

# THE BEACON

PRACTICE NEWS BULLETIN OF THE PG STUDENTS OF JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION

Thursday, 13 October 2022 / St. Joseph's University / Vol: 15 Issue: 26 / www.sjcdeptcomm.wordpress.com

## Padhayatra: the fight for justice

**Shariq Ahamed**

**Bengaluru:** Workers from Bellary who lost their livelihood following the Supreme Court order of 2011 that directed the mine owners to shut down the operation to avert the damage to ecology, organised a protest rally demanding rehabilitation under the aegis of AICTTU (All India Central Council of Trade Unions).

The Bellary Padhayatra was inaugurated by actor Chethan and progressive activist Medha Patkar in the presence of over 2000 workers. Patkar pointed out that Bellary's struggle is arduous and significant and that the Padhyatra is to secure their livelihood, equitable sharing, life, and for change. She also told the workers that their struggle is a long struggle like that of Narmada Bachao Andolan. The workers demanded five lakh in compensation, five acres of irrigated land, employment in other mines, pension for the old workers and financial aid for education among others.

"The workers are positioned like slaves under the East India Company; with the capitalist regime of Ambani and Adani today the sweat of the workers makes the corporates rich," said Patkar dwelling on the exploitation of workers by the private sector.

Actor and activist Chethan expressed his support for the demands of the mine workers, stating that they are legitimate and that the government should consider them. "They were abused by the management and subjected to harsh working circumstances," he said.

## Kharge vs Tharoor: Congress playing a master stroke?

**kannika shembekar**

**Bengaluru :** The presidential elections will give a face-lift to the battered Congress party said Dhruv Jatti, Karnataka Congress Deputy Spokesperson speaking to The Beacon on Tuesday.

"The party's cadres are re-ignited with the forthcoming elections, and after a long period, the party is finally having a full-time president. This will ease operations, appointments and smooth functioning of the AICC (All India Congress Committee)," he said.

The Congress Party is holding its presidential election in twenty years amidst the criticism from various quarters that a remote-controlled candidate would be saddled in the position of the president.

The Thiruvananthapuram MP, Dr Shashi Tharoor and senior Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge have submitted their nomination papers to run for the position



The news minute

of Congress party president.

The new Congress president will be chosen by 9100 delegates. On Oct 17, the elections will be held and the results will be out on Oct 19. The party will choose a non-Gandhi family member to serve as the new party.

"The race for the elections is contested by two tall leaders of the party - Shashi

Tharoor & Mallikarjun Kharge. Both these leaders have vast experience in the organisation. The party cadre who will vote for the elections will decide who is best suited for it," said Jatti.

"I believe there is a healthy chance for Tharoor to land in the position, considering the internal support among his peers. A lot can

change behind the scenes if the Gandhi family throws their weight to bolster support for his opponent. It's a wait-and-watch game," said a Congress party supporter who didn't want to be named.

Karnataka state director (BJP), GS Chaudhari stated to The Beacon, "They are trying to make some changes (by electing non-Gandhi

president), even the public is demanding for changes but no matter the change, the final decision will still stay in the hands of Gandhi family. Even while Manmohan Singh was the president what was different? What he wanted to do that never happened; what the Gandhi family wanted the same thing had to be done."

"It is a genius move since they never considered electing a different leader for so many years before coming up with this one. Until the BJP party exists, everyone who arrives won't get better and won't be able to do anything. The Gandhi family founded the Congress party, but they didn't do it to serve the best interests of our nation; rather, they did it so that their family might remain in power till today, believing that Rahul Gandhi alone should hold the position of prime minister," he said.

## Quota reservations in J&K creates tension

**Angeline Claudia**

**Bengaluru:** Home Minister Amit Shah's recent visit to Kashmir has ruffled the political weather of the union territory with the conflict between the two prominent communities, the Gujjars and the Paharis, precipitating to a level that has caused concern among many. Shah mooted the idea that Pahari speaking population will be given a Scheduled Tribe (ST) while addressing a huge gathering in Rajouri recently.

While the Gujjars are already accorded a ST status, the Paharis are looking forward for the same status. The Gujjars and others STs are now con-



SC/ST reservations for pahari

Shuaib Masoodi

cerned that the increase in the reservation for the Paharis from currently 4% to 10% would eat into their seats.

Javid Ahmad Khan, a journalist from Kashmir, said, "Gujjar and the Pahari commu-

nity do live together, but their standard of living is completely different. The Pahari community has already been given reservations under the PSP (Pahari Speaking People) category. This way they can only

increase their PSP reservation and can get a separate right to themselves. But unfortunately, the BJP is taking this step, only to serve themselves with a higher number of votes."

He further added, "Amit Shah stated during the event that both the Gujjar and Pahari communities would receive their rights. However, he has also said that the Pahari group will not benefit from the Gujjar community's privileges in any way. Therefore no rights simply mean no reservation. The current dispute between the Pahari and Gujjar communities is being used as a political ploy to increase vote bank."

## Puducherry electricity workers resort to a legal battle

**Jeba Janet**

**Bengaluru:** The Puducherry government's decision to privatise the union territory's electricity department and the unexpected tenders floated prompted the workers in the electricity department to go on strike. However, the strike was called off on Oct 3.

F Muthukumar, assistant line inspector, while talking to The Beacon, said that privatising the electricity department will result in a loss of identity as government employees and as a result, we may lose our pension. The government says it will provide pensions, salaries, and benefits through a trust, but workers are sceptical about it.

Home Minister Namasivayam said the protestors suggested selling off only a partial stake in the company, as in UP, instead of 100%, which would protect them. Since privatisation is a decision of the central government and cannot be overruled, they failed to convince the government to drop the plan. The workers failed to pressurise the government to drop the privatisation plan. But, the Case is filed against privatisation by electricity department workers' unions in the High court of Tamil Nadu, and the legal battle has just begun.

## The bone of contention between govt and cab aggregators

**Nikita Priya**

**Bengaluru:** The online booking of auto rickshaws using the ride-hailing apps Ola, Uber, and Rapido is now prohibited by the Karnataka government.

On Saturday, the Karnataka Transport Department sent notices to Ola, Uber and Rapido terming a part of their operations as illegal and asked them to discontinue the service within three working days.

The government has said it is abiding by the rules laid down under the On-demand

Transportation Technologies Aggregators Act (ODTTA) and Section 93 of the Indian Motor Vehicle Act, 1988. Cab aggregators are classified as "digital intermediaries" under the recently passed Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Bill 2019, and all app-based taxi aggregators must obtain a license to operate at the state level. The state governments will grant licenses to the aggregators based on the parameters set forth by the federal government.

The IT Act, 2000's regu-

lations must also be followed by the aggregators.

As per the ODTTA, a fleet of a minimum of 100 taxis either owned or through an agreement with individual taxi permit holders is needed to get a license. The ODTTA also mandates that every taxi should have a display board with permit and driver details, panic buttons, a GPS control room facility, a digital fare metre capable of generating printed receipts, and a yellow board with 'taxi' visible from both the front and rear.

## Tharoor deliberates on future of democracy

**Dhamini D**

**Bengaluru:** Taking a dig at the Modi government at the Centre, one of the Congress's presidential nominees Dr Shashi Tharoor on Sunday said that democracy has been reduced to a mockery in the country.

"In a democracy, you should have the freedom to criticise, you should have the freedom to support the criticism, the freedom to support the opposition parties. If you want to bear a consequence for it, you have to be a very brave person," he said.

Tharoor was applauded for his comments on the need to strengthen the Indian Congress to take on BJP in 2024. "People want to see a revived Congress to represent the aspirations of Young India," he concluded.

On Oct 8, in Mumbai, Tharoor spoke at the IFP (Indian Film Project) event to a packed crowd of young people on the state of democracy in India. The discussion was moderated by Shoma Chaudhary, a renowned Indian journalist and political commentator.