

# THE BEACON

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

Thursday, 26 January 2023 / St. Joseph's University / Vol: 15 Issue: 49 / www.sjcdeptcomm.wordpress.com

## House of wisdom turns 21

Anuja Jose

**BENGALURU:** For any city to be recognised, the bookstores are important, asserted Mayi Gowda, the owner of Blossoms Book House.

Blossoms Book House, Bengaluru's iconic bookstore, turned 21 years old recently, adding another year of being a haven for Bengaluru's book lovers. They marked their 21st anniversary by opening up a third store on Church Street.

Lots of people come in here every day," Gowda says, proudly. He felt that the two other stores on the same street still had the same rush on most days. Blossoms mostly deal with second-hand books that are provided to them from all over India and abroad. The abundance of books received led to the opening of the third bookstore.

"We are only 21, but it feels like it's 100 years old now," he said. Gowda spoke of a rags-to-riches tale, talking about how he came to Bengaluru from Mysuru, to study and started selling books for the college expenditure.

The growth of this beloved bookstore is massive, considering the introduction of digital libraries and stores. He felt that with all the access to eBooks, pdfs or audio-books in India, the physical bookstores were still on top. "People prefer to hold the book and read them," he says.

"Support physical bookstores," he says. He opined that the feeling of going to bookstores and browsing through the aisles cannot be replaced.

## Income divide in the country sparks debate

Priyanka Gond

**BENGALURU:** OXFAM seeks data on income inequality from the government as the data available with the organisation might be outdated, and hence be inaccurate. "We need the numbers from the government," said 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 in Rajya Sabha and an academician, Tara Krishnaswamy, an activist, and Amitabh Behar.

The three intellectuals spoke out against India's growing inequality. Gowda said, "It is not an explicit election issue."

Political parties receive funding from the wealthy, thus the government doesn't



Panel discussion on OXFAM report

Priyanka Gond

feel the importance to resolve the problem, says Krishnaswamy. They just use inequality for vote bank politics, 'gareebi rekha hataiye aur ameeri rekha barhaiye'.

Behar narrates a tragic story about seeing billboards for furnished apartments with massive private

pools, every five kilometres as he travels from Pune to Mumbai. He laments the absurdity of seeing impoverished people strolling along the same route barefoot and bodies reduced to skeletons. Krishnaswamy laments, "The reality that the returns go to the rich

while risks are borne by the poor." It is shameful that the way we celebrate billionaires and do not empower the poor, she says.

India is fourth from the bottom in terms of health investment, has 9 beds per 1000 population, and needs to invest at least 3% in health and 6% in education. "There is no government that has done that," Gowda argues. Behar exclaimed that the same caste still performs sewage cleaning and 15 of them die every month, due to a lack of health facilities.

Gowda says, "It is a political decision that Gujarat, the state with the highest GDP, has the same number of hospital beds as Uttar Pradesh." While Delhi being the national capital has a horrendous amount of slums same as Punjab. How do we escape these false promises, Krishnaswamy wonders?

While the gender gap in

higher education is narrower, the gap in income earnings is widening, and there is no data for the child-sex ratio. Sadly, infants are losing lives owing to simple illnesses, she said. State expenditure for women is insufficient, they require additional support and facilities as they create the future. Behar regrets the fact that just 7 women are among the top 100 billionaires. "Not even 75 women have become MPs in 75 years of independence," says Krishnaswamy.

They also discussed the shortcomings of corporate taxes and recommended the government introduce wealth and inheritance taxes, like other countries. It's no longer true that wealth leads to investment, leading to increased job opportunities. The lack of student loans without collateral and hefty interest rates suggest a collapsing economy.

## One step closer towards Digital India

Ashish Bhandarkar & Anjali Singh

**BENGALURU:** The concept of digital currency, often misunderstood, is being scrutinised for its relevance in the Indian market. It will serve the same purpose as cash but without any physical form, said Lakshman Prabhu, a crypto and blockchain expert working for CoinMarketCap.

Wholesale digital transactions in government securities during the first phase by RBI in November 2022 were a huge success. The pilot project for retail digital currency was launched on December 1, 2022, but is still under imple-



Crypto creeps into RBI

entrackr.com

mentation on an experimental basis in Bhubaneswar, Bangalore, Mumbai and Delhi.

Unlike conventional bank accounts and other investments like equity and cryptocurrency, desired for their returns, the e-rupee will be the modern manifestation of

the traditional mode of transactions, serving as a digital token representing legal tender. This might not have the option to earn any interest by itself but will certainly make it easy to invest in the stock or money market, he said.

The reason for it to be

launched on an experimental basis under eight of the most prominent commercial banks is to evaluate the degree of acceptance by the general public. However, it will take a while for the eventual amalgamation of it in the economy, he added.

"The CBDC is different from the United Payments Interface (UPI), which is a real-time payment system that allows individuals to instantly transfer money between bank accounts using their mobile devices," said Gayathri Krishna, associate loan manager at South Indian bank.

## Tuning into past melodies

Jesbin Sam Mathew

**BENGALURU:** Music, one of the greatest phenomena of the world, transcends all boundaries of culture, language, religion and many more, opined Dr Indira Viswanathan Peterson, author of the book 'Poems to Siva'.

The Bangalore International Center hosted an event named 'Violins and Veenas' on January 24 to enlighten Bangaloreans about a fascinating chapter in the fusion of European and Indian music. It was witnessed in a small south Indian royal court during the early nineteenth century.

The event portraying Serfoji II's reign, the multitasking king who ruled the British-supervised Tanjore principality from 1798 to 1832, demonstrates how Indian classical music, in collaboration with European musical styles, attained new standards of excellence.

Speaking to The Beacon, Peterson said, "Serfoji was the first Indian ruler to develop a full-fledged European wind band, including classical chamber, works for instruments and voice, and experimented with ensemble performances (a group of musicians performing together) involving European and Indian instruments."

## Tranquil 'wall of thoughts'

Aileen Raju

**BENGALURU:** A blanket of warm air greets the customer as one passes through the doorway. The peaceful sight of the bookshelf, hanging wall frames with inspirational quotes, and calming soulful music will leave one smiling with the sheer force of enchantment.

Café Zubaan is a home art cafe that provides a venue for intellectual conversations about socially significant issues as well as the development of a progressive



Entrance to Cafe Zubaan Instagram

community. "Along with Lebanese delicacies, the scent of personally touched books has added to the cafe's elegance," said Labeeb Usman, owner of the cafe.

Jasna Moidu, co-owner, feels that the quotes on the wall hangings are quite powerful and that looking

at some of them every day provides the validation one needs to hear. "My idea is to fill the entire wall with quotations. I put the hashtag 'wall of thoughts' because we should all be extremely thoughtful," she added.

The word 'Zubaan' literally means "tongue" in Urdu, but it also implies "speak up" or "voice out" in a broader sense. "We were looking for names, but after we spoke a bit more, I realised the way we wanted this café to be. Zubaan was the ideal name," added Moidu.

## New rules: A boon or bane?

Sowmya A

**N**ila Arun (name changed), a beauty influencer said that while it was good to see the government's rules and regulations regarding celebrities and influencers, it would affect the way we earn from the paid partnerships.

Recently, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs announced that the endorsements received by celebrities, virtual influencers and social partners should be disclosed to the public, failing which a Rs 10 Lakh fine will be imposed. The Ministry also announced that repeating the offence will attract a penalty of Rs 50 Lakh.

Nila, who has been on social

media as an anonymous beauty influencer since 2021, is popular among skincare and makeup enthusiasts for her genuine reviews. "Apart from earning through Instagram reels, influencers depend largely upon brands for their income through paid partnerships," Nila told The Beacon.

Around half of the social media influencers don't fail to disclose their paid partnerships, but some influencers don't disclose this as many followers think that paid partnered brands lack credibility and they aren't genuine. So, disclosing the partnerships with brands might reduce the followers of some Instagram influencers.