

Nine-year fight against taint breaks a heart, kills kidneys

| Chetan R chetan.rudrappa @timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

What is the human cost of a case in which the accusation eventually turns out to be motivated or false? A recent case of acquittal of two state government officials shines some light on the question.

During the pendency of the trial, both the kidneys of the main accused failed; and the second accused had to undergo two heart operations. Both now have two years of service left and are glad that despite the case going on for nine years, they will now retire with a clean bill of service.

While the Lokayukta special court judge Manjunath Nayak acquitted both last week, their counsel, CG Srinivas, said that it was obvious from the charges were cooked up and the police should have been more careful; they should have vetted the case before



registering it.

Flashback
 One Aravind Kumar, an electrical contractor, had lodged a complaint with the Lokayukta on September 25, 2008, alleging that RB Shivaraj, now 58, (who was charged as the main accused) had demanded a bribe of Rs 200 to issue an electrical contractor's licence to the former. Shivaraj was an accountant in the electrical inspectorate office. A Anand, also 58 now, a

first division assistant in the same office, was made accused number 2 in the case even though his name did not figure in the initial complaint. HV Sreenivas, a social welfare department staffer, was made the shadow witness and a certain Mohammed Irshad was the investigating officer in the case. The Lokayukta police claimed that the trap laid on the two on September 25, 2008, was successful (An electrical contractor licensed by the government is a big deal; such contrac-

tors can earn in crores if they win a government tender or in lakhs if they get small contracts like electrification of a new construction. A bribe of a mere Rs 200 for such a licence prima facie looks like somebody's attempt to fix the accused.)

The investigation
 During the trial, multiple versions by the IO, witness and the accused proved that something was amiss.

Kumar, the complainant alleged that he had left Rs 500 on Shivaraj's table after he refused to accept the bribe. He also alleged that he had given Rs 200 to Anand (accused No. 2) on his way back and Anand had kept the money on Shivaraj's table.

However, the IO alleged that the demand was for Rs 200; the same amount was given to the complainant when he approached the accused.

The shadow witness, Sreenivas, on the other

hand, sided with Kumar's version and said that Rs 500 had been paid.

Interestingly, he admitted during trial that he was a repeat witness and complainant; he was a witness in five cases and a complainant in nine.

The clincher came from the mahazar (record of proceedings or recoveries during a raid/incident) which recorded Shivaraj as telling the accused "I know what you are up to. Get out of here," when he approached him with the marked currency notes.

Despite the loopholes in the case, a charge sheet was filed on February 2, 2010.

The trial stage
 When the case went to trial, it became increasingly clear that the accused had been fixed. The complainant failed to turn up for cross examination from January 2013 till December 2016. The hand wash of

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Deccan Chronicle 16/2/17 P-5

Morning shocker! Debt-ridden farmer climbs up transformer, electrocuted

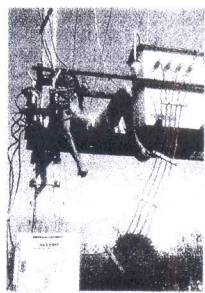
VITTAL SHASTRI | DC HUBBALLI, FEB. 17

He left home at 5 am and walked for over a kilometre before climbing up to sit on a transformer on the outskirts of the village. There was no power supply at the time, but he was aware it would resume at 8 am and waited patiently for it and got himself electrocuted.

The suicide of 58-year-old farmer Chamansab Arisinaguppi of Chikkamsihosur village in Hangal taluk of Haveri district on Friday left the people here shocked.

He was believed to be depressed over the failure of his crops for two consecutive years and the harassment he was suffering from moneylenders.

The people, who rushed to the transformer on hearing a loud noise, saw him lying there dead and realised what he had done. Chamansab owned three acres of land and had



The body of Chamansab Arisinaguppi of Hangal taluk atop a transformer

seven children, including five daughters.

Struggling to make ends meet owing to the drought, he had grown jowar by taking a loan from the State Bank of India, but could not repay it as the crop failed. He then borrowed from moneylenders on higher interest to repay the bank, but it refused to give him a

CHAMANSAB OWNED THREE ACRES OF LAND AND HAD SEVEN CHILDREN. HE HAD GROWN JOWAR BY TAKING A LOAN FROM SBI. BUT HE COULD NOT REPAY IT AS THE CROP FAILED. HE THEN BORROWED FROM MONEYLENDERS TO REPAY BANK LOAN. HOWEVER, THE BANK REFUSED TO GIVE HIM A FRESH LOAN WHEN HE NEEDED IT THE MOST

fresh loan when he wanted one, according to his family.

"He left home saying he was going to the fields. No one noticed him sitting on the transformer for over two hours as it is located in a remote spot outside the village. He had borrowed over ₹3 lakh from various finance companies and moneylenders.

The debt increased after he got two of his daughters married last year," said Chamansab's nephew, Mardhansab. Angry farmers' leaders, meanwhile, alleged that banks were continuing to harass farmers to repay loans despite the drought in the region.

Chamsab is only the latest to commit suicide in the district.

Going by officials of the agriculture department 77 farmers have committed suicide and compensation has been paid to families of 56 of them in Haveri since April last year.

Farmers are continuing to kill themselves although they were assured by AICC vice-president, Rahul Gandhi and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during a mammoth rally and padayatra in October 2015 that the government would come to their rescue.

Bangalore Mirror 18/02/2017 Pg. 1

Mysuru & Hassan railway stations to get solar power

| Manoj Sharma mybangaloremirror@timesgroup.com
TWEETS @BangaloreMirror

#MYSURU

Mysuru and Hassan railway stations will soon have solar panels installed on the roof. It is part of an all-India initiative by the Ministry of Railways. In Mysuru Railway division, Mysuru and Hassan stations will soon allot space to private parties on the roof of station premises for setting up the panels.

Both stations will have solar panels with a 200 kw capacity unit generating 2000 units of electricity every day.

Sources from Railways told Bangalore Mirror that the two stations are now getting electricity from the Karnataka Electricity Board (KEB). After solar electricity generation begins at the plants, they will buy the electricity from the company that installs the plant at a lower price. Officials said the cost could come down by Rs 1 lakh per month.

The solar plant is expected to be installed within 6 months. Atul Gupta, Divisional Railway Manager, said, "It is very easy to install. Soon afterwards, we will get power at a reasonable price." Officials of the company which has won the tender have identified the spots where plates can be installed.

The Hindu 18/2/2017
Power shutdown

BENGALURU
 There will be no power supply on Sunday between noon and 4 p.m. in Bommasandra Industrial Area 4th phase, KSSIDC, 2nd Stage, Vinayakanagara and surrounding areas fed by Bommasandra Industrial Area Station. This is due to wiring work of the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited in the jurisdiction of Chandapura sub-division.