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A sordid tale of 'Longing'

Chanrasoodeshwar

Campus: The most significant questions are often the ones left unasked, said Bani Singh during the screening of her documentary 'Longing' at the Social Justice Film Festival curated by documentary filmmaker R P Amudhan and hosted by the Department of English of St. Joseph's University on January 30.

'Longing' is a multi-layered documentary with hockey as the subject and explores the themes of partition, friendship, politics, and division. The film captures how politics can create divisions and disrupt relationships and communities. It highlights the themes of loss, reunion, and the unifying power of friendship despite differences.

Bani Singh sets out to understand the life of her father, Grahanaandan Singh, a former hockey player who won Olympic gold medals in 1948 and 1952. To gain insight, she seeks out and connects with her father's friends from Government College Lahore and his days in sports. She meets Keshav Datt, one of her father's friends living in Kolkata. Bani Singh's journey to locate Shahzada Shah-Rukh, one of his teammates.

While explaining the process of filmmaking, Bani Singh says, "When I went to Pakistan, I have identified a crew which was supposed to do sound and camera, but for some reason, they didn't show up. When I found Shah-Rukh finally, I put a headphone on and handled them. It turned out to be a blessing because of the intimacy Shah-Rukh spoke to me, and I don't think this would have happened with them."

Farmers protest high input prices, low yield

Parnika S

Benguluru: The farmers of Raichur protested Monday demanding the government intervene to stop plummeting prices of their produce. The 'saat mile roadblock' was in response to the loss incurred by the rice and cotton-growing farmers of Raichur and Bidar.

This was not the first as a similar protest took place on December 26, 2022. Farmers who sold cotton for 10,000-12,000 Rs per quintal last November and early December are currently forced to sell for 6000 Rs. The All India Kisan Khet Mazdoor Sanghatan (AIKKMS) along with the farmers urged the authorities to take immediate action against the sudden fall. One of their demands was to fix the MSP as a means to provide compensation to the farmers.

Following this protest, another was held on January 4 in the city against the



The 'saat mile road block' protest by farmers

Special Arrangement

decline in cotton production. The district collector assured them of resolving the issue. However, the promise has not been delivered yet, and the farmers continue to incur losses.

Speaking to The Beacon on the 'saat mile road block', Mallagund Annacheshaguru, the district secretary of AIKKMS Raichur described the intensity of the problem. He pointed out that one of

the reasons for the failure of crops was the low-quality seeds due to the mixing of male and female seeds. Given the price drop, the amount they receive does not cover the expenses. "We

are demanding the buyers to increase the price per quintal to at least 9 thousand," he added. The farmers spend an amount of 30 to 40 thousand on an acre of land.

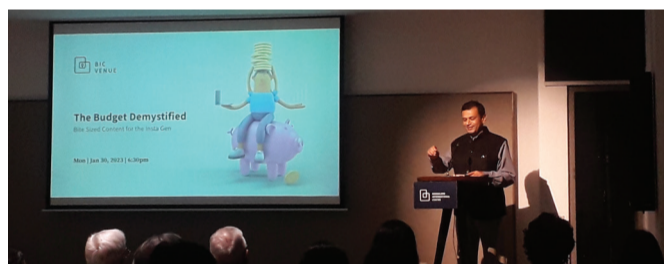
Mallagund said that the Cotton Corporation of India had fixed the rates at 6000 Rs per quintal. However, that will not be sufficient either, he said. "We are demanding these prices to be increased to 12,000 Rs," he added. He also suggested that the buyers should increase the MSP as the prices for inputs have also increased. State governments need to put pressure on the district's officials; unfortunately, that has not happened, he said.

Farmers are demanding to fix the procurement price of cotton at 9,500 per quintal. The other demand includes fixing a procurement price at mills, colouring the male and female seeds for identification and a report on the low yield.

Market investor demystifies the Union Budget

Jesblin Joseph

Benguluru: With Union Budget 2023 around the corner, Narayan Ramachandran, a rising marketing investor, asserted in his budget talk that a budget is and should be a narrative. While economists and analysts predict trends, dissect nuances, and poke holes in the budget, not many understand the meaning of it, said the curator of the budget discussion held on Monday at the Bangalore International Centre. How many of us grasp what economists and analysts say, when they forecast trends, dissect nuances, and find flaws in the budget, he questioned.



A budget talk

Jesblin Joseph

"One thing we miss in India is that we do not have an independent budget office," he pointed out citing examples of legislatively appointed bodies in the United Kingdom and the United States that critique whatever the government cooks up. He opined that the

words represent what these organisations should be and hoped and encouraged the mass to demand an organisation of this type whose purpose will be to honestly and independently critique not only the numbers but also how the numbers are presented to the population. "Whether you

are applying for a grant as a scientist, writing a freelance journalism proposal, or trying to get a commission for an art piece, communicate a budget; the budget is communicated in terms of its values, principles, and purpose."

While answering questions from the audience, Ramachandran suggested that in the last thirty years, we have descended into a form of spreadsheets. "I will present some scratches of my own if you like, but you will see the void of the narrative; the spreadsheets and the numbers are somewhat meaningless."

Domestic workers issued labour cards

Anirudh J

Benguluru: The Bangalore Apartment Federation (BAF) in association with Stree Jagriti Samiti conducted a domestic worker's benefit camp at Akme Encore on Saturday to identify domestic workers as a part of the workforce. This camp facilitated the domestic workers to register for labour cards such as smart cards, Eshram cards, and Sampatti cards.

Geeta Menon, secretary of Stree Jagriti Samiti, speaking about the initiative said, "Domestic work is regarded as the unseen sector since they are still marginalised in the unorganised economy. Our union decided to host these camps because the government hasn't created any programmes to raise public knowledge of labour cards. This will benefit migrant workers the most as it creates a database and gives an identity to them."

Speaking to the Beacon, Seetha Ramaswamy, a representative of the BAF, said, "Akme encore and five other apartment representatives came together to organise this camp here as it is our responsibility to spread the idea. We are also planning to replicate this in every area."

Sordid picture of mental hospitals

Anjela Patrick

The deplorable conditions of the government mental hospitals have drawn flak from activists and psychologists across the country.

The inhuman and despicable conditions of the mental health institutes were disclosed by a recent report released by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) after it visited government hospitals in Gwalior, Agra, and Ranchi; the remaining 42 hospitals were visited by Special Rapporteurs to assess the situation on the ground.

Dr Binda Singh, a Patna-based clinical Psychologist, said to The Beacon that this reflects the country's deplorable state and its approach to mental health and treatment. "Normally, all patients are not harmful and need proper care, medication and family support. So they might not be a threat, but instead, society can weaken their morale if not habilitated properly," she expressed.

Dr Singh opined, "Awareness is vital, there has been a significant change in society in recent times, but still, people need to understand that

the mind is part of our body, and it needs care and attention like any other body part. Such practices should be put in force to help make people aware of the procedures, outcomes and remedies for any mental illness. People should know what medicines work on which medical condition. Laws and regulations alone cannot change the mindset and issues in society. The government needs to act in order to reinstate better-equipped and qualified staff. Mental patients are part of our society, and they only need empathy and awareness."

Workers protest in Nelamangala

Aasline Dsouza

Benguluru: The Yazaki workers held a rally on Monday, demanding the revocation of the termination notice and reinstating the sacked employees. The workers continued their two-month-long protests and marched from the Arasinakunte by-pass to Magadi the by-pass of the Nelamangala town.

More than 150 Yazaki India Pvt. Ltd. workers were terminated from duty without prior notice and have been protesting at the factory gate since December 26, 2022.

Speaking to The Beacon, Arindham, a district committee member for the All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICTU), said, "Some of them have been working in the factory for two to four years. In a conciliation meeting held on January 10, the management had agreed to reinstate all the workers, but only around 30 workers were called back to work, while the rest are still protesting to be let back to work. The next meeting with the deputy labour commissioner is scheduled on February 7."