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SNIPPETS

Don't cut salaries of maids, drivers: CM

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Saturday requested employers not to cut salaries of maids, servants, drivers and others, who are unable to come to work due to social distancing and the coronavirus-driven lockdown.

"Your compassionate gesture will support the poor and the needy to overcome this hard time," the CM appealed in a tweet.

Symbolic Karaga this year

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state government has given a conditional approval for the annual Bengaluru Karaga. The festival will be held "symbolically" with not more than five people taking part in it, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said on Saturday.

"This year, the Karaga was set to begin on March 31 and culminate with a procession from the Dharmarayaswamy Temple on April 8. The Karaga is celebrated by the Vahnikula Kshatriya (Thigala) community.

Pay bill on time for uninterrupted power, says Energy dept

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Energy Department of Karnataka on Saturday issued a circular asking consumers everybody to pay up their electricity bills without fail.

The department said that if people fail to pay their monthly electricity bills, it may become 'extremely difficult to provide uninterrupted power supply' in the coming days. In a circular, a copy of which is with *DH*, the Energy Department said, "Escoms are working 24X7 to ensure uninterrupted power supply to you so that you can operate from home and have a comfortable lockdown stay. Escoms' day-to-day expenses are met out of day-to-day revenue collection from consumers."

However, the department has also stated, "If any consumer has genuine, unavoidable difficulty in making the payment, they may represent to the local Escoms office who will consider the representation sympathetically."

Tablighi incident: Shobha suspects 'Corona Jihad'

'Those not furnishing details should be sentenced to life'

CHIKKAMAGALURU, DHNS

Udupi-Chikmagalur MP Shobha Karandlaje on Saturday alleged that people, who took part in the religious gathering at Tablighi Jamaat headquarters in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, were spreading Covid-19 across the country.

Speaking to media, Shobha said that a few of those who took part in the gathering were missing. They might be involved in 'Corona Jihad', she suspected.

"People who participated in Tablighi religious gathering should furnish their details voluntarily to the police and get themselves examined. In addition, they should remain in quarantine. The authorities should trace people who had failed to furnish details. They should be given life sentence" Shobha urged government.

"When they fail to adhere to the law of the land, I feel there is a hidden agenda behind it," she said. Shobha said there was a need to show them the power of the law so that everyone abides by it in the future.

The MP, however, said the authorities were not able to trace those who had attended the gathering.

When Asha workers went to collect details about a woman, who had tested positive to Covid-19 in Sadiq Layout in Bengaluru, they were assaulted. "It is proved that members of one community are not cooperating with the government to contain the spread of coronavirus," she alleged.

The district administration has started distributing rice, tur dal, edible oil and other essential commodities to migrant labourers and poor in the district. The grocery is supplied to those who do not possess ration card as well. The voluntary organisations, philanthropists and donors should extend support, Shobha said.

She said that measures had been taken to supply ration to those living on hilly ranges. Santhosh, who died in a destitute home at Tarikere, was suffering from Tuberculosis, the MP added.

SHOBHA KARANDLAJE
Udupi-Chikmagalur MP

"When they fail to adhere to the law of the land, I feel there is a hidden agenda behind it.

9 from Jamaat quarantined in Virajpet

MADIKERI, DHNS: Kodagu SP Suman D Pennekar said on Saturday that the police had traced nine moulvis from Shura Tablighi Jamaat in Gujarat. They are staying in a rented house in Virajpet taluk. The police are keeping a vigil on them.

The nine moulvis and the owner of the house have been quarantined at a facility on the outskirts of Madikeri. Their throat swab samples have been sent to Mysuru for testing, the SP told reporters.

The moulvis had attended a religious gathering in Mumbai in January. They had come to Virajpet on February 3 and were part of a religious programme held at a mosque for 40 days. When they were about to return home, the lockdown was announced.

They had stayed indoors and had shown no symptoms of Covid-19 since their arrival, Suman said. They have been quarantined as a precautionary measure, she said.

The team of moulvis claimed that they had got themselves checked by a doctor in Virajpet. "We will cross-check their claim. An FIR will be registered against them, in case their claim turns out to be wrong," the SP said.

District-wise Covid-19 tally

District	Positive	Discharged	Active	Deaths
Bengaluru Urban	55	09	45	01
Mysuru	28	0	28	0
Dakshina Kannada	12	0	12	0
Bidar	10	0	10	0
Uttara Kannada	08	0	08	0
Chikkaballapur	07	0	07	0
Kalaburagi	05	02	02	01
Ballari	05	0	05	0
Davangere	03	0	03	0
Udupi	03	0	03	0
Belagavi	03	0	03	0
Bagalkot	03	0	02	01
Dharwad	01	0	01	0
Kodagu	01	0	01	0
Tumakuru	01	0	0	01
Bengaluru Rural	01	0	01	0
Total	146	11	131	04

Container from China led to outbreak in N'gud, suspects Siddaramaiah

MYSURU, DHNS: Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Siddaramaiah, on Saturday, urged the district administration to investigate the spread of Covid-19 in a pharmaceutical company in Nanjangud.

Siddaramaiah was speaking to reporters in the city on Friday evening. He said the authorities suspect that a container that came from China to the pharmaceutical company may have caused the outbreak of the disease.

Siddaramaiah

However, the exact reason is yet to be ascertained. The samples from the container have been collected and sent for tests, he said.

Siddaramaiah urged the people who were at a religious congregation in Nizamuddin to co-operate in the fight against the disease and asked them to be in self-quarantine.

When asked about Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to light lamps on April 5, Siddaramaiah said the PM did not give a solution to the problem. "Will lighting lamps combat Covid-19?" he said.

Firm gives Rs 25L to CM's fund

Nanjangud-based Jubilant Life Sciences has contributed Rs 25 lakh to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund and has also donated other materials to support the government's efforts to combat the spread of Covid-19.

On March 26, one of its employees, a 35-year-old resident of Mysuru city who had no travel history, tested positive for Covid. Later, his wife and father-in-law also tested positive. Among the 21 Covid positive cases in Mysuru district, 19 are related to the company, either directly or indirectly.

A company spokesperson said, "the company has distributed over 7,000 masks and 325 litres of sanitisers." "As a precautionary measure, operations at the Nanjangud plant have been temporarily suspended and all personnel are under self-quarantine," he said.

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa chairs a meeting of all MLAs, MLCs and MPs from Bengaluru to discuss measures to tackle Covid-19, at the Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru, on Saturday. Deputy Chief Minister C N Ashwath Narayan, Ministers R Ashoka, S Suresh Kumar and V Somanna are seen. DH PHOTO/S K DINESH

5 Covid patients had toured Mandya dist for 40 days

MANDYA, DHNS: Deputy Commissioner Dr M V Venkatesh said on Saturday that five people, who tested positive for Covid-19 in Mysuru, all residents of Delhi, had travelled across Mandya district for 40 days.

Speaking to mediapersons here, the DC said seven other people from Malavalli in the district are said to have taken part in the Tablighi Jamaat's event at Nizamuddin in Delhi from February 5 to 8.

They returned to Malavalli on February 13 and were guiding those from Delhi during their tour in the district. All of them have been quarantined.

Venkatesh said, "Ten persons, said to be clerics, took part in the Tablighi event in January, left Delhi on January 27 and reached Mysuru on January 29. Among them, five have tested positive".

When they were on their way to Mysuru, on March 29, they were intercepted by the Mysuru district administration officials at Bannur checkpost and quarantined," said the DC.

Those participated in the Tablighi Jamaat's Nizamuddin Markaz gatherings are not volunteering to provide details. If they are traced, cases will be filed against them," said Venkatesh.

CM assures MLAs of measures to tackle Covid-19

Hopes staggered lifting of lockdown from April 14

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa said that he hoped the lockdown will be lifted in a staggered manner after April 14.

In a meeting with all MLAs, MLCs and MPs from Bengaluru on Saturday, Yediyurappa said that the lockdown enforcement will be strengthened to curb unnecessary movement of the public.

Responding to various issues raised by the legislators, Yediyurappa said even non-ration card holders will get foodgrains. That apart, the government will continue distributing free milk in slums until April 14, the CM said.

Yediyurappa issued a strict warning to hospitals that are shut or not treating patients. The government would ensure that the hospitals function, Yediyurappa said.

As for medical infrastructure, the government had ordered for 9.8 lakh PPE kits, of which 1.43 lakh had been delivered and 18.33 N95 masks of which 4.13 lakh were delivered, he said.

Listing out measures taken by the government, the CM said supply of vegetables was being ensured through 480 Hopcoms and mobile Hopcoms vans.

Opposition MLAs, while appreciating the government, were critical for stopping free food distributed through Indira Canteens.

"The government has changed its policy midway by stopping supply of food through Indira Canteens and the BBMP," Congress' Krishna Byre Gowda said.

In his Bytarayanapura constituency alone, there were some 12,000 labourers "who aren't in any formal network because they neither have ration card nor are registered with the labour welfare board," he pointed out.

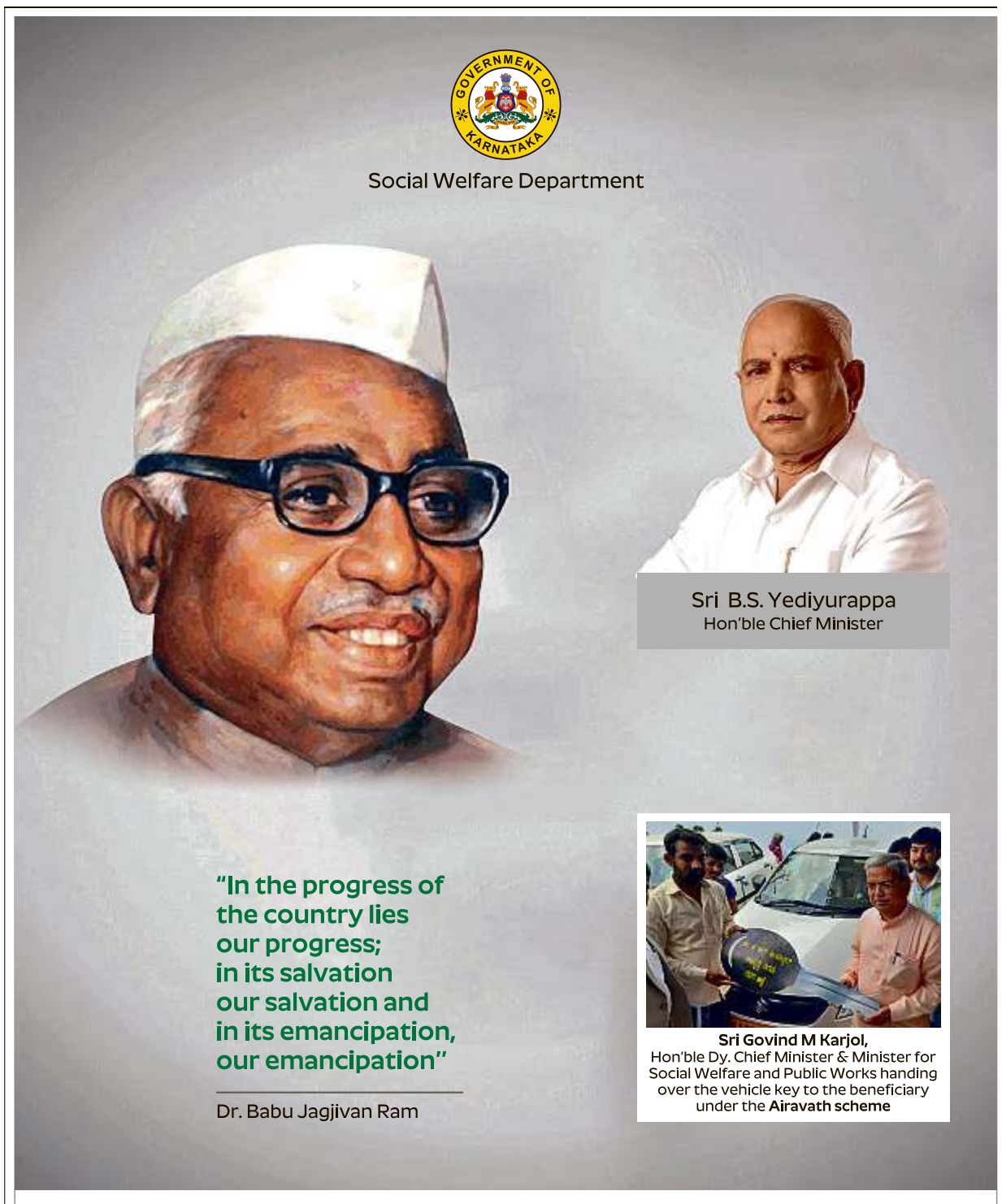
Gowda said he was not convinced with the government's argument that there was misuse of Indira Canteen food. "There may be 20-30% misuse, but deprive 70% genuine beneficiaries?" he sought to know.

A similar sentiment was echoed by JD(S) MLC T A Saravana. "There is a huge demand for food," he said, urging the government to restart Indira Canteen food distribution. Even though the government promised free gas, the BPL card holders are still paying for it, while the free milk is not reaching all the places as envisaged by the government," he added.

Don't stop free food at Indira Canteens: ex-CM

Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah on Saturday urged Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa to provide free food to the poor and the migrant workers through Indira Canteens. "It's inhuman to charge for breakfast and lunch/dinner during such bad circumstances," Siddaramaiah, who started Indira Canteens when he was the CM, said in a letter. "Any misuse should be prevented, but it's wrong to stop the supply of free food."

Earlier in the day, Yediyurappa told Bengaluru MLAs that Indira Canteens will continue to serve food at subsidised prices.



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Commissioner
Social Welfare Department

G. Kumar Naik, IAS
Principal Secretary to Govt.
Social Welfare Department

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Will not open border for Kerala, BSY reiterates

'Removing blockade will spell disaster for state'

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Saturday categorically refused to open Karnataka's borders for Kerala as doing so will be "embracing death."

Yediyurappa made the government's stand clear in a three-page response to former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, who has thrown his weight behind Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan on the issue.

"The decision to close the Karnataka-Kerala border was not sudden. It was a conscious decision that was based on a study and documentation of the health situation in the border areas," Yediyurappa stated. "The Indian Medical Association's data on the spread of Covid-19 in Kasargod and surrounding areas was alarming. Even the Kerala government has information on the spread of the virus in this region."

Yediyurappa pointed out that Kasargod had 106 Covid positive cases. "This region has the highest density of cases across the country. If this restriction is removed, it puts the health of Kannadigas at risk. It'll create a situation of embracing death. Hence, we will not be able to open the border," Yediyurappa said, reiterating the government's decision.

On March 31, Gowda had asked Yediyurappa to open the borders on "humanitarian grounds" to allow ambulances from Kerala to reach Mangaluru for treatment. Subsequently, the JD(S) supremo wrote to Vijayan lambasting the BJP government in Karnataka for the border blockade, saying closure of the interstate highway between Mangaluru and Kasargod had brought him "pain and anguish". The JD(S) is a coalition partner in Kerala.

There is no political motivation behind the border blockage, Yediyurappa said. "I respect your views that the border should be opened on humanitarian grounds. But if we open up the border, it'll be impossible to identify who is infected and who is not," he said, adding that opening the border will open a Pandora's box that will be disastrous for the state.

"It's worthy to mention here that the Opposition parties have been supportive of my government ever since the pandemic broke out. I hope the same cooperation will continue in the future to protect the people of this state," Yediyurappa concluded.