

# THE BEACON

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## Neck to neck battle heats up in Puthupally

**Kessiah Joseph**

The developmental contributions in the field of education and medical facilities by the United Democratic Front (UDF) have enabled them to gain confidence about the upcoming election in Puthupally, mentioned Rahul Mamkootathil, youth Congress state general secretary.

Following the demise of former Chief Minister Oommen Chandy, a by-election is taking place on September 5 for the MLA seat in Puthupally. After 53 years, the seat is vacant and the state is looking forward to the results. His successor's son Chandy Oommen is contesting for UDF against Jaick C Thomas representing the Left Democratic Front (LDF) party.

Talking about the current political circumstances, amkootathil said "Inflation rates are high in Kerala and corruption is rampant, all these factors are affecting the public." He affirmed that this would help them win the election.

Mamkootathil mentioned how Oommen Chandy had a high educational and a good political background. His work during Covid-19 and the 2018 floods was commended by people and restored their confidence in the UDF party. "There are a lot of developmental projects that happened in Puthupally when congress was in office," he added.

## Bengaluru City police address concerns

**Sinchan Saha & Anu Priya**

**BENGALURU:** Lack of proper infrastructure, unruly parking and threats from several politically influential people have made several localities in Bengaluru unsafe and hard to live in. Several complaints to the police station have gone unnoticed, said Smita Shivaprasad, a resident of Seshadripuram.

On Aug 27, Bengaluru police organised 'Masika Janasamparka Divasa' for the public to address their grievances and suggestions where the keynote speaker was B. Dayananda IPS, Police Commissioner of Bengaluru.

## BMTC's futile attempts to aid commuters

**Pratham Basu**

**BENGALURU:** To address the rising problems faced by bus commuters in the city, Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC) set-up new Electronic Display Boards (EDBs) across various bus stops. A lot of crucial issues regarding transparency, information dissemination and proper resource allocation still remain unaddressed and the signboard stands are insufficient, said Shaheen Shasha, member of Bengaluru Bus Prayanikara Vedike (BBPV).

Under the Automated Vehicle Tracking Scheme, Nirbhaya funds have been allocated for the new EDBs at over 200 bus stops across the city. Citizens have tweeted about sightings of these EDBs last week, in Banaswadi, JP Nagar, Palace Grounds etc.



BMTC Electronic Display Boards in Palace Guttahalli

Pratham Basu

However, a recent survey by The Beacon revealed that citizens continue to remain confused about the timings, routes and schedules of various buses as the EDB comes handy for only a section of the society who are literate and familiar with the boards, while lower income groups and uneducated people are still devoid of this.

"In the wake of the growing issue of pollution, emissions and increasing transit times, there is a dire need for improvement in the existing BMTC bus service. The efficacy of the EDB, cannot be measured as of now but I believe that information is power, and such attempts will build confidence among the public," said Shasha.

Talking to The Beacon, she further stated that there are several limitations to the bus service. Published route information is not made available, buses are not running according to the time tables and there are no allocations for fixed bus routes. The EDBs are not efficient as it takes time to register the details, hindrances

in multilingual inclusion as well as there exists a lack of awareness, Shasha expressed.

A commuter from Jalahalli said, "This initiative to put up EDBs is a good one but for illiterates like me it is of no use. We just ask the conductors when the next bus to our destination arrives and carry on."

Another commuter from JP Nagar commented that she was unaware of such a board and resorted to Google Maps entirely. She also pointed out that the board is only limited to three bus details at a time which is a hindrance.

BBPV officials have made five suggestions to improve these situations. These included the reduction of the bus fares and travel time while increasing the number of buses and improving connectivity with greater information transparency.

## Accidents rising in Bangalore's safest area

**Kushal Varma J V**

**BENGALURU:** Poor road maintenance by Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) and drunk driving cases have plagued Malleswaram's road safety. The data on the recorded deaths of the first half of this year is more than the half yearly data registered from the past three years, said Maruti Basaragi, a head constable of Malleswaram police station.

Malleswaram managed to restrain the number of reported accidents consistently in the past three years, as per the reports from Bangalore Mirror in the first week of August. However, this year, 1 death was



Plethora of potholes

Hindustan Times

caused due to drunk driving, 2 from self-inflicted accidents and 7 due to rash and negligent driving as of August 26.

Though only one death involved a drink and drive case, most of the accidents are caused by drunk drivers. The

prevailing pattern with such cases is that they usually occur at the end of every month when most of the employees get their salaries, or during the weekends when corporate employees tend to party, said Basaragi.

"Extremely dissatisfied

with the work done by BBMP. Potholes remain unfixed due to which the underpass at 11th Main Road in Malleswaram has become a hotspot for accidents," said Jagadish Kumar, a constable.

To address these issues, awareness drives are being organised on a regular basis in schools and public gatherings. Rumble strips and high-rise pedestrian crossings are being installed, along with Cat Eye road studs for better visibility of the lanes at night. The station organises a 'Jana Samparka Sabhe' every 2nd and 4th Saturday, where they educate and address public queries, Kumar added.

## Inequitable distribution of SSP Scholarship

**Hemalatha Y.N.**

**BENGALURU:** The scholarships are to be credited to all the students within 10 days and the department is waiting for the sanction of funds by the state government, said Lily Mathew (name changed), Backward Class Welfare Department (BCWD) official.

Students belonging to the backward section have been subjected to unequal distribution of scholarships from State Scholarship Portal (SSP) for over 7 months. The SSP which has served as a financial support for the students pursuing higher studies of all the categories, is now being delayed for Karnataka students.

"We have sent an application to the government regarding this issue as we are getting so many calls regarding the same," said Mathew. She mentioned that they are trying to resolve all the registered complaints on time. Payments were getting credited only to the students belonging to SC/ST and the social welfare department. "Nobody has got the scholarship due to lack of funds," she added.

## Tomato prices take a dip

**Shoab Shakeel**

**BENGALURU:** The price of tomatoes in the market were supposed to drop a week later, but due to the increase in prices, there was piling up of the stock which resulted in a sudden drop in the price of tomatoes, said Nisar Ahmed, a vegetable vendor.

Tomato prices had inflated in June and it continued throughout July and August, due to delay in monsoons, insufficient harvest and extreme climatic conditions. This led to the price hike reaching

263 rupees a kilo in some regions of the country, which have now reduced to 30 to 40 rupees.

Speaking to The Beacon, Ahmed said, "The price per crate of tomatoes went up to 2000 rupees but now has dropped around 600 to 700 per crate depending on the quality. Each crate is about 20 kilograms."

Irrespective of the price hike, people continued purchasing tomatoes, with many customers buying lesser quantities, Ahmed added.