

Kids put to gruelling screening for nursery, class 1 admissions

Meghana Choukkar

BENGALURU: Hour-long tests followed by interviews in which the students are asked a series of questions to determine their readiness for a course. These are not for those seeking admissions to college but for children as young as five and six years old.

In several schools in the city, admission to Class 1 requires children to answer a paper. A child who cannot frame sentences using a given word, write opposite words, add and subtract two-digit numbers, may not have a chance to enter school.

A parent, who is moving to Bengaluru from Gurgaon for the next academic year, was uncomfortable to have her son take such exams for Class 1. “He was taken away to a separate classroom to give the exam. Though the test was elementary, I was uncomfortable because I think it is too in-

timidating for such a young child.” In Gurgaon, schools interact only with parents leaving the child out of the process, she said.

When Yashaswini Sharathkumar’s son had to proceed from Kindergarten to Class 1 in the same school, he had to undergo an assessment to find out if he was fit for ICSE syllabus. If not, he would have to continue in the state syllabus. “The school wanted to conduct a written test. But when the parents collectively protested saying that the children were too young, they settled for an oral test.” The child had to answer questions on grammar and identify vowels and consonants among other questions.

Such screening processes begin much before Class 1. Yashaswini’s son had an oral test for admission to pre-nursery in the same school. He had to recite the alphabet, name the months of the year and identify animals. “The school has a reputation of excellent results in Class 10. The stu-

dents get nothing below first class. They want to maintain this standard so there is pressure on children from the beginning,” Yashaswini said.

All of two years and 10 months, Trupti Kulkarni’s son was rejected admission by a preschool for the 2017-18 academic year. “The teacher did not address me at all. She asked my son to identify objects and even asked him to draw standing and sleeping lines,” Trupti said.

Schools defend the practice saying that they receive a large number of applications and some form of filtering is required. Referring to the tests in a school where she used to teach, Priya Venkat said, “Schools need a method to filter applicants when there is a vacancy for only 10 in Class 1 but 150 apply. Indian preschool system is very competitive so they are considered ready enough to do a test.” Selecting by picking lots had been considered but parents preferred to have tests, she added.

DH News Service

Experts speak

Such tests are a clear violation of Section 13 of the Right to Education Act. It says that the parent or the child should not be subjected to any screening procedure. This applies at the entry-level such as LKG or Class 1 but it can also be applied up to Class 8.

Nirnanjan Aradhya V P, senior fellow, Centre for Child and the Law, NLSIU

We send directives to member schools every year to refrain from conducting tests at entry-level. If education has to be stress-free so should the entrance process. The trend is changing now. Over the last three years, the number of schools following this practise has reduced.

Mansoor Ali Khan, general secretary, Mgmt of Independent CBSE Schools Association

Why should one test children at all, when the very purpose of schools is to educate whoever comes to them? Schools can engage with parents to know their views on education and discuss the school's philosophy and expectations on parental involvement. But testing young children for admission should not be done.

Kinnari Pandya, faculty & anchor, Early Childhood Education specialization, Azim Premji University

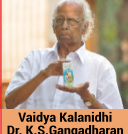

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HM accused of raping student

CHIKKABALLAPUR: The head master of the government higher primary school in Gujjeppalli village of the taluk is accused of raping a student of his school.

The crime came to light after an anonymous call was made to the deputy director of Women and Child development department, Muniraju, on Monday.

The officer, who swung into action immediately, went to the house of the girl along with personnel from the district child protection unit. After obtaining information from her parents, the officer admitted the girl to the government hospital in Bagepalli.

Duggappa, the teacher, is absconding.



Drinking water overflows on the road near the entrance to the Palace Grounds at Vasanthnagar on Monday. DH PHOTO.

Water fills roads as pipeline bursts

BENGALURU, DHNS: Water drained out on the traffic-filled Palace Cross Road at the entrance of Palace Grounds in Vasanthnagar on Monday as the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) broke open a large concrete pipeline as part of a repair work.

The pipeline was burst around 9 am, and water filled the railway underbridge, obstructing traffic.

Shankar M, a two-wheeler rider, said the water was stagnant and almost touched his knee. A BWSSB team arrived

after sometime and started draining the stretch, he added.

An official in the BWSSB's central division told *DH* that the old concrete pipeline was cut open as it had to be re-assembled and connected to a mild steel pipeline being laid from the underbridge till the High Grounds tank.

“The old pipeline stored some water, which drained out when the pipeline was being cut open. The linking work is 90% complete and the road was cleared within minutes,” the official said.

‘Conspiracy to unseat seer’

BENGALURU: Sri Akhila Havyaka Mahasabha director Mahabaleshwar Bhat has accused the Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court S K Mukherjee and Edurkula Ishwar Bhat (petitioner in a PIL) of hatching a conspiracy against Ramachandrapura Mutt seer, Raghaveshwara Bharathi.

Ishwar Bhat has filed a public interest litigation (PIL) in the high court seeking directions to Raghaveshwara Bharathi to step down as the seer of Ramachandrapura Mutt.

Mahabaleshwar Bhat, in an affidavit filed before the high court on November 19, 2016, has said that Ishwar Bhat and his associates were using the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh to pressure Justice Mukherjee to get a favourable judgement.

C M Krishnashastri, the Akhila Bharatha Prashikshana Pramukh of Samskrita Bharathi, a wing of the RSS, introduced Ishwar Bhat and his associates to Dwaraka Shankaracharya Peetha seer Swarupananda Swami. The Swami heard Ishwar Bhat and his associates’ complaints against Raghaveshwara Bharathi and pressured Justice Mukherjee to act against the Ramachandrapura Mutt Seer.

“Justice Mukherjee is a disciple of Swarupananda Swami. Hence, he will not do justice to the petitioner” Mahabaleshwar Bhat explained, saying that he was willing to face contempt of court if his charges against Ishwar Bhat and Justice Mukherjee were untrue. Swarupananda Swami had recently visited Bengaluru and stayed at the house of Congress MLA Dr K Sudhakar. C M Krishnashastri led a team of “like-minded” people to Swarupananda Swami.

Efforts are being made to pressure Justice Mukherjee for a verdict against Raghaveshwara Bharathi Swami, he said.

Meanwhile, the division bench headed by Justice Mukherjee adjourned the hearing on the PIL following a request by the pontiff’s advocate.

DH News Service



A scene from the play ‘Maya Bazaar’.

Classic ‘Maya Bazaar’ now adapted to stage in English

BENGALURU: The timeless 1957 Telugu and Tamil classic movie ‘Maya Bazaar’, a story on mythology and fantasy, based on the epic Mahabharata, is well etched in our minds.

Recreating the magic yet again, Bangalore Little Theatre (BLT) had adapted the movie to the stage. The one-hour play will be staged at multiple venues across the city.

Directed by Sridhar Ramathanan, the play in English revolves on Ghatothkacha (Bhima and Hidimbi’s son) and his merry Rakshasa men uniting two lovers Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna and Subhadra with Shashirekha, daughter of Balarama and Revati.

How Abhimanyu wins the hand of Shashirekha, the love of his life, with some help from Ghatothkacha and his rakshasas and Krishna, original magician, forms the climax of the tale.

BLT started staging the play

Upcoming shows

- **New Horizon College:** November 26, 27
- **Purandhara Bhavan:** December 3
- **Alliance Francaise:** December 14
- **Ranga Shankara:** December 23, 24

starring actors from November 17 and so far, had five shows at Alliance Francaise and National Public School, Koramangala. "A total of 22 shows are being staged at places such as Alliance Francaise, Purandara Bhavan, New Horizon College Auditorium, NPS Koramangala and Ranga Shankara. The response so far has been overwhelming. The play runs for 100 minutes, including a 10-minute interval," said Poornima Kannan from BLT.

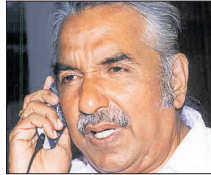
The play enacted in two

acts, is narrated in a contemporary style and language, keeping in the mind, young and the old audiences at the same time.

BLT said the proceeds from the sale of tickets, priced at Rs 200 each, will go towards the Indian Cancer Society and in support of children with cancer. For details, contact BLT at 080-22236890.

City court summons former Kerala CM Chandy in solar case

BENGALURU, PTI: A city court today directed former Kerala Chief Minister Oommen Chandy to appear before it in connection with a solar project cheating case.



Oommen Chandy

Additional City Civil and Sessions Court Judge N R Channakeshava directed Chandy to be present on December 13.

On October 24, the court had directed six persons, including Chandy, and a firm to together pay an amount of Rs 1,60,85,700 to a Bengaluru-based businessman M K Kuruvilla, with 12% interest, for a solar project that did not materialise.

Chandy had filed two applications appealing against the earlier verdict. The first plea challenged the court’s ex parte order and the second sought that his arguments be heard.

Earlier, holding Chandy jointly liable for paying back the money to the petitioner in the case by a firm for a solar power project which did not materialise, the court had said “six defendants, including Chandy and SCOSSA Educational Consultants Pvt Ltd, shall pay the decretal (ordered) sum Rs 1,60,85,700 to the plaintiff with current and future interest at 12% per annum.”

The court had said the defendants must comply with the order within six months failing which Kuruvilla will be entitled

to recover the determined amount from the defendants, in accordance with law.

Kuruvilla had filed a petition last year seeking return of Rs 1,60,85,700 deposit-

ed with SCOSSA Educational Consultants Pvt Ltd, the first defendant, for setting up a solar power project in Kerala. According to Kuruvilla, during 2011, he got acquainted with one Binu Nair who claimed to be the director of Kochi-based SCOSSA. Nair had approached him for setting up a solar power project.

Nair had claimed that one of the directors, Andrews, was Chandy’s first cousin and would be appointed consultant and operate from Abu Dhabi for setting up the project. Also, he had named another person Diljith and claimed that he too was a director in the firm besides being a Youth Congress activist. Nair had claimed Diljith was the private secretary to Chandy.

Kuruvilla had said he gave Rs 1.35 crore to the three persons. After the money was handed over, the trio did not answer his phone calls and allegedly threatened that his entire family would be eliminated.

The Bengaluru-based businessman, in his petition, had sought Rs 1,60,85,700 with 18% interest per annum on the deposited sum along with court expenses.

The court allowed the plea with an interest of 12%.

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1	356/11.11.16	11943 (First Call)	Construction of 02 Nos. E- Type Quarter, 08 Nos. F- Type Quarter, 10 Nos. G-Type Quarter, 20 Nos. H-Type Quarter, 10 Nos. I-Type Quarter, at Balrampur, Distt. Balrampur -Ramanujganj (CG.).	728.81	02.12.16
2	357/15.11.16	12028 (First Call)	Construction Of High Level Bridge i/c App. Road Across Kharfari Nalla On Bilashpur Main Road To Keshgaon Road.	319.38	06.12.16
3	358/15.11.16	12111 (First Call)	Widening & Upgrading of Nagarda to Baradwar Road from Km. 1/2 to 14/4 = 13.40.	2442.99	06.12.16
4	359/16.11.16	12103 (First Call)	(Under Nabard Scheme) Construction Work Of Ghorari Approach Road, Length 1.30 Km.,At Distt. Durg.	225.80	07.12.16

For more details on the tender and bidding process please visit the above mentioned portal.

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