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## Museum highlights city's Nobel Prize connection

C V Raman, physicist decorated with the world's most prestigious award, did much of his work here. The Raman Research Institute is a museum dedicated to his collection of gems, minerals and more



Krupa Joseph, DH News Service, Bengaluru, NOV 08 2019, 18:40 IST | UPDATED: NOV 08 2019, 19:22 IST



**A**mazing museum in Sadashivanagar, nearly five decades old, proudly keeps alive memories of Bengaluru's tryst with the Nobel prize.

C V Raman was awarded the prize for physics in 1930. The Raman Research Institute continues to function even 49 years after his death.

'The Raman Effect' was a result of years of his fascination with nature, light, sounds and patterns in the world around him. It was the deep blue colour of the Mediterranean that prompted him to study the scattering of light in liquids.

### **Halwai's contribution**

In a quiet corner in the main building of the institution, you find the 'Rai Bahadur Bissessuraj Motilal Halwasiya Science Museum'. There is a story behind it: a 'halwai' who sold sweets collected funds for the museum. In return, he asked that his name be printed on the plaque.

Curious by nature, Raman studied the natural colours of flowers, birds' plumage, rocks and minerals. He collected iridescent substances like rocks, gems, minerals, butterflies and study the effects of light on them. His collection is housed here.

The private museum is run by P S Sasikumar, curator for 40 years. "It is a one-man show," he says.

That is one of the reasons the museum has remained private. At the moment, entry is dependent on his availability. The institute accepts visits at its discretion.

### **Carpentry supervision**

The other more important reason is that it would be a disservice to disturb the artefacts from where Raman wished to keep them. He had hired E K Govindaraj, well-known photographer, to assist him in designing the museum. The physicist oversaw the making of teakwood cases and the glass cases.

Raman spent hours placing the specimens in different positions, so that their beauty could be displayed in full intensity. The five-room gallery is the largest dedicated to the collection of a single man, but it is too small a space to allow large crowds, its curator says.

The display remains true to his vision. But even for those familiar with his work, the collection may come across as slightly odd at first glance.

Fret not, Sasikumar takes you from rock to rock, room to room, narrating anecdotes from Raman's life. Everyone who steps in gets a good dose of Raman trivia.

The museum continues to archive many things, including a cartoon by RK Laxman after Raman was awarded the Nobel Prize.

### **Veena resonance**

Raman's earlier studies focused on the vibrations and sounds of Indian instruments, and his wife's veena in the corner of a room. Amidst the rocks and minerals, it stands out. It was the sound of the veena that inspired his first paper 'Acoustic Knowledge of Ancient Hindus'.

"As a child, Raman would listen to his mother play. When he was four or five years old, he asked his father why the notes from the instrument sounded so close to a human's voice. His father had no answer, but eventually, he decided to find out the answer," he says.

He had to refute the popular theory of his time. "Hermann von Helmholtz, who had never seen Indian instruments, had made the resonance discoveries based on the guitar. He said the sound frequencies from most string instruments are in the ratio 1:3:5, with 2 and 4 always missing. However, he discovered that when his mother played the veena, that wasn't the case. The slight curve on the bridge allowed a different voice," Sasikumar says.

### **Acoustics achievements**

Over the years, Raman came to be seen as an authority on acoustics. He disproved the popular idea that circular stretched membranes of percussion instruments such as the tabla and the mridangam could not produce harmonic overtones.

A section is reserved for butterflies, iridescent shells and nacre. The cases house quartz, calcites and other crystals acquired from all over

Raman studied the effect of light on various gems and crystals, and even on shells and oysters. "Nature always found Raman. Many people gifted things, but only he knew what he was looking for. He studied why butterflies were colourful, why shells showed different colours when light is reflected and reflected, and how to count the number of days in a year using the layers in a shell," shares Sasikumar.

In a small darkened room, the last in the gallery, he studied the effect of UV light on amethyst and rubies.

Herkimer diamonds, crystals from Russia, opals from Australia, jade, rubies, lapis lazuli, granites, limestone-- the variety of things he collected knows no bounds.

### Crystal from Poland

The museum houses the largest rock salt crystal that he collected from a cave in Poland. "He travelled a lot. He was extremely popular, and he kept getting invited, and he used the opportunity to add to his collection," he explains.

Raman is the only Indian to win a Nobel Prize in science. He chose to work in Bengaluru. The British government had invited him to move to London for training, and he declined, says Sasikumar, beaming with pride.

However, the greatest example of Raman's dedication to science is embodied in a carborundum that sits shining bright in one corner of the museum.

### Power outage

In 1945, when he was teaching at IISc, a statewide power outage was reported.

"He rushed to Bhadravati, because he knew the iron ore factory would have stopped working. When the furnace was pulled down, a crystal would be formed; and he just had to find it," he says.

### MAHARAJA GAVE LAND FOR RAMAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE

In a quiet lane in Sadashivanagar, you find an 11-acre sprawl, once a mango orchard, and now dedicated to science and research. That is where Raman lived and worked.

Raman was appointed the first Indian director of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bangalore in 1933.

However, his style did not always match those of his colleagues and his British counterparts. Eventually, he stepped down but continued as professor in the physics department, which he had founded.

In 1934, Jayachamarajendra Wadiyar, maharaja of Mysore, gifted him this piece of land to build the research institute of his dreams; a place free of bureaucracy.

That year he founded the Indian Academy of Sciences. He continued to work at IISc till 1948, and on the day of his retirement, he walked into the Raman Research Institute and started working there.

He refused any funds and grants from the government to run the place. He would often ask people for funds, which made people uncomfortable. After his death in November 1970, the academy created a public charitable trust: the Raman Research Institute Trust. However, in 1972, the centre became an aided autonomous research institute receiving funds from the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India.

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## Indie dog merits less known

Pet owners in big cities prefer foreign breeds, and some unwittingly encourage unethical breeders



Therese Sudeep, DHNS, Bengaluru, SEP 12 2020, 00:09 IST | UPDATED: SEP 12 2020, 00:28 IST



Dog breeding and marketing are regulated under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (2017). “The rules are well thought-out, but there is a huge gap in enforcement. Finding an ethical breeder can be tough,” says Nidhi Srivastava, canine behaviourist and trainer based in Delhi.

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In India, the northern states prefer Himalayan breeds while the south is known for its sighthounds.

In his most recent Mann ki Baat radio talk, Modi called upon the people to support Indian breeds. India has a rich history of indigenous dogs, many of which received royal patronage in pre-Independence days.

About 15 years ago, foreign breeds took over the market, and an expensive dog became a status symbol, dog lovers say.

“People who buy dogs in this manner generally never take care of them,” says Amrut Dogguru, canine psychologist and trainer.

Many dog owners fail to take into account that the origin of a breed plays a large role in a dog’s behaviour.

“For example, the husky is a sledging dog that requires cold climates. Bringing them to the tropics means they are more susceptible to disease and have a bad temperament,” he says.

Indian breeds are more responsive to training. “Everything from their food to the maintenance of their coat is easier since they have evolved in these surroundings,” he says.

#### **Popular breeds**



Dog lovers welcome Prime Minister Modi's call to promote Indian breeds, but fear it may also encourage unethical breeders.

Most Indian breeds are sighthounds and require open fields to run around in. They need four hours of active exercise a day.

Amrut recommends that popular breeds such as Mudhol, Chippiparai and Kanni be bought only by experienced dog owners.

"The Lhasa Apso is a breed from the Indian subcontinent and is probably the best suited for first time owners and those with smaller spaces," says Nidhi.

### Pricing

Since the demand for these dogs is low, they are priced much lower than foreign breeds. "There are few regulated breeders, so a true price comparison would be difficult," says Amrut.

### What unethical breeders do

The regulation of breeding in the country is not where it should be, says Nidhi Srivatsava, canine behaviourist. . "Although there is a good legal framework, enforcement is weak," she explains. Some of the guidelines include that continuous breeding should not be done, puppies under two months shouldn't be sold and the female being impregnated is above the age of 18 months. Unethical breeders tend to bypass these rules in order to make profit. "This is most prevalent with foreign and more exotic breeds as they bring in the big bucks, but I'm afraid that if demand increases for Indian breeds the same might happen to them," she says.

### Indian breeds in police force

Indian breeds are being trained to be part of the police force, says Amrut Dogguru, advisor to the police on canine matters. "The Karnataka state police has adopted two indie strays and they are under training to become narcotics detection dogs," he says. The CRPF has two Combai puppies and a Pandikona puppy under training now. The RPF too has shown interest in indigenous breeds.

"The senior security division officer himself has six Himalayan mastiffs he is training at his home in Chennai. Once trained they will be dispatched with squads in Jammu and Kashmir," he says. Amrut adds that seeing these dogs in the police force will encourage people to get them. "In a way their inclusion is a testament to their ability. More and more people will understand that it's the dog that matters more than



INDogs or indies are a breed unto themselves and not mongrels like many believe.

It is a common misconception that indies are mongrels (unintentionally mixed breeds) or strays (dogs without owners). “Indies or INDogs are pure breeds,” explains Nidhi Srivastava, canine behaviourist. These dogs have existed in India for ages. They have evolved but they are the ones depicted in cave paintings, she says. They are low maintenance and they have fewer health problems. Amrut Dogguru, dog psychologist, adds that they make great guard dogs and are easy to handle for a first-time dog owner.

#### Popular Indian breeds

**Mudhol hounds**

Rajapalayam

Combai

Chippiparai

INDogs

Bully Kutta

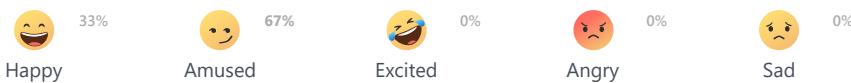
### So what's available?

Breeders in Bengaluru are not big on Indian breeds. Suerendra, a breeder from Vijayanagar, says he only has Mudhols. "The demand is low, but we have seen a spike in calls after the prime minister's radio speech," he says. Satish Cadaboms, president of the Indian Dog Breeder Association, says, "Mudhols are not good dogs for the city; they're better suited for hunting and large farmhouses," he says. This means that there is a demand for hounds in areas like Mudhol and Bagalkot, but city pet lovers prefer golden retrievers, labradors and shih tzus, he adds.

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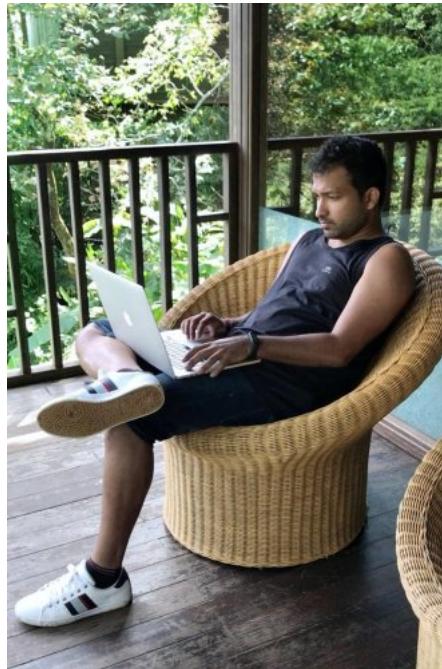
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## Work from homestays, hotels trending now

Places like Kodagu are beckoning working professionals with discounts



Anila Kurian, DHNS, Bengaluru, SEP 12 2020, 00:00 IST | UPDATED: SEP 12 2020, 00:20 IST



Young working professionals are going to resorts and homestays and working from there, since they are not required to be present at their offices.

Many are travelling out of Bengaluru, to destinations such as Kodagu (Coorg).

Couples Debolina Ray and Tapash Kumar Sahu initially planned a weekend trip to Kodagu but extended it by a week.

Debolina says, "We stayed at a place in Madikeri and it was absolutely lovely. We realised that there's a WFH (work from home) offer which seemed feasible, so we took it."

Hotels and homestays are offering discounts on their regular rates. "For example, if you had to spend about Rs 30,000 for a week earlier, it is half rate now," she explains.

So what was it like being a corporate employee from amid nature? Tapash says laughing, "I loved every bit of it! I attended calls from the balcony where my colleagues could hear the birds chirping. We didn't have to worry too much about the hustle and bustle of city life."

Wi-Fi is an essential service, and it is widely available across homestays and resorts.

### Families wary

Chidvilas, who owns Abbydhama Estate Stay in Madikeri, says families are hesitant to travel because children have online lessons, but

## Cheaper and safer

Software engineer Debasish Acharjya is planning to make a trip soon too. "As much as I am enjoying working from the four walls of my home, I really need a break. I'm yet to finalise where I will be staying but I've been seeing a lot of offers calling out to me," he says.

He is planning a solo trip as he feels it is the safest at the moment. He says, "I'm not sure how much I will be able to explore the new place since I won't be taking off from work to travel this time, but I guess I will be able to make a better judgement only once I reach there."

Content writer Deepika Singhania feels travelling to a homestay is a good idea because of the lower costs. "We have to be realistic here since none of us want to blow up all the money we have. Homestays are quieter, safer and can give you a good break which is what I'm looking forward to when I travel next week," she says.

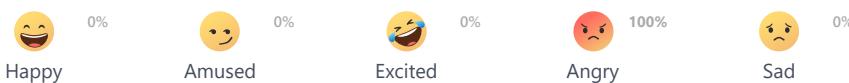
## City offerings

For those who cannot step out of the city but want a break, city hotels are offering working staycations. The Oberoi, ITC Hotels, and Oakwood Premier Prestige, (UB City) are among those offering packages.

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## Setback for weed legal-use campaign



Theres Sudeep, DHNS, Bengaluru, SEP 11 2020, 23:58 IST | UPDATED: SEP 12 2020, 00:29 IST



Politician Shashi Tharoor, celebrity Milind Soman and Baba Ramdev are among those calling for the legalisation of marijuana (ganja), but the ongoing investigation involving actors is a big setback, campaigners say.

The arrest of actors Rhea Chakraborty, Ragini Dwivedi and Sanjana Galrani, and the subsequent ‘war on drugs’, obscures the medical benefits of marijuana, many are complaining.

A Twitter campaign with the hashtag #BlazeItUpForRhea is showing solidarity for Rhea. “We were making great headway until this media circus began. Now even the states planning to support medical usage and cultivation are delaying or scrapping it,” says Priya Mishra, the woman behind Hempvati, a campaign seeking legalisation of marijuana.

She says the TV coverage has been so detrimental that even patients who benefit from the use of weed are stopping out of fear.

“We were also looking at a uniform law but that seems like a lost dream. The only silver lining is that celebrities who were earlier silent are talking about it more openly,” she says. Research has shown the benefits of marijuana in the treatment of many conditions, including cancer, Priya says.

Uttarakhand and Jammu and Kashmir are among the states that allow the farming of marijuana for medicinal and industrial use, but farmers are at risk. “They are arrested every other day as the contracts for farming are given to corporates and the law is murky,” she explains.

### Current status

Marijuana was banned in India only in 1985. The law that governs banned it--The Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act--is stringent.

“The law is primarily geared towards peddlers and is not as strict on those who consume the drug. There are also mandatory provisions to avoid false implications,” explains Sharanya Chandra, advocate.

The law defines one kg as a commercial quantity. "Anything below that is generally ignored or subject to less stringent punishments," he says. In a recent case in Nelamangala, near Bengaluru, two people were caught with 500g of marijuana. "They got bail in two days. At the most they may be sentenced to two years in jail," he says.

The actors arrested have been charged with consumption and police have not recovered any contraband, which is critical to any conviction, says Sharass Chandra.

"It is easy to get bail in such a situation, but perhaps because they are high profile, an example may be being made of them. The case of Rhea is also intertwined with another investigation and that may be why the initial bail attempt was rejected," he says.

### Gear on sale

The sale of weed-related paraphernalia is legal. Slim Jim India is one of many companies that sell things like roach pads, rolling paper, bongs, chillums and more. "We were consumers first and we saw a space in the market and went for it. Now our site gets around 60,000 visitors and 2,000 orders per month," says Nikunj Ahuja, partner at 4 Twenty Lifestyle, parent company.

The tobacco connection gives them leeway. "This strategy is used by other brands as well. They market their products for weed where it's legal and for tobacco where weed is illegal," he explains. The company pays import duty, GST and does everything else needed to run a legitimate business.

### Woman in the space

Many attribute the intense scrutiny to the fact that women have been hauled up for ganja use.

Priya Mishra, the only female legalisation activist, says men within the movement look down upon her and call her names.

### Is it really a gateway drug?

A lot of the bad reputation for marijuana comes from the fact that it is termed as a gateway drug. A relatively harmful substance that leads the user to hard drugs like cocaine and heroin. Dr Roshan Jain, addiction psychiatrist says that this is not entirely true. "This mainly comes into play when the drug is illegal. It exposes you to drug dealers, who in turn might lead you into harder drugs," he says. He explains that the argument for legalisation takes this into account. "If you're getting your cannabis from government approved dispensaries, you don't tend to explore beyond what you need," he says.

In the same breath he adds that India is not ready for legalisation. "Our legal system and mindsets are not mature enough to be able to regulate and monitor its usage and growth appropriately. But it is inevitable," he says.

Criminalisation and stigma surrounding it also leads to less people seeking treatment when they have an addiction, he adds. "We need to make space in our legal system for rehabilitation, that's the only solution to dealing with addiction," he says.

### Is it as bad as they say?

Dr Jain says that cannabis has no proven physical dependence or toxicity. "In fact when compared to alcohol and tobacco, it's a much safer drug. I see a higher number of patients suffering more adversely with the former," he says.

The repeated use of it can lead to psychological dependence, which he explains as - compulsion to take the drug, craving for it and difficulty in controlling the amount of the substance.

"But people can regularly use it and come off it without any major adverse effects. The media coverage given to it is unfair that way. It has led to a further stigmatisation of something that's not as harmful as substances that are legal in the country," he explains.

### Legalisation = reckless usage?

A popular argument against legalisation is that it would create reckless usage of the drug. "I used to work in the UK, where it is illegal, and we did a study comparing the number of marijuana users there versus the number of users in the Netherlands where it has been legal for years. We found out that the UK has a higher number of users," says Dr Jain. He adds that the same phenomenon can be seen in Indian states where bhang is legal.

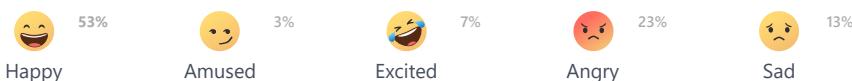
### Religion and weed

Bhang, a drink made from the same plant as smoking weed, is legal in certain states and it is even sold in government run shops. A legalisation campaigner was an invited speaker at the Kumbh Mela 2019, organised by the UP government. "I shared the stage with many politicians across the spectrum and they applauded me for my work," she says.

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Nina C George, Vivek Phadnis, DHNS , Bengaluru, SEP 10 2020, 22:54 IST | UPDATED: DEC 01 2020, 13:55 IST



Pandemic regulations have made people wary of public transport, and many in Bengaluru are buying their own vehicles.

Car and SUV sales are booming, and buyers are back at the showrooms, according to trade insiders.

Maruti-Suzuki had zero sales in April because of the total lockdown that month. In May, they sold 13,888 units in India, after manufacturing resumed.

Sales went up to 53,139 units in June, 1,01,307 units in July and 1,16,704 units in August. In Bengaluru, Maruti-Suzuki sales have recovered remarkably, after a dismal May. “Swift, Brezza and Baleno are topping the charts. They have a waiting period of three to four weeks,” says a dealer.

Maruti-Suzuki dealers expect sales to peak in the Dasara-Deepavali season. “People have now started investing their surplus money in buying vehicles because their other plans are standstill because of the pandemic,” he says.

It is the same with Hyundai India. In June, they sold 21,320 vehicles in India. The numbers went up to 38,200 in July and 45,809 in August. This is the case with other manufacturers too.

Ajay Singh, director of sales and marketing, Advaith Hyundai, Residency Road, says SUVs like Hyundai Venue and Creta have done substantially well in the last three months.

While Creta has a waiting period of three to five months, Venue, readily available earlier, now has a waiting period of a month and a half. “We always knew Creta would do well, but the increased sales of Venue came as a big surprise,” he says.

First-time buyers are going in for cars priced between Rs 6 lakh and Rs 9 lakh, and the more affluent are buying cars and SUVs between Rs 9 and Rs 12 lakh.

Higher-priced cars are doing well too, and that is because the pandemic hasn’t particularly affected the personal finances of the rich, says a dealer.

Trade analysts thought it would take a year for the automobile industry to get back on track, but sales picked up because people have a continued fear of infection, and are not as enthusiastic about public transport as they were before.

### Used cars in demand

Used cars are in big demand: they are cheaper than new cars, and buyers are not as daunted by the price tags.

Sixty per cent of first-time buyers are opting for pre-owned cars as compared to less than 50 per cent pre-Covid, he says. His company has helped transact about 40,000 cars across India after the lockdown. “Bengaluru has emerged as one of the leading markets with cities such as Mumbai, Pune and Delhi NCR,” he says.

Naveen Soni, senior vice president, sales and service, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, sees good potential for used cars. “We have seen a positive trend, especially for small cars in the A and B segments. There is growing traction especially among those in the metros commuting by public transport.”

### **Scooters and bikes**

Two-wheeler sales are upbeat, too, but recovery is not uniform across brands.

An official with Yamaha says the company has seen a 40 per cent decline in sales in Karnataka in the last two months and an overall 27 per cent decrease in the sale of two-wheelers. “People are working from home and many have returned to their hometowns. We hope sales will pick up after September,” he says.

TVS Motor Company, which makes two-wheelers and autos, is fully back on track. After an initial setback, its sales numbers have bounced back.

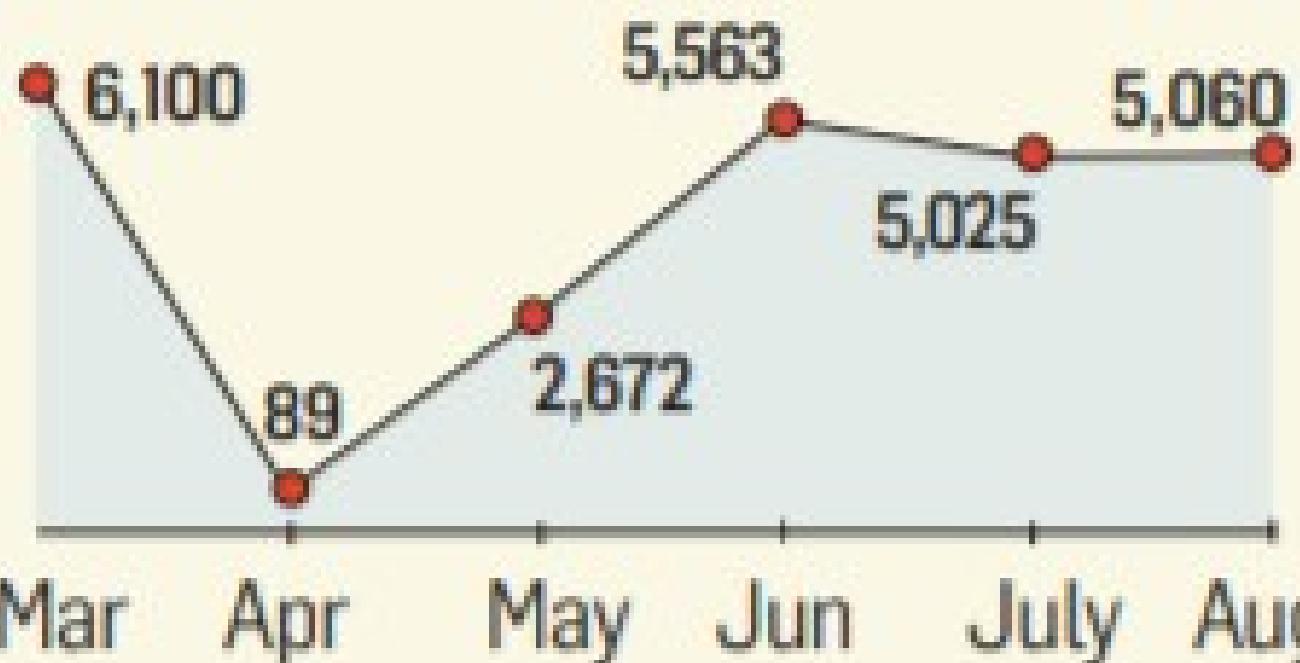
TVS sold 198,387 vehicles in June as against 297,102 units in the same month last year. Sales grew to 2,52,744 units in July and 2,87,398 units in August. It sold 144,817 two-wheelers in June as against 226,279 in June last year. That was a major low, but business picked up soon enough. Motorcycles sold 84,401 units in June as against 1,31,331 units in June 2019. Scooter sales registered 65,666 units in June as against 99,007 units in June 2019.

### **RTO allows virtual registrations**

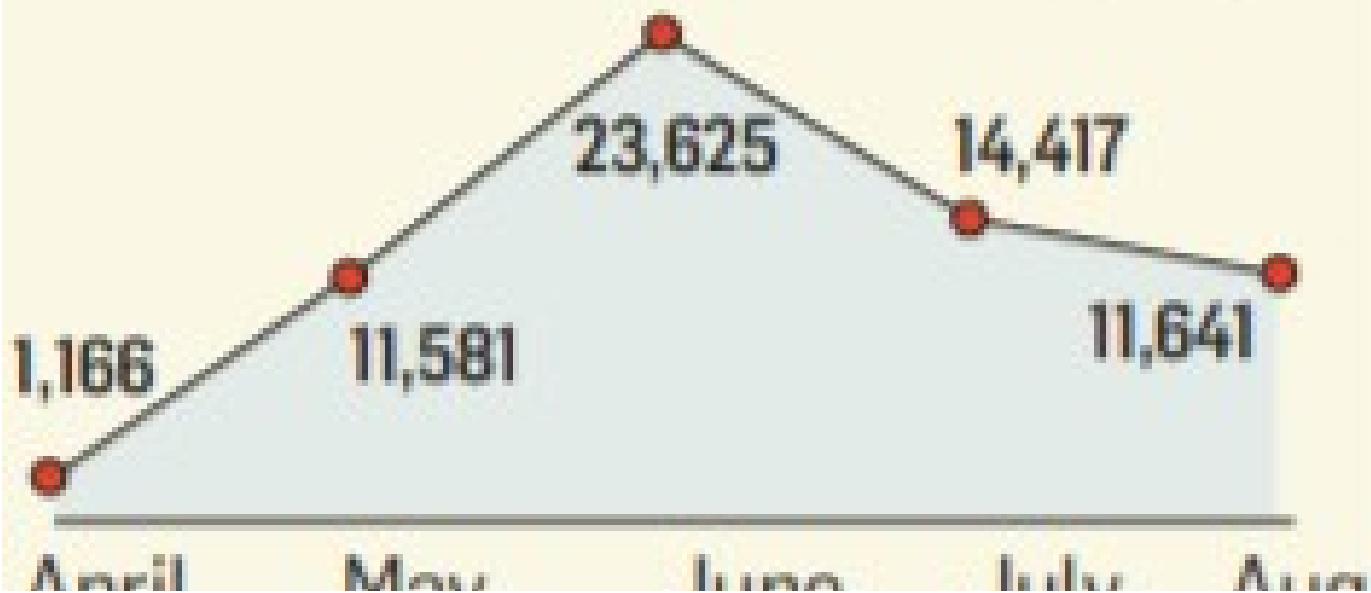
Transport commissioner Shivakumar N says while April and May saw few registrations, the numbers picked up in June. “We have also eased the formalities of registration. People can now upload all documents from their vehicle dealer’s office, with photos of their vehicles. We have noticed that smaller cars are moving fast,” he told *Metrolife*.

## Four-wheelers and two-wheelers registrations at RTOs in Bengaluru

### Four-wheelers (March to August)



### Two-wheelers (April to August)

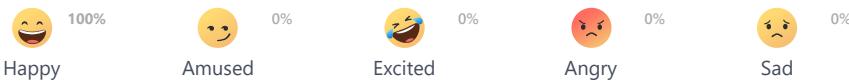


# (Source: Transport department)

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