

Kids not enjoying school as Covid protocols prove a killjoy

Activists advocate counselling before reopening lower classes

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BENGALURU, DHNS

The government is all set to reopen schools in a full-fledged manner after the Dasara vacation, but children who have started going to school are saying they are not comfortable with the new normal.

Schoolchildren have expressed unhappiness over distance from friends, not being allowed to share food, lack of sports activities and play time, unable to smile or see friends due to face mask, etc.

The Child Line has been getting such calls from both parents and children. Even the teachers are saying that children are not as joyful as they were in the pre-Covid days.

One of the main reasons for children feeling uncomfortable in schools is the Cov-

id protocol which is in place to ensure safety of children, because of which they are restricted from mingling with friends.

Speaking to *DH*, Yasboda, the parent of a class 6 child, said, "We have been sending our daughter to school since Day 1 of the reopening, but she is not happy. She says she will attend online classes."

Authorities from Child Line said they are receiving at least two such calls every day since the commencement of offline classes for grade 8 and above.

Child rights activists have requested the government to conduct counselling sessions before commencing regular classes.

Nagasimha G Rao, director of Child Rights Trust, said, "We are also getting calls from parents seeking advice from experts to convince their kids to attend schools like pre-Covid days. The children are not enjoying the school atmosphere now."

Following such calls from parents and children, the Child Rights Trust has written a letter to Primary and Secondary Education Minister B



The schools in the state opened after a long gap on account of Covid pandemic. (DH FILE PHOTO FOR REPRESENTATION)

C.Nagesh, requesting for counselling sessions for children, with the help of the National Institute for Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (Nimhans), before starting regular academic activities.

In the letter, they have mentioned about the mental health of children as they may have

lost family members, neighbours or friends to Covid.

"There is a need for schools to look at counselling children when they reopen physical classes. The mental health of children has been affected due to various reasons during the pandemic and we should help kids come out of it," reads the letter.

Dr Govinda Visvesvara's Donation to Sankara Nethralaya

Sankara Nethralaya has received a substantial donation from Dr. Govinda Visvesvara, scholar and philanthropist from Atlanta. His unprecedented donation will go towards the department of Uvea.

Dr. Govind Visvesvara, a native of Bangalore, gave away Rs. 1.1 crores to Sankara Nethralaya, Chennai in memory of his parents. The donated amount will support the department of Uvea, set up in 1981. With the largest number of consultants of any Uvea department across the country, the department sees around 3000 new Uveitis (a form of eye inflammation) cases per year.

Both Sankara Nethralaya arm of SN, and the Sankara Nethralaya India teams thanked Dr. Govinda Visvesvara for his generous

donation, according to a statement. Dr. Girish Rao, President of Sankara Nethralaya, "Dear Mr. Visvesvara ji, on behalf of the staff of Sankara Nethralaya I wish to convey our sincere gratitude for your benevolence in loving memory of your parents." Dr. T S Surendran, Director of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Vice Chairman, Sankara Nethralaya said, "Sankara Nethralaya family and on behalf of patients, thank Dr Govinda Visvesvara from the bottom of our hearts for coming forward to sponsor one of the floors for Sankara Nethralaya."

S.V. Acharya, President Emeritus, and Balu Reddy Induri, President, Sankara Nethralaya USA also thanked Dr. Govinda Visvesvara wholeheartedly for this magnanimous gesture.

Karnataka's Covid positivity rate drops to 0.31%

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka on Wednesday logged 357 new Covid-19 infections and 10 deaths, taking the case tally to 29,82,189 and the toll to 57,986.

The day also saw 438 discharges as the number of recoveries swelled to 29,34,523. Bengaluru Urban accounted for 140 new cases. The city also saw 157 discharges and five deaths.

Belagavi, Dakshina Kannada, Davangere, Haveri and Tumakuru reported one death each.

as on Oct 13, stood at 9.621. While the positivity rate for the day was 0.31%, case fatality rate stood at 2.89%.

After Bengaluru Urban, Dakshina Kannada recorded the second highest daily cases with 38, Tumakuru 27, Hassan 26 and Mysuru 21.

A total of 4,90,63,454 samples have been tested for Covid-19 in the state, of which 1,12,780 were tested on Wednesday. As many as 4,87,191 Covid vaccine doses were administered on Wednesday taking the tally to 6,04,12,117.

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