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Students join forces against the shuttle fees

Aileen Raju & Anuja Jose

BENGALURU: The Azim Premji University's (APU) hostel in Bengaluru has reinstated shuttle fees for transportation from the hostel to campus for the new semester.

Students of APU have been protesting for three days, demanding the cancellation of the fees. The administration has levied a cost of Rs 8500 on all students staying at the hostel which is 3 kilometres away from the university.

The hostelers were forced to pay the shuttle fees immediately after their admissions were confirmed. Geetha (name changed), speaking to The Beacon, said, "There are students who work part-time on the campus to get some extra pocket money to sustain themselves." The registrar of the university said that the students would be responsible for covering the costs.

On February 15, the third day of the protest, the students spoke to the public outside the university gates, to gain support. "The registrar noticed us twice or thrice, but didn't meet with us... we thought that it would be revoked, that the university would take care of the students' safety and that it would be free," said the source.

The road connecting the university to the hostel is unsafe and dangerous after dark. "It feels like if you want to be safe and avoid harassment, you must pay that amount," added Geetha.

'They tortured my brother and hanged him'

Jenett Jose & Megha Mukundan

Kerala, the land of intellectuals, has once again hit the national headlines after a tribal man's death. Viswanathan (46) was found hanging near the Government Medical College, Kozhikode after he was accused of stealing. Although the authorities have declared it to be a suicide, his family has alleged murder.

Hailing from Wayanad district's Paravayal tribal colony, Viswanathan and his pregnant wife Bindu travelled to Kozhikode, expecting to have a baby after 10 years of their marriage. He was accused of stealing money and a mobile phone by the security staff from the waiting shed at the hospital, and later was found dead, with injuries on his body.

"They tortured my brother and killed him. It will either be the security people



Representational Image

The Statesman

or the police," said Vinod, brother of the deceased, speaking to The Beacon. "My brother is a very innocent man. They waited for 10 years for a child and how can he just commit suicide on the next day?"

Even though the family approached the police to register a missing complaint, the police took 4 hours to file it. He affirms that they had checked the hospital premises the previous day, including the place where his body

was found. Also, his body had several injury marks and blood stains, which can only happen through physical assault. "People tend to outcaste us and consider us as untouchables and criminals even today. We have regis-

tered a complaint with the SC/ST commission," Vinod added.

Reacting to the incident, social activist Ammini K said to The Beacon that this is not a new story for Wayanad or the tribals there, as they are always discriminated against and exploited. "This is not just one case. A 58-year-old man called Babu, from Ambalavayal Panchayath, got beaten up when he asked for a raise in wages last Friday.

She is sceptical about the police version, as there is CCTV footage of him being chased by a group of people. "The place where the body was found is an old police quarter and has broken glasses and sharp stones on the way. Had he gone there by himself, he would have injuries on his foot, as he was barefooted. But the dead body doesn't have any," she added.

It's time to walk a mile in her shoes

Ashish Bhandarkar

Gender sensitisation is the primary goal of this initiative, as not only grown men but also children from high schools need to apprehend the biological limitations of women, said Joan Rita O'Brien, Head of the Department of Sociology at St Aloysius College (Autonomous), Mangalore.

Karnataka's first-period simulator was inaugurated by Dr Praveen Martis, Principal, St. Aloysius College and Dr Sandra Sunitha Lobo, Head of the Department of Psychology at School of Social Work, Roshni Nilaya, Mangalore on Febru-



Faculty members trying the simulator

Special Arrangement

ary 8, at St Aloysius College. The Department of Sociology initiated it under their ongoing 'Cramp Swap' campaign.

Talking about the awareness, she acknowledged science, noting that men can now at least be aware of the extent of phys-

ical pain through the simulator, but might never relate to the psychological turmoil women go through during their menstrual cycle.

"Men should have the knowledge about the natural process that women go through

and must have some kind of empathy towards it," she added.

This campaign is receiving an overwhelming response from the students and faculty. Most of the people trying the simulator are astounded by the experience and even women are giving it a try. "Some girls with extreme period cramps are not feeling anything by the simulator even at a frequency of 15, whereas men give up at the frequency of 4," she narrated.

"It's not just about the period simulator; it's high time that we normalise talking about the so-called taboos of society. The etiquettes can be forgone to let them know what is happening."

Diverse voices get an open mic

Jesbin Sam Mathew

CAMPUS: The students of St. Joseph's University got a chance to witness a lively college life through an Open Mic Contest conducted as a part of Prathiba celebrations.

Prathibha is one of the popular intercollegiate festivals held by SJU and this year, it is conducted as an intracollegiate event by the Student Council of the university. Around 15 participants performed in this open mic event from different departments.

The event was organised in Arrupe Atrium to cheer up students who are exhausted by overworking in their academics. To bring out the vibrancy in both the participants and the audience, purple was chosen as the colour theme of the event.

Speaking to The Beacon, Tommy Alben, the cultural secretary of the Council said, "Prathibha is a dream come true moment for the students of SJU as they were longing for this fest for a very long time." He added that this open mic event will definitely serve as a platform for the participants to express their talents by bringing out their Josephite spirit.

Women's cricket gets a tennis legend

Anuja Jose

Sania Mirza brings in years of experience and insight about the sports industry, irrespective of whichever sport she played, says Neha Shetty, host of the cricket podcast 'Never on the Backfoot'.

Women's Premier League (WPL) team Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) recruited tennis ace Sania Mirza as their mentor on Wednesday. Shetty talks about all things related to cricket on her podcast 'Never on the Backfoot'.

"Sania understands what it



Sania Mirza RCBTweets

is to be a sportswoman in this country. She can bring that to a lot of the domestic players and she can focus on the mental aspect of both the young and the established players," said Shetty. There was a lot of criticism regarding a tennis player being signed up as a mentor

for a cricket team. Shetty explained that Mirza was one of the top sportswomen from India. "Since she's coming from another sporting discipline, she brings in a very different aspect as well," added Shetty.

Meanwhile, speaking to the RCB social media team, Mirza said, "I was a little surprised when the team approached me, but I was really excited. I want to help the younger generation believe in themselves, and no matter how many odds are against you, you can achieve your goals if you back yourself."

Embracing the tales of Mythology

Priyanka Gond

BENGALURU: Satyarth Nayak, a prolific author has duly collected and preserved the essence of ancient stories in his fourth book, Mahagatha.

On February 14, Blossom Book House conducted a meet-and-greet with Nayak, which was followed by the signing of his latest book.

"It was a beautiful process of osmosis, sitting and listening to stories by my grandfather. Later, I began studying further mythology.

It's pitiful that the current generation is being deprived of stories from their grandparents," he said about his source of inspiration.

He finds it fascinating that tales from centuries ago still spark the same imagination. It was an interesting process to write about the gods and demons, as well as the larger-than-life spectacle, he added.

Mahagatha has been well received and 5,000 copies got sold out. Additional 4,000 copies will be printed for the same bookstore.