

THE BEACON

PRACTICE NEWS BULLETIN OF THE PG STUDENTS OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

Sunday, 14 September 2025 / St Joseph's University / Vol:18 Issue: 34 / www.sjcdeptcomm.wordpress.com

Saving lives through education

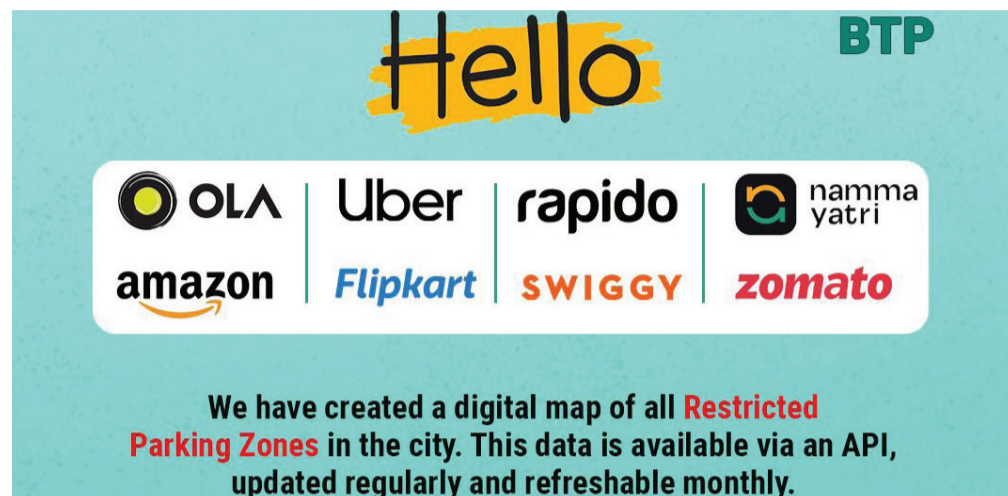
Ancy James

The Kerala Government Medical Officers's Association (KGMOA) has urged for the inclusion of basic life-saving techniques such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid in school and college curriculum across Kerala. KGMOA president Dr. Sunil P.K stressed that the lack of universal CPR training is leading to avoidable deaths, as delays in first aid greatly reduces survival chances in emergency situations. Speaking to *The Beacon*, Dr Sunil stated that structured training programmes should be introduced through health clubs or as part of academic classes. These modules would include classroom demonstrations, instructional videos, and hands-on practice sessions using mannequins. To ensure continuity, annual practice sessions would be conducted for newly enrolled. Dr Sunil stated that large-scale training of students would greatly enhance emergency response among communities and empower youth to respond with confidence in emergency situations. "If students learn how to do chest compression and some basic parameters, they can rescue people in emergency situations," stated Dr Sunil. KGMOA has officially submitted a proposal to the state government, appealing for the structured integration of life-saving skills into the education system. The association believes that Kerala can set an example for other states by equipping its youth with vital emergency response skills, potentially required in saving lives through timely intervention.

Bengaluru traffic police launch parking alert

Diana Saldehna

BENGALURU: The Bengaluru Traffic Police's ASTraM mobile app, developed and maintained by Arcadis, has already attracted over two lakh active users, offering the public real-time traffic advisories, alerts, road and closure updates through a single platform since its release September, 7. To tackle the growing traffic in Bengaluru, the Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) has launched a new technology system that gives real-time alerts to drivers about No Parking and Restricted Parking Zones. One of the major causes of Bengaluru's traffic congestion is illegal and unauthorized parking. The BTP has developed an API-based digital mapping system of parking and no-parking zones, integrated into its ASTraM platform app, aimed at keeping delivery, cab,



A poster of ASTraM mobile app by BTP

and logistics drivers informed in real time. Many violations are linked to cab and delivery vehicles, where drivers often stop without knowing the area is a no-parking zone. The idea behind this initiative is to keep drivers informed and prevent violations before they happen. Each company can design how the warning appears inside its app, and they will also track repeat offenders to

ensure drivers take it seriously. This data will be shared with companies like Swiggy, Zomato, Ola, Uber, and quick-commerce platforms. Once these firms connect the API to their apps, drivers will start receiving instant alerts if they try to stop in a restricted zone. Speaking to *The Beacon*, Rakshith Padmanna, Project Manager of the initiative, highlighted that the system is

not limited to delivery riders alone. "The good news is this won't just be for delivery partners. Soon, everyday users of Google Maps or Mappls may also see the same alerts, helping regular car and bike users avoid confusion on the road," he pointed out. On concerns about privacy, he clarified that the Traffic Police will not be tracking individuals. "All personal data will remain

with the companies, who already have their own privacy rules in place. Our role is only to provide the parking and no-parking information," he added. Unlike regular traffic fines, this new step by Bengaluru Traffic Police is not about punishment. For now, there are no challans linked to it. The idea is simple: to help drivers know in advance if they are stopping or parking in a "No Parking" zone. With a quick notification on their app, cab and delivery partners can move before they block the road and cause jams. "The aim is to guide drivers and prevent mistakes, not to penalize them," said Rakshith Padmanna. Summing up the vision behind the project, Rakshith added: "This project is not about fines, it is about awareness. If drivers know where they can and cannot park, we can prevent jams before they even start."

Locals demand fix for deadly pothole

Anamica Vinod

BENGALURU: Despite the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP)'s recent instruction to zonal engineers to identify and fill over 4,500 potholes across the city and carry out adequate repairs, a crater remains unrepaired on the Hulimangala Main Road in Electronic City Phase 1 for over five long months, posing daily major risks to commuters and businesses. There have been around 13,000 potholes identified since April 2025, with only about half repaired and a 63% increase in the number



The locals lift a trapped mini truck

Special Arrangement

of potholes compared to last year despite the BBMP spending 12.25 cr on repairing these holes (up from seven crores last year), according to the Deccan Herald. At Hulimangala, the situation has called for panic among locals. Shopkeepers along

the road talk about regular accidents, particularly during rains when the pothole fills with water and conceals its depth, pointing to specific accidents involving two wheeler riders. Residents add that mud fillings wash away within days, while confusion over whom to

approach has left their plea unheard. "It's been five to six months. Once some mud was put inside, but the rain washed it away and the gap is only getting bigger," said Maroof, a local restaurant owner, speaking to *The Beacon*. Residents and shopkeepers stress that without a permanent fix, the Hulimangala pothole will keep growing and accidents will continue. They urge officials to rebuild the road in a full-scale and effective manner instead of offering temporary patchwork.

GST's tax reduction sparks concerns

Vaishnavi Savant

The goods and service tax (GST) Council's recent decision to cut tax rates on hotel stays, to make travel affordable, is backfiring for small hotel owners in Goa who say it's pushing up their costs. On September 3, during its 56th meeting in New Delhi, the Council approved a revision in hospitality GST rates, effective from September, 22. Under this structure, hotel rooms priced up to ₹7,500 per night will now attract 5% GST without input tax credit (ITC), down from the earlier 12% with ITC. Rooms priced above ₹7,500 will continue to be taxed at 18%. Restaurants will also be taxed uniformly at 5% without ITC. "We prefer 12% with ITC any day because it helps us reduce costs," said Ajay Bhaskar, owner of Ginger Hotel, speaking to *The Beacon*. He also commented this will lead to his hotel raising prices for rooms so customers could still get benefits like complimentary breakfasts and drinks.

Cinema mirrors Bengal's silence

Jessica Maria

BENGALURU: Filmmaker Vivek Agnihotri is back with *The Bengal Files*, the concluding part of his politically charged trilogy following *The Tashkent Files* and *The Kashmir Files*. With a runtime of 204 minutes, it ranks among the longest films ever made in Indian cinema. Set against the backdrop of the 1946 Bengal riots, the film draws sharp parallels between the past and present-day political unrest in Bengal while exploring its violent and often overlooked history. The film portrays bloodshed and conflict, making it a difficult but powerful watch.

The film includes instances which can spark debates as it portrays history from a singular viewpoint, distinctly highlighting one community as the saviours. It contradicts the views held by some of the national leaders and includes scenes which portray violence as an essential element while addressing certain issues. Despite it being an opinionated film by the makers, it resonates emotionally with the viewers through depictions of bloodshed and struggles which overpower the political aspects. Pallavi Joshi, Darshan Kumar and Namashi Chakraborty

deliver stellar performances, along with Simratt Kaur and Anupam Kher. The screenplay is effective in the first half, with emotional sequences that are enhanced by Rohit Sharma's evocative background score. However, the frequent use of lengthy monologues makes certain scenes feel overstretched. This is not a film made for entertainment, but one that demands attention. Intense, emotionally draining, and unflinching in its graphic details, *The Bengal Files* stands as another bold cinematic statement from Agnihotri.

Parents fear PG safety

Samya Sharma

BENGALURU: With growing reports of security lapses in women's paying guest (PG) accommodations in Bengaluru, parents and residents are once again worried about the safety of young women. Rising rents and the shortage of safe hostels push many to depend on PGs, but for most, the safety systems in place still feel weak and unreliable. Residents say CCTV cameras and security guards are marketed during PG hunts yet they fail in practice. Speaking to *The Beacon*, Rakshita, a PG resident said,

"On paper everything looks fine, but in reality, half the cameras don't work and the guard is often missing." She stressed that true safety lies in functioning cameras, alert guards and verified staff that responds during emergencies. Parents remain equally worried with one mother expressing that safety is her biggest concern. Urging the PG owners to take accountability, she told *The Beacon* "We put our children in your care. Take care of them like family. For you, it's a business, but for us, it's our child's life".