors for rural areas. If this is how they are treated, how can I ask doctors to continue serving people?

K R RAMESH KUMAR,
Minister for Health and Family Welfare

involved in providing medical care. The Act passed in 2009 protects doctors, nurses, trainees and other hospital staff from assaults.

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In brief

Cardiac centre launched

» A dedicated cardiac reha-bilitation centre was launched on Wednesday at M S Ramaiah Narayana Heart Centre at Mathikere here. The centre will help cardiac pa-tients to return to an active life and prevent recurrence of car-diac events after surgery.

D Nagamalesh U M, senior consultant, Heart Failure and Transplant Cardiologist, M S Ramaiah Narayana Heart Centre, said a primary cause for the re-occurrence of a car-diac ailment is imbalance in the autonomic nervous sys-tem of the patient. Apart from treatment, a focused correc-tive programme to reduce the risk of a repeat occurrence and post-surgery monitoring are crucial in this regard, he said.

‘Don’t rush new textbooks’

» A BJP delegation led by MLC Ramachandra Gow-da on Wednesday met Governor Vajubhai Vala and sought his intervention to im-press upon the government not to rush through intro-duction of new textbooks in the next academic year. The dele-gation told the Governor at Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru that the new textbooks are not yet ready and it will be imprac-tical to introduce them in the academic year 2017-18.

Drunk man drives into footpath; 5 hurt

» A drunk man ploughed his sedan into a footpath in Devanahalli, on the northern outskirts of the city, damaging at least three food carts and injuring five people on Tues-day night.

Srinivas, 35, a resident of Devanahalli, lost control of his white Toyota Etios around 9.30 pm and crashed it into the walkway near a play-ground opposite the Devana-halli Town Municipal Council office. The car hit the food carts that went on to strike customers. Four to five people were injured and treated as outpatients at a hospital.

Public caught Srinivas and thrashed him before turning him over to the police. Police took him to the Devanahalli police station where he was subjected to the blood alcohol test. The content of alcohol in his blood was found to be 186 mg/dL, way above the permis-sible limit. He was booked for driving under the influence of alcohol in a rash and negligent manner, endangering public lives and safety. He was reman-ded in judicial custody.

Goraguntepalya road overbridge set to open for traffic tomorrow

The RoB is expected to make travelling on this stretch a breeze

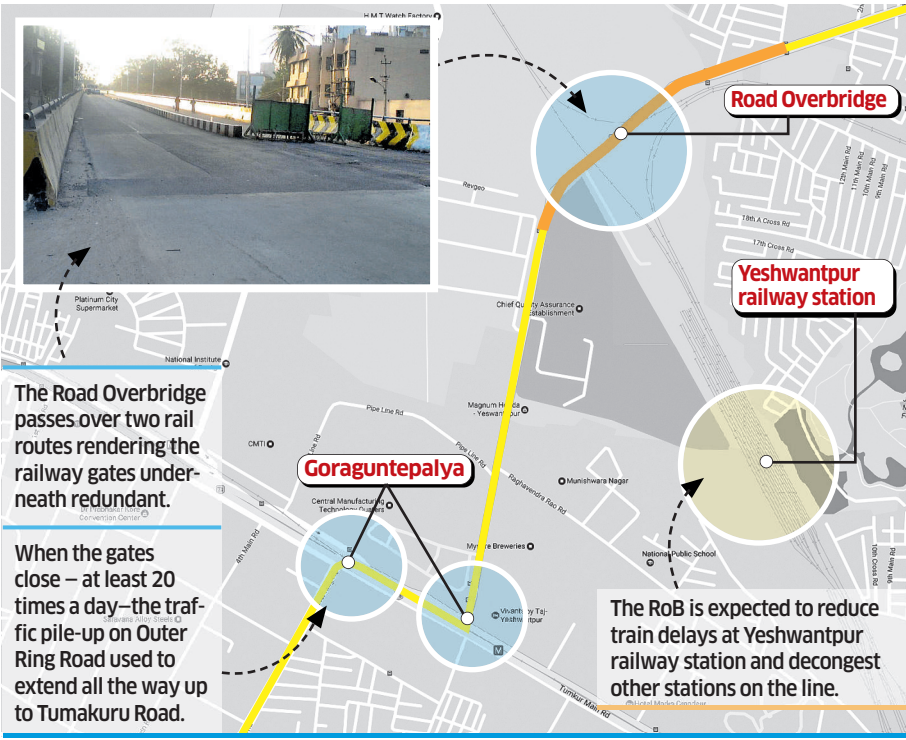
Rasheed Kappan

BENGALURU: Four years in the making, the Goragun-tepalya Road Overbridge (RoB) along the Outer Ring Road is all set for a formal launch on January 6. De-signed to decongest the ORR, the project will also ease traffic on Tumakuru Road, just in time for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event kick-ing off on Saturday.

Built jointly by Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) and South Western Railway, the RoB passes over two rail routes rendering the railway gates redundant. Frequent clo-sures of the gates triggers mas-sive traffic pile-ups on the busy Ring Road. The traffic police have often been at loggerheads with Railways, insisting that closure frequency cannot be in-creased.

Perennially stuck at the gates in kilometre-long queues, ORR commuters are bound to heave a huge sigh of relief. Chief Min-ister Siddaramaiah is expected to inaugurate the partially completed RoB on January 6, R Hithendra, Additional Com-missioner of Police, Traffic, said. Two-way traffic will be al-lowed on the RoB, only one ramp of which is complete. SWR is expected to ready the second ramp soon.

During gate closures - at least 20 times a day - the traffic pile-



up extends all the way up to Tu-makuru Road, a small stretch of which is part of the Ring Road.

The commute from BEL Circle on ORR to Goraguntepalya now takes about an hour. The RoB is expected to make trav-elling on this stretch a breeze and reduce congestion at Goragun-tepalya by over 50%.

This, as traffic police officials point out, will benefit delegates

heading to the Bangalore In-ternational Exhibition Centre, where the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas event is scheduled to be held from January 7 to 9.

Once the railway gates un-derneath the bridge are per-manently closed, train halts at Yeshwantpur railway station are likely to be reduced to three minutes. Currently, Tumaku-ru-bound trains are not allowed to proceed from the first three

platforms till the gates are closed. Incoming trains are stuck at Chikkabanavara sta-tion.

People advocating the sub-urban rail project say trains from the Krantivira Sangolli Rayanna city railway station can now chug into Yeshwant-pur station at smaller intervals, decongesting tracks at the crowded city station.

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No migratory birds at BBP, so no bird flu threat

BENGALURU: The bird flu outbreak that forced the clo-sure of Mysuru zoo for one month poses no threat to Bannerghatta Biological Park (BBP). This is because, migratory birds do not visit BBP, the park's executive di-rector Santosh Kumar told DH.

Also, the birds in the zoo are in enclosures and do not come in any contact with migratory birds. However, based on the directions from Zoo Authority of Karnataka, a close watch on the avian population is being kept and precautionary mea-sures are being taken, he said.

Visitors are being asked to wet their feet in potassium per-manganate solution placed at the zoo entrance and tyres of vehicles entering the zoo will also be sprayed with the solu-tion. Zoo keepers have also been directed to keep them-

ZAK chief, zoo director lock horns

Zoo Authority of Karnataka (ZAK) chairperson Mallige Veeresh expressed unhappiness over the decision of Chama-rajendra Zoological Gardens, Mysuru, executive director K Kamala, to close the zoo for a month, reports DHNS from Mysuru. Mallige said, "I told her I will be in the ZAK office on Wednesday and the issue can be discussed at the govern-ing council meeting. But, I learnt about the decision to close the zoo for a month only through the media," she said. How-ever, Kamala claimed she had communicated the decision to Mallige after a meeting with officials.

selves clean and keep a close watch on animals and birds.

Dr Manjunatha V, Scientis-t-1, Wild Animal Disease Diag-nostic Lab, Institute of Animal Health and Veterinary Biolog-icals (IAHVB), added that there are 500 birds of 25 species in the zoo, including ostrich, pea-cock, pelicans, parakeets and silver pheasant. He added that wild migratory birds, like ducks, carry the H1N1 virus

which spreads through water and fecal matter. Though water bodies of the national park and zoo's safari area are connected, there is no contact of these wa-ter bodies with the birds in the zoo area. Hence, the chances of bird flu infecting avian po-pulation here is minimal.

Deputy Conservator of Forests, Ganesh Bhat, Mysuru forest division, said there is no bird flu threat at Ranganthittu

and Kokrebellur conservation reserves. Though a large num-ber of migratory birds visit the two places in Mandya, so far there have been no cases re-ported.

He said that a month ago, two birds died in Kokrebellur and their samples were sent to IAHVB for analysis. The re-ports were negative. Also last week, another death was re-ported and again the reports were negative. No deaths have been reported in Ranganthittu so far. However, a close watch is being kept at both the places. A team of veterinarians also visited the conservation re-serves on Wednesday and di-rected the staff to keep a close watch on the birds and collect samples every alternate day for analysis. This year, around 200 migratory birds visited Kokre-bellur.

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1,841 illegal hoardings removed, BBMP tells HC

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahana-gara Palike (BBMP) on Wednesday submitted to the high court that there are 2,439 unauthorised hoardings in the city. The civic agency also said that they have so far removed 1,841 such billboards.

There are 605 unautho-rised hoardings yet to be re-moved. BBMP counsel V Sreenidhi submitted the status report which said, an amount of Rs 29.59 crore has been collected as advertise-ment tax from 2,621 advertis-ing agencies till December 31, 2016. At the previous hearing, the BBMP commissioner had informed the court that BBMP has issued 5,507 no-tices demanding annual charges, penalty charges and interest charges. The total amount demanded is Rs. 331.92 crore. In the status re-port, the Palike has said that of all the persons to whom no-tices were issued, only 94 have made the full payment

amounting to Rs 1.88 crore. Justice Vineet Kothari is hearing a batch petitions where in Shine Outdoor Me-dia, an advertising agency and others have challenged the de-mand notices issued by BBMP.

The judge had passed an order on December 15 framing certain guidelines in tax col-lection after which BBMP had collected nearly Rs 24.98 crore from 879 hoardings as adver-tisement tax from eight zones of the city. The judge directed BBMP to file its next status re-port and adjourned the next hearing to January 25, 2017.

I-T proceedings against Yogeshwara quashed

» The high court on Wednesday quashed the Income Tax department pro-ceedings initiated against for-mer minister C P Yogeshwara, his brother C P Gangadharesh-war and their firm Megacity (Bangalore), Builders and De-velopers. Yogeshwara and his brother had approached the court challenging the I-T de-partment proceedings initi-ated against them for not fil-ing their returns on time. The pe-titioners argued that they had delayed filing their returns but had eventually filed them. Justice Anand Byrareddy al-lowed the petitions and quash-ed the I-T department proceed-ings initiated against them.

Mayor fumes at pathetic state of Palike hospitals

BENGALURU: A visit to the BBMP's two maternity homes left Mayor G Padmavathi flab-basted on Wednesday.

The mayor carried out a sud-den inspection of the Palike-run maternity homes only to come across the lack of hygiene in the hospitals and the missing doctors. She gave an earful to the medical health officers for the poor maintenance of these hospitals.

The most annoying sight for the mayor was garbage littered all over the premises at Hala-suru Maternity Home. Taking the garbage contractor to task, she ordered the officials to im-pose a penalty of Rs 50,000 on him. The mayor blasted Dr Latha who is in charge of the hospital for the untidy inter-iors. On noticing that the rusted operation table and racks, she directed the officials to im-me-diately replace them.

Infuriated with the pathetic condition of the hospital, Pad-mavathi questioned the offi-cials, "Why would anyone visit this hospital if it is so badly maintained? Is this how you keep your house?"

There were more shockers in store for the mayor at Mur-phy Town Hospital, where doc-tors were not present. The duty nurse too had gone to complete her personal chores. The phar-macist was playing the role of doctor by giving medicines to the patients. There was no medical or paramedical staff to look after the hospital.

She directed the chief of medical officer to issue show-cause notices to the doctors why they were not present in the hospital. The mayor warned that henceforth she would not tolerate such indis-cipline.

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Airtel's V-Fiber broadband comes to Bengaluru

BENGALURU, DHNS: To offer superfast broadband to its cus-tomers, Bharti Airtel, India's largest telecommunications services provider, on Wednes-day announced launch of 'V-Fiber' in Bengaluru.

V-Fiber is a green technol-ogy and there is no new wiring or drilling required at an exist-ing customer's premises. One simply needs to upgrade to a new 'V-Fiber' modem.

Airtel also announced the launch of unlimited free voice calling for all broadband cus-tomers. The facility is now

available across broadband plans and customers can make unlimited free voice calls to any network across the country at no extra cost.

C Surendran, CEO, Karnata-ka, Bharti Airtel told DH, "This will help three lakh existing Airtel broadband customers, who can an upgrade to 'V-Fiber' speeds to enjoy superfast data speeds at no extra month-ly cost. If they are not happy with the service within one month, Airtel will refund the activation charges in the next bill cycle."

In city today

GENERAL
Al-Aman Educational and Welfare Trust: Inauguration of Ashiana Food Bank, Frazer Town, 11 am.

NMKRV PU College for Women: Annual day celebrations, Nadoja Dr Mahesh Joshi, additional director general of Doddarshanah, College premises, Jayanagar, 9 am.

CULTURAL
The Indian Institute of World Cul-ture: Smt Radhamma Gopalakrishna Gupta Endowment Programme, com-positions of Saint Thyagaraja by K Sri-latha, Institute premises, B P Wadia Road, Basavanagudi, 6 pm.
Natyajana: "13th Nrittyotsava," inau-guration by statistician Nagaraj Dasarahalli, K H Kala Soudha, Raman-jaanya Temple Compound, Hanuma-nthnagar, Basavanagudi, 4.30 pm.

RELIGIOUS
Infant Jesus Church and Shrine: Novena Masses, Church premises, Viveknagar, Tamil and English (5.45 am), English (6.30 am), Kannada (8 am, 10 am), Telugu (9 am), Tamil (11.15

am), Malayalam (3 pm), Konkani (4 pm), English (5 pm), Tamil (6 pm).
Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira: Vocal by Mahadevan Shankaranarayanan, open air theatre, 9th Main, BSK 2nd Stage, 5.45 pm.

City weather

FORECAST: Mainly clear sky.
TEMPERATURES
Maximum 29.0 C
Minimum 15.8 C
Rainfall Nil
Humidity 38 pc
Sunrise 6.43 am
Sunset 6.07 pm
Moonrise 11.54 am
Moonset --
(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm. Source: IMD)