

METRO LIFE

STUDENT DESIGNER SHOWCASES CONTEMPORARY FUSION WEAR PAGE 4

HOW TO STAY HEALTHY DURING LOCKDOWN PAGE 2



POPCORN

Third degree kajjaya

As policemen brandish their lathis at anyone straying outside, TV channels are having a field day describing the blows as 'prasada' and 'kajjaya.' So lathi blows are sweets? The violence can be unsettling, but not for our enthusiastic TV folks. A comedy segment casually said the police would use chilli powder and a lathi and teach a lesson to the man who had got into a scuffle with a policeman. A pretty, dolled-up anchor said pleasantly, 'We wrap up this show with the hope that the police will give such people the aeroplane treatment.' Akka, torture isn't allowed by law. And let's not cheer the lathi festival our policemen are celebrating. Not all citizens stray out on the streets for fun, okay? Some are doctors, others are going to deliver critical services. A few are looking to buy essentials. They don't want your prasada and kajjaya, thank you.

Free train please

Subramanian Swamy (@Swamy39) has come round to the opinion that the lockdown will lead to a Partition-like crisis unless his government acts in the interest of stranded labourers: 'Let GoI run free ticketless trains from where migrant workers live to their hometown, for three days. Otherwise we will have 1947 type exodus within our country and suffering.' Don't know how safe that is going to be, but the long treks have already begun, sir. Perhaps a package first and lockdown next would have helped reassure people.

Helping hand for daily wagers

Many organisations are stepping forward to ease the pain of those in the informal sector, hit badly by the lockdown

KRUPA JOSEPH AND SURUPASREE SARMAH TEAM METROLIFE

Construction labourers, auto and cab drivers, food vendors, masons, painters and plumbers are among the worst-hit as India goes into a three-week lockdown. The unorganised sector, which depends on daily earnings for its livelihood, has no idea whom to turn to. Many groups and companies are stepping in with a helping hand.

FEED THE DAILY WAGER

Zomato India has started a crowd-funded initiative to ensure that no one goes hungry while we fight the virus. They have partnered with NGOs across 26 cities to supply food grain kits to those in need. Each kit contains wheat flour, rice and two types of pulses, and can sustain a family of five for a week. A kit costs Rs 500, but is given away free. By the third day of the lockdown, the initiative had managed to collect a total of Rs 8 crore in donations.

How to donate: Visit www.feedingindia.org/donate

#TOGETHERWE CAN BY YUVA

Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action works towards empowering communities and building cities that are inclusive. They are procuring and distributing kits that include a week's worth of rations. A kit includes rice, pulses, wheat, oil and soap. They have been able to help around 940 families so far.

How to donate: Instagram page (@officialyuva).

SAFA

Safa has been working towards helping



Zomato India is partnering with NGOs to deliver provision kits in 26 cities. It has also collected donations to the tune of Rs 8 crore.



Shikha Gupta and Saurabh Dawrani are collaborating with organisations that deliver provisions to the poor.



Hasiru Dala has identified 2,500 families in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh that need help.

HOW MANY ARE AFFECTED?

No clear statistical data is available with respect to what percentage of India's population works in the unorganised sector.

The Economic Survey of 2018-19, released on July 4, 2019, says almost 93 per cent of the total workforce is informal.

The Niti Aayog's Strategy for New India at 75, released in November 2018,

says India's informal sector employs approximately 85 per cent of all workers. According to the International Labour Organisation, at least 90 per cent of the country's workforce is employed in the informal sector. The sector includes agricultural and construction labourers, security guards, cleaners, domestic help, and

rickshaw pullers. Apart from the fact that they don't have savings, they have no job security or benefits such as paid leave or pensions. Migrant workers are stuck long distances from home, and they have no way to return to their villages. With no means of livelihood, their families back home suffer too.

daily wage workers, migrant workers, street children, single parents and beggars in Hyderabad, North Karnataka, Bengaluru and Chennai. They are providing provision packets that include wheat flour, rice, onions, oil, sugar, tea, pulses, spices, and soap. Each packet costs Rs 500, and is given away for free.

How to donate: Bank details on Instagram (@safaindia). You can also use Google Pay and PayTM.

HASIRU DALA

Started in 2018, Hasiru Dala works for the wellbeing of waste pickers. It is helping them with donations. The group has identified 2,500 vulnerable families across Karnataka — Bengaluru, Mysuru, Tumakuru, Davanagere, Hubli and Dharwad — and Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh.

"So far we have been able to help 260 families. We have now received passes

that will help us continue the work," says Rohini Malur, who heads the Bengaluru-based organisation. AMPK, she says, has been helping Hasiru Dala procure the supplies for kits consisting of dry rations such as rice, grains, spices, and oils, as well as soap. Each kit costs between Rs 1,400 and Rs 1,800, and is given away for free. The group is also disseminating information among waste pickers on how to wear masks and dispose of waste.

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THREE FRIENDS AND A BUNCH OF CELEBS

Three friends — Tanya Mallavarapu Reddy from Chennai, Shaaz Mehmood from Hyderabad and Deepti Katragada from Bengaluru, have come together to do their bit.

"I happened to post on Instagram asking people if they knew of an initiative or an NGO that works for daily wage workers. This was way before the lockdown was announced," says Tanya.

After the virus outbreak, everything started to slow down and the three friends decided to do something on their own. They got together with Safa, an NGO based in Hyderabad. Eventually, they tied up with NGOs in three cities and identified communities where food could be distributed. They follow a strict protocol. The volunteers wear full-sleeved clothes and avoid hand-to-hand transfer of relief material. They use masks and gloves while out on the field. "Many celebrities have



Deepti Katragada



Tanya Mallavarapu Reddy



Shaaz Mehmood

helped us. We have got support and donations from Rana Daggubati, Farah Khan, Ananya Birla, Shobana Kamineni, Ritesh Deshmukh, Sonakshi Sinha, Abhishek Bachchan and Kunal Kapoor, among others," says Tanya.

Each package contains rice, dal, onion, salt, turmeric, tea powder, sugar, soaps and glucose. "We have set a target of 5,000 families. Now, this campaign has got so much traction that organisations from Mumbai and Delhi have also reached out to us asking us to set up operations there as well," says Tanya. The trio made sure they got curfew passes from the police. "We have got permissions for Bengaluru and Hyderabad, and in Chennai, we are working directly with the police. Supplies for all three cities are coming from local wholesalers, and that way there is no inter-state movement," she says.

How to donate: www.ketto.org/fundraiser/SAFAforcorona

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

On Thursday, the central government announced an economic stimulus package worth Rs 1.7 trillion to help millions of low-income households cope with the 21-day lockdown. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the package would be disbursed through food security measures and direct cash transfers.

How to donate: Instagram page (@hasiru_dala) for details.

MULTIPLE-CITY GROUP

Bengaluru-based couple Shikha Gupta and Saurabh Dawrani have started a campaign called 'Help the underprivileged community fight coronavirus' on crowdfunding platform Milaap. "Since we can't go out, we have collaborated with organisations such as Panah in



Shikha Gupta and Saurabh Dawrani

Ahmedabad and Voice of Humanity in Jamshedpur. They are already in contact with blue-collar workers to ensure help reaches those in need," says Dawrani. The group calculates the needs of a family of three for a week, and provides them with rice, wheat flour, pulses, spices, and handwash. Each kit costs Rs 400. "While we are personally finding it hard to find supplies in supermarkets, these organisations have contacts of people who supply in bulk," he says.

How to donate: Visit www.milaap.org/fundraisers/support-shikha-gupta

Virus brings new challenges for home-alone singles

Afraid of falling sick and finding no help, those living alone are extra-anxious during the lockdown

TINI SARA ANIEN TEAM METROLIFE

While families are using the 21-day lockdown to reconnect, singles have a unique set of concerns.

From learning to cook and clean to finding help in a medical emergency, shadows of worry loom over them.

Devi Meenakshi, senior HR professional at an MNC, recently moved to Lingarajapuram and is just settling in.

"The situation is absolutely crazy. I lived in Cooke Town for 15 years and just moved a month ago. I do not have help around the house and am left with uncertainty about how to manage all the chores," she says. Stories from different parts



Yashaswi Shivanand plays video games like 'Witcher 3' to stay stress-free and focused.

of the world worry her. "It's a very scary situation to be alone when you hear of Covid-19 positive cases," she says.

Though Devi has lived alone for a while, one of the biggest challenges for her is to create a schedule and abide by it. "I am using my time to read, research and understand HR trends. I enjoy cooking. I also have a pet cat, Xena, who keeps me busy," she says.

Yashaswi Shivanand, technical architect at a startup, is handling things alone. He moved to Koramangala recently and is still figuring out how to get groceries, water and other supplies. Yashaswi misses going to work and meeting people. "Human interaction is important. I find work slower during the lockdown too," he says. When he feels stressed, he turns to Netflix and video games. "I love games like

'World of Warcraft' and 'Witcher 3'. Video games help me stay focused and distance me from my worries," he says.

Minimising needs Lifestyle and fashion photographer Rohith Sarcar has stayed alone for more than a decade.

"Being by myself is not a worry but it is odd to step out for getting supplies and not



Devi Meenakshi tries to balance work and home chores.

seeing anyone around. Since most online platforms have slowed down, getting supplies is worrisome. I am learning how to cook

and manage with minimal things," he says. Rohith's work called for meeting new people every day. "I am not able to meet anyone now which is eating me up. I see people video conferencing and using digital platforms to connect but I like

LOCKDOWN WILL HELP PRIORITISE: PSYCHOLOGIST

Renu M K, psychologist and life coach, says many people will learn to give up on unnecessary luxuries during this period.

"As most singles control their finances, they splurge and get things done through online services. The lockdown will make us all more equipped for life ahead, and discover the world of cooking, cleaning and creating a work-life balance," she says.

HOW TO STAY CALM

- Practise meditation or yoga.
- Listen to soothing music.
- Organise your desk.
- Make a to-do list every day.
- Take up an online course.
- Learn art and music online.
- Minimise on news updates.



Rohith Sarcar

meeting people face to face," he says.

EXTRA DOSE OF CAUTION

Saina Jayapal, freelance PR consultant, says stocking up on supplies is not what worries her. "I've lived alone for a while and I know I can manage chores well. As long as all my gadgets work, everything is manageable. My biggest concern is who will help me if I have a medical emergency. I'm cautious and am trying to be extra careful now," she says. Being an extrovert, Saina misses meeting her friends. "I am sure that I will miss human contact very soon," she says.

DOCTOR'S ADVICE

Anxiety during such an emergency is common. Dr Roshan Jain, senior consultant psychiatrist, Apollo Hospitals Bangalore, says testing times demand an organised approach. "We



Dr Roshan Jain

are social beings and our existence and identity exists on connections with others and through feedback from others. Loneliness is feared by people," he says.

The lockdown provides an opportunity to manage things better, he advises.

"Use this time to do a check on your lifestyle. Most professionals do not have time to exercise. Now is the right time to set your schedules straight and make some time to work out and explore things you always wanted to do," he says.

Look at chores left unattended, like cleaning up a bookshelf, or make time for a hobby. Use the extra time to reconnect with family and friends. People who have anxiety face more challenges. "Overexposure to updates and information about the current scenario can be exhausting. Educate yourself from the right and official sources. If you are feeling anxious even after getting relevant information, call a medical expert and check, as this can be reassuring," he says.