

## South African strain found in Karnataka

The man had arrived from Dubai

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT  
BENGALURU

Karnataka on Wednesday recorded the first COVID-19 case of the South African strain.

It was detected in a 58-year-old male, who came to Bengaluru on March 1 from Dubai. He is under institutional quarantine in Shivamogga, Health Commissioner K.V. Trilok Chandra told *The Hindu*. Eight of his primary contacts have been traced and isolated. They have been tested and reports are awaited, he added.

Meanwhile, four more cases of the U.K. strain were reported on Wednesday taking the total to 29. The State also reported a sudden spike with 760 new cases of COVID-19, taking the total to 9,56,801. Of these, 488 cases are from Bengaluru Urban.

### Genome testing

V. Ravi, nodal officer for genomic confirmation of SARS-CoV-2 in Karnataka, told *The Hindu* that the South African strain was detected in one of the samples sent to the genome testing lab at NIMHANS 10 days ago from the airport. "We detected the strain three days ago, and informed the Centre," he said.

Pointing out that the U.K. variant is recognised as a mutation of the virus, one of which is N501Y, Dr. Ravi said the South African variant is E484K along with N501Y. "The symptoms are the same and it is as contagious as the U.K. strain," he said.

Meanwhile, with six deaths, the toll in the State rose to 12,379. This is apart from 19 deaths of patients due to non-COVID-19 reasons.

As many as 331 persons were discharged on Wednesday, taking the total re-



A senior citizen at Sir C.V. Raman General Hospital to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

• K. MURALI KUMAR

coveries to 9,36,947. Of the remaining 7,456 active patients, 115 are being monitored in ICUs. While the positivity rate for the day stood at 1.08%, the Case Fatality Rate (CFR) touched 0.78%.

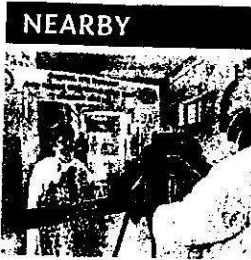
As many as 70,133 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours, including 65,330 RT-PCR tests. With this, the total number of tests rose to 1,94,98,106.

### Vaccination

The total vaccinations in Karnataka touched 11,34,295 on Wednesday. This includes 1,88,764 senior citizens and 31,962 persons above 45 years with comorbidities, who have been vaccinated since March 1.

On Wednesday, as many as 41,529 senior citizens and 7,190 above 45 years with comorbidities took the jab. Cumulatively, Bengaluru Urban has recorded the highest numbers - 71,468 and 9,0398, respectively - in these categories.

So far, a total of 4,71,219 healthcare workers and 1,70,298 frontline workers have taken the first dose of vaccination. As many as 2,65,106 healthcare workers have taken the second dose.



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