



A massive traffic jam on Chennai-Mumbai National Highway and NICE Road due to the Kuruba rally at the BIEC. DH PHOTO

# Kuruba rally throws traffic out of gear on city outskirts

**Thousands descend on BIEC; cops blame haphazard parking for jams**

BENGALURU, DHNS

**T**raffic on the busy Mumbai-Chennai National Highway and NICE Road was thrown out of gear on Sunday after thousands of supporters from the Kuruba community descended on the Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre (BIEC), near Nelamangala, on the outskirts of Bengaluru.

Anticipating traffic chaos due to the massive crowd, the Bengaluru police had proposed alternative routes for those travelling to Bengaluru and Kempegowda International Airport from Tumaku-

ru, Chitradurga, Davanagere and Shivamogga.

However, the swelling crowd put paid to cops' calculations. Adding to woes, supporters had parked their vehicles, buses all along the road blocking the highway.

As a result, the National Highway witnessed traffic jams spanning several kilometres. The situation on NICE road was no different, with trucks queuing up for several kilometres to pass through the BIEC junction.

The alternative roads proposed by the traffic police yielded some success till afternoon, but as supporters began to leave the venue the sudden rush threw traffic out of gear.

Ambulances rushing towards Bengaluru were caught in long traffic jams on the highway.

Airport travellers were allowed to travel via Dobbaspeth, Doddaballapur and KIA, while Bengaluru-bound travellers

via Dobbaspeth, Gudemarana-halli hand-post, Magadi Road, NICE Road and Mysuru Road.

Facilitating the arrival of supporters to the rally, ministers had requested the highway toll collecting agencies to exempt rally-bound vehicles. As a result, separate lanes were provided for rally vehicles at three toll plazas.

Traffic police on duty told *DH* that the reason for the sudden traffic jam was haphazard parking of vehicles by people attending the rally.

"The designated parking slots were brimming with vehicles by noon and there was hardly any place for parking," said a senior traffic police officer.

"Due to this, those who had come on two-wheelers, cars and private buses had parked their vehicles all along the service road from Madanayakanahalli to Nagasandra toll."

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# Kurubas press for ST tag in massive B'luru rally

Siddaramaiah stays away from the convention

8/2/21

BENGALURU, DHNS

Thousands of people from the Kuruba community staged a rally in Bengaluru on Sunday, urging the state government to recommend Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for them.

In a massive gathering at the Bangalore International Exhibition Centre grounds, leaders of the community decided to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the issue and agreed to continue the agitation until their demands are met.

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister K S Eshwarappa, who is at the forefront of the agitation, said that he was confident of securing the ST tag at the event where Congress leader Siddaramaiah, a Kuruba, was missing.

"After consulting with the state government, we will meet PM Modi and Amit Shah. We won't rest until the whole community gets the ST tag in the state," he said.

Refuting allegations by Siddaramaiah about the movement being sponsored by the RSS, Eshwarappa said that



Hosadurga branch Kanaka Gurupeetha seer Eshwaranandapuri is engaged in animated conversation with RDPR Minister K S Eshwarappa during the convention of Kuruba community members in Bengaluru on Sunday. Kaginele Mahasamsthana seer Niranjanandapuri is also seen.

DH PHOTO/IRSHAD MAHAMMAD

poor Kurubas had sponsored the padayatra by Kaginele Kanakaguru peeta seer, Niranjanandapuri Swami.

"They must withdraw their statement," Eshwarappa said. Siddaramaiah did not take part in the rally, having expressed reservations about the demands in the past.

Niranjanandapuri seer, who reached Bengaluru last Wednesday after launching the padayatra from Kaginele on January 15, said they would not "blackmail Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa like other seers".

"We only urge him to complete the socio-economic study

of the community and recommend providing ST tag to the Centre," he said.

Leaders of the community also submitted a petition to the state government over their demands. Revenue Minister R Ashoka accepted the petition on behalf of Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa and assured to take up the matter with the CM.

BJP MLC A H Vishwanath trained his guns at Siddaramaiah at the convention. Without referring to the former chief minister by name, he said that a leader who became CM because of Kuruba community had not participated in an apolitical event.