

## Karnataka, Tamil Nadu illicit liquor toll crosses 140

At least 140 people, about 80 of them in [Bangalore](#) and surrounding areas, have died in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu after drinking spurious liquor Sunday, the police said Tuesday.

In Krishnagiri district in Tamil Nadu, at least 37 people lost their lives while in Kolar district in Karnataka 29 died in the tragedy that began Sunday afternoon in the two districts.

The Karnataka government Tuesday suspended six excise officials as the killer brew took 31 more lives Tuesday in Anekal and Hoskote, on Bangalore's outskirts.

Authorities raided several villages on the outskirts of Bangalore and destroyed a huge quantity of material stored to manufacture spurious liquor, the police and excise officials said.

Raids were conducted at several places across the state and nearly 20,000 sachets of illicit liquor, each containing about a quarter litre of hooch, were destroyed, the police said in Bangalore.

The toll could go up as many of about 100 people being treated in Bangalore and Kolar hospitals are in a critical condition, they said.

In Bangalore's Devara Jeevan Halli, a poor, thickly-populated locality of daily wagers, 45 have lost their lives, in Kolar district, 68 km from here, 28 died, Anekal 14, Hoskote 17 and Krishnagiri 37 are dead, the police said.

The Karnataka government increased the compensation for the kin of the dead to Rs.50,000 from Rs.10,000 announced Monday.

P.K.H. Tharakan, adviser to Karnataka governor Tuesday met senior police and excise officials and discussed steps to be taken to contain the spread of the tragedy and measures to trace and destroy the dens where spurious liquor is manufactured.

The Bangalore police have arrested six people, but the vendor who sold the brew in Devara Jeevana Halli, the worst affected area, is absconding.

The tragedy started Sunday afternoon in Kolar and Krishnagiri districts and by evening it had hit Devera Jeevana Halli. Five deaths were reported soon after many people consumed the spurious liquor in the area in Bangalore at around 8.30 p.m. Sunday.

Apart from the dead, many were said to be in a serious condition and on the verge of losing their eyesight, doctors in Bangalore and Hosur hospitals said.

Major political parties, engaged in campaigning for the third and last phase of Karnataka assembly polls Thursday, have now begun blaming one another for the tragedy.

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