

# METRO LIFE



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## POPCORN

Sorry, no TV cameras

Now that TV cameras are not allowed inside the Karnataka Assembly, all is well.

Here is an account of how things might be panning out among our honourable MLAs.

**Popping Eye (to MLA in next seat):** Aren't you bored to tears with all these speeches about floods and destroyed homes and bad roads? Take out your phone, anna.

**Naughty Boy:** Sure, here, we can check out

your favourite sites. **Speaker:** Please pay attention, sanmaanya MLAs.

**Popping Eye:** Aah, that's better. Speaker sir, this is an august forum. As always, we place the naked truth above all else.



**Naughty Boy:** Let me also check out

Salman Khan. If they don't give my constituency enough flood relief, I'm going to throw away my shirt and stand on the podium.

**On our roads, potholes are becoming craters, and craters are becoming ditches. And civic agencies offer more explanations than solutions**

**NINA C GEORGE**  
TEAM METROLIFE

**T**he gaping potholes and craters on Bengaluru roads are getting bigger and bigger, and little is being done to fix them. A prominent orthopaedic hospital in Bengaluru estimates about 20 per cent of all injuries they treat are caused by bad roads (see box). BBMP Commissioner BH Anil Kumar says Python machines, used to fill potholes, are few in number. "We have only two for the whole of Bengaluru and the city is expanding at a fast pace. We have eight zones and we need at least two such machines in each zone," he says. The roads have turned into death traps, and the BBMP can't remain blind to them, citing inadequate equipment, says a senior officer with the Bengaluru Traffic Police. "They should use all means at their disposal to fix them," says the officer. "It is a question of life and death."

The BWSSB is laying underground water lines for 110 villages around the city now under its jurisdiction, and sometimes the contractors aren't following protocol, the BBMP says.

"The BWSSB sometimes digs trenches and the soil is not removed. In order to bring in accountability, we will levy penalties on contractors who don't remove soil dumped on the roads," says Anil Kumar.

Tushar Girinath, chairman, BWSSB, concedes some contractors are slipping up.

"Laying laterals in the sewage network is a tough job. We have told our contractors to remove the soil after laying the pipes. We will impose fines on slack contractors," says Girinath. The pipe laying for water supply projects is almost done. Some bigger pipelines have to be laid in the middle of the road in areas like Whitefield, he says.

"We hope to complete work for 1,500 km of road by the end of November. Some road work related to Cauvery fifth phase will be taken up only in 2020," he says.

The BWSSB doesn't intend to take up any major road cutting work for the next two years.

# Why is Bengaluru a holey place?



**KH ROAD** The potholes are getting deeper and bigger on this arterial road, near the KSRTC head office and Shantinagar bus terminal. Thousands of vehicles use this stretch, and no one is doing a thing about the hazards. **DH** PHOTOS BY SK DINESH AND PUSHKAR

## 'OFC COMPANIES WILL BE HAULED UP'

BBMP Commissioner **Anil Kumar** says OFC companies are indiscriminately cutting roads. "The BBMP had earlier given them blanket permission for one year. The permissions were open-ended which meant that they could cut any road anywhere for cable laying. We have cancelled this permission and directed all OFC companies to come to us with details of roads and the timeline," he told Metrolife. He says the BBMP will not grant permission until companies provide details. "We recently levied a fine of Rs 68 lakh on Airtel for violating rules. This rule applies to Reliance Jio and other companies as well. We have also caught a few agencies red-handed," he says. He threatened to file criminal complaints against contractors who violate rules.



**JAYANAGAR** Private companies are digging up roads to lay cables and, in this case, instal poles.

## WHAT IS A WHIPLASH INJURY?

In accidents involving four-wheelers, whiplash injuries are common. A whiplash injury occurs when the driver brakes a car suddenly. Though the vehicle has stopped, the body is going forward. The head and neck move fast when the brakes are applied. Your head goes forward and suddenly comes back. This is called a whiplash. The pain from such an accident can last for years. Most accident cases occur at night due to potholes and poor visibility, says **Dr Chandy**.

## TAKE CARE OF LAKES, SAYS EXPERT

**T V Ramachandra**, Centre for Ecological Studies, Indian Institute of Science, believes flooding of roads worsens the condition of roads. His recommendations:

- Remove all encroachments from lakes and maintain buffer zones.
- Rejuvenate water bodies and maintain them regularly.
- De-silt lakes to enhance storage and recharge groundwater.



**THANISANDRA MAIN ROAD** The potholes here are deadly. Poor maintenance of roads is among the major causes of non-fatal accidents, says traffic police. **DH** PHOTO BY PUSHKAR V

## PROBLEMS CAUSED BY BAD ROADS

**Dr Thomas Chandy**, director and chief of orthopaedics of Hosmat Orthopedic and Accident Hospital, categorises problems into two categories—acute and chronic. "Chronic cases come with back and neck pain. Some come with slipped discs, spondylitis in the neck and arthritis of the spine caused by wear and tear because of constant use of bad roads. The acute cases involve broken bones and fractured hands, legs and head," he says. Chronic cases affect those above 45 years and acute injuries involve younger patients. In accidents involving two-wheelers, pillion riders are grievously injured because they have nothing to hold on to. This is called a direct injury. "An indirect injury happens when somebody tries to avoid a pothole and accidentally gets hit either by an oncoming vehicle or a vehicle speeding from behind," explains **Dr Chandy**.



**BVK IYENGAR ROAD:** This is one of busiest streets for business, and it is in pathetic shape. Potholes force motorists to stop, swerve, and often trigger accidents.