

# THE BEACON

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## Art in protest against patriarchy

**Aileen Raju**

**BENGALURU:** Questioning patriarchy and power imbalances, as well as contesting how they are manifested in the public sphere, feminists have played a significant role in making crime against women visible and actionable, stated Nicole Wolf, researcher of the reservation process of the Yugantar Film collective.

On January 23, 2023, the Yugantar Film Collective, in collaboration with Gamana Women's Collective, Bangalore Film Society, and SFS College, presented three documentaries at SFS College, Bangalore.

Yugantar is a flourishing independent women's movement in India. The collective's films contributed to the movement's discussions and new artistic techniques of protest, organising demands for massive change.

Talking to The Beacon, Deepa Dhanraj, a researcher, writer and filmmaker, commented that Tambaku Chaakila Oob Aali (1982) amplifies the struggles that the women of the Nipani tobacco factory went through. The 25-minute long documentary showcases the woman workers, hailing from SC communities, and how they were compelled to work for long hours for low wages.

"One thing you may have noticed in the documentary is that the women discuss sexual harassment in the workplace. It's interesting to note that their list of demands in 1980 included not only work but also dignity, self-respect, no humiliation, and no caste discrimination," she commented.

## Backyard snake creeps in Pak front door

**Ashish Bhandarkar**

The monster nurtured by Pakistan in the form of terrorist groups like Jaish-e-Mohammad, Al-Qaeda and most importantly Taliban, to weaponize these groups against India, has backfired and is wreaking havoc in their own country, said Ashish Kumar Singh, editor of foreign affairs at ABP news.

The Pakistani variant of the Taliban, Tehreek-e-Taliban has taken over and declared a parallel government in the northwest region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and has been governing the province with a full-fledged cabinet since January 2023. This is a direct threat to Pakistan's sovereignty, compelling them



The new 'government' on a walk

Modern Diplomacy

to declare it as a terrorist group, contradicting their own stance on the Taliban taking over Afghanistan.

The primary problem in the structure of Pakistani politics is the dominance of communalism and the division of power between the Army, ISI and the parliament. The absence of a strong central governing body fuels

these fringe groups to get stronger by gathering people who are looking for representation and decent livelihood, Singh opined.

"It's a tragedy to see nuclear power's existence threatened by a terrorist organisation. Shahbaz Sharif's public statement on agreeing to have negotiations with terrorists shows the fragile state Pa-

kistan is slipping into. If the situation is not curbed, there is a high possibility of Pakistan breaking into pieces," he added.

Further narrating the current scenario in Pakistan, he added that this is the worst time for any civil instability. Pakistanis are already going through a high food inflation and forex deficit, where people are struggling to buy basic needs like wheat and cooking oil. Also, the recent floods in the country have shattered the infrastructure, bringing Pakistan's economy to its knees. The geopolitical patrons like Saudi Arabia and China have also backed off from extending a helping hand.

Contrary to the popular

belief, Pakistan's debilitating state of affairs will not serve Indian interests or reduce terrorism in the country. The political instability in Pakistan makes it a challenge to maintain diplomacy. A stable government in Pakistan will enable India to make trustworthy bilateral agreements, fulfilling India's interest, he said.

"Pakistan needs to learn from its mistakes and contemplate how it wants to be seen on a global platform. For this, they need to make fundamental changes in the governance and they should start by eradicating these terrorist groups from their soil, otherwise, the country will eventually be extinct from the world map," he concluded.

## Students' protest knocks casteism off campus

**Megha Mukundan**

After 50 days of protest alleging caste discrimination, the students of the KR Narayanan National Institute of Visual Science and Arts (KRNNIVSA), Kerala wins big. Shankar Mohan, the institute's director resigned from his position out of pressure, followed by the resignation of around eight staff, against whom the allegations were levelled. Kerala higher education minister R Bindu assured the students that the institute will have a new director soon, and subsequently, the students called off their strike.

"Shankar Mohan's resignation was one of our many demands, and the minister has assured us that all of them will be met very soon", said Aswin Krishna, a student of the institute and an active participant in the protest. "We called off the protest, and we are happy and hopeful now," he added.

However, Mohan said the resignation was tendered as his tenure ended and not because of the protest.

On December 5 2022, students of the KRNNIVSA launched the strike accusing Shankar Mohan of practising open casteism. It was alleged

that he forced the institute's sanitation workers to clean the toilet of his house and manipulated the reserved seats meant for the admission of students from a scheduled caste. The workers also revealed that they faced casteism at his house, as they were asked to take a bath before entering the house and clean the toilets with bare hands.

By launching an indefinite strike called 'The art of protest', the students demanded the director's resignation, and the institution to adopt more inclusive measures. Not only the director and the chairman Adoor Go-

palakrishnan (veteran Malayalam director) denied the allegations, but also the latter passed derogatory comments about female workers.

After the students launched their protest, many prominent figures from Malayalam cinema and literature came in support of them. This included director/cinematographer Amal Neerad, Rajeev Ravi, and directors including, Jeo Baby, and Kamal KM. According to the students, the protest was a resistance through art and a learning process as it included master classes, talks, discussions and music performances.

## Getting ready to face the pitch

**Srijit Ray**

**BENGALURU:** A Bangalore-based cricket startup, Freebowler, that offers cricketers a bowling device has emerged in the field.

Founders, Pratheek Palanethra and Vishwanath HK, both cricket fanatics and experienced players, wanted to provide an inexpensive bowling mechanism for young cricket aspirants.

The company's vision is to provide better training experiences and infrastructure for amateur cricketers. Also, the brand ambassador of Freebowler is none other than Ravichandran Ashwin.

The device is capable of bowling at a maximum speed of 130 Kmph. It is portable and also has many natural variations of bowling. The devices, available in both electric and non-electric categories, are very cost-effective.

Vishwanath, himself a qualified coach and umpire, says, "The device works on springs as well as battery... There are a lot of cricketers and academies who need such equipment, and they are our main buyers. We have sold 1000 units across 15 countries. Other companies do sell such products but for very high prices."

## A scoopful of 'Heaven'

**Anuja Jose**

**CAMPUS:** Providing everything to everyone is the strong foundation on which The Heaven eatery aims to serve the public.

Started in December 2019, The Heaven, in Arikere, Bengaluru, offers everything from pizzas to ice creams and is currently working to take this project pan-India. Promoting their restaurant, an ice cream roll stall was put up on the premises of St. Joseph's University.

Uday Kumar, the owner of The Heaven caught up with The Beacon for a chat. "It is a heav-



The Heaven on SJU campus

Jenett Jose

en where you get everything. Our unique point is that we do not add any preservatives," he said. The restaurant also includes healthy food options like low-fat pizzas, wheat pizzas, low-sugar ice creams etc.

"The ice cream roll tastes really good," said a student, trying a strawberry-flavoured ice cream roll. "I'll definitely be a regular at their shop if a branch opens near my house," she added.

## 'Survival of the richest'

**Ashish Bhandarkar & Priyanka Gond**

**BENGALURU:** When the whole world is vouching for a capitalistic economy because of its past success, why is chronic poverty still rampant around the world questioned Amitabh Behar, CEO of OXFAM India.

On January 22, OXFAM India conducted an event called "Survival of the Richest-The India Story" at the Bangalore International Centre. It was presided over by Rajeev Gowda, former MP, Rajya Sabha and an academician, Tara Krishnaswamy, an activist, and

Amitabh Behar. The current data released, raises concern about the increasing wealth inequality in India. "India is a rich country with poor people, where a Mercedes Benz is bought every minute while millions of people go to bed on empty stomachs," said Behar.

Fundamental reforms must be done in the Indian economic structure to bridge the wide gap created by the culture of crony capitalism. India being the most populated country with a diverse demography, has to strive for inclusive growth rather than running behind the 5 trillion mark, he added.