Protest to defend protests

Diya Daniel

Bengaluru: The Horatada Hakkigaagi Janandolana, a coalition of progressive groups, advocated for the preservation of the right to protest in Bengaluru on September 20. They opposed the restrictions on protests as curtailment of the democratic right. The Licensing and Regulation of Protests, Demonstrations, and Protest Marches (Bengaluru City) Order, was enforced in January 2022. This order constrains the right to protest, primarily confining it to Freedom Park, say the activists. Protests beyond this area are denied permission. The collective has engaged with government officials, including the chief minister and home minister, demanding the immediate withdrawal of this "unconstitutional" order. "If the demands are unmet by October 2, we plan to march from Gandhi Statue on MG Road to B.R. Ambedkar's statue outside Vidhana Soudha upholding their fundamental right to protest and calling for the repeal of the contentious order," the release read. The demands of the activists include the immediate withdrawal of the order and the dismissal of cases against protesters, workers, farmers, Dalits, women, and marginalised communities. The movement staunchly defends democratic principles and freedom of expression enshrined in India's constitution, emphasizing the ongoing struggle for democratic values and citizen empowerment.

Tamil Nadu's new scheme to be fraud proof

Ishika S

There are people who might attempt to give fake information to benefit money from the scheme, but through the fine system established for the scheme, it is hard to fraud it, said Ragavapillai Siva an MLA, President of DMK party in Puducherry. Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu MK Stalin introduced Kalaignar Magalir Urimai Thittam on September 15, a scheme to empower women. It provides Rs 1000 every month for all women above the age of 21, with an annual family income less than Rs 2.5 lakh, annual household electricity consumption below 3,600 units, land holding not exceeding 5 acres (wetland) and 10 acres (dryland).

Speaking to The Beacon, the MLA explained the provisions to apply on online or offline mode according to their convenience. The

MLA R. Siva — Ishika S

beneficiaries' Aadhar card details will be linked to their respective bank accounts, facilitating the verification process to determine their eligibility for receiving funds under the scheme

He added, "This scheme only applies to the ones who come under the poverty line and are unemployed. The moment they apply for this scheme, the scheme heads will verify it thoroughly, and the money will directly be credited to the respective bank accounts. This will leave no room for fraud."

All districts have an office specifically available to address the rejected applications — in case any applicant is rejected and seeks redressal. One of the reasons for rejection of the application can be when some people claim to reside at their relative's place, and not possess a home of their own. In such cases, a thorough check is done on the information provided. If the information is accurate then the application will be approved, he said.

The verification process will be carried on under the supervision of Chief Secretaries under who the district collectors are given various positions. Eligible candidates will be requested to create an account which links their Aadhar details and provides an account number to access the money every month.

"This scheme is not just a political agenda but it is to empower the people. The party has educated girls in various fields and initiated numerous programs. They have provided opportunities to girls without any discrimination and now the problem has been resolved. The scheme is first of its kind and no other state has implemented it. The scheme will prove very beneficial for the women as it can help them afford their basic necessities."

Dilemmas of stray & relocation worries at bay

Unnati Mishra

Depriving animals of their territory is cruel and illegal, said Ajay Kainth, in charge and manager at Sanjay Gandhi Animal Care Centre, New Delhi. In an interview with The Beacon regarding allegations of brutality towards dogs during the G20 summit in the national capital, he clarified that the dogs were taken for sterilisation.

To enhance the city's appearance, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) relocated hundreds of dogs to sterilisation units without proper record-keeping, leading to outrage among animal activists.

Kainth defended the

Stray dogs captured in ambulance — Arab News

government's actions, explaining, "As per the government's guideline we only took animals that required sterilisation (animal birth control) and gave them Anti-Rabies vaccination for those who were sick and ailing after which they were released to their specific area." Regarding allegations of dog relocation, he stated that they were released in the presence of observers, adhering to their protocol.

"As clearly stated in Article 429, relocating animals is against the law, and keeping them in their non-habitat is cruelty to them," Kainth affirmed.

"Whenever we pick up an animal, we take the Aadhar card of the issuer/reporter, and when we release it, we do it in a particular location, ensuring it is released in the presence of the issuer," he added.

Ironically, the G20 theme, 'One Earth, One Family, One Future,' contradicted the principle of 'leave and let live'. Kainth suggested the creation of habitats for animals rather than relocation, with their right to live and their freedom."

Kerala rejects NEP framework

Sen Michael Mathew

In a step that accentuates the contradictions, the Kerala government has rejected the school education structure suggested by the National Education Policy (NEP). Instead, they have introduced a new curriculum framework.

It is proposed to include cyber law as part of the curriculum. This framework aims to tailor education to Kerala's unique needs and values. "The approach of the government is not to implement the NEP as it is. The state's new curriculum framework will be more suitable taking into account the circumstances in Kerala," Education Minister V Sivankutty said in the press conference.

A retired teacher in Kerala said, "The new curriculum framework introduced by the state government is a great pace in the field of education. It will bring wonderful changes in the intellectual as well as social life of students." As per the NEP 2020, the school structure is divided into four stages starting from pre-primary to secondary education. Another recommendation was to control the number of seats which should be 20 in a class.

Parai to smash social stigma!

Aatreyi Bose

Carving out a space for dignity and financial stability, Parains struggle to keep stories of their existence alive. Speaking with The Beacon, Keela Naren, parai musician and facilitator of Adavi Arts highlights the importance of parai as an anti-caste instrument, rarely spoken dalit struggles, and their community goal. On September 22, he's working on a fundraising performance with Beru's Water Collective exploring individual stories linked with a 'Frame'.

Naren traced the history of the transformation of parai from a prejudiced funeral-drum into a liberating instrument. In Kattumannarkoil, Dalit youths compiled a list of menial jobs like manual scavenging, handling deceased bodies, and cobbling, among others, and initiated protests in 1985, said Naren. Kadalur's district collector gave them permission to abandon the jobs, voluntarily. Then the Parain community resolved with Reddiyur Pandiyan, one of the protestors, to not play parai in festivals. "The police and people, mostly upper-caste, planned and shot Pandiyan. We still use his name before performance," he added. Next, near Thanjavur, Master Gurumurthy, a Parain and watchman helped the struggle to gain momentum. After he had urged his students not to perform due to the loss of their dignity, his thumb was severed and displayed to the villagers, reminisced Naren. "With the hope of recognition, we are travelling to spread the message. We still want to play parai, we don't want to lose it," said Naren. Just look at this music without any boundaries, without caste hierarchies, just as music, he added.

Markets hit festive profits

Srishti R Jois

BENGALURU: As Ganesha Chathurthi, one of India's most celebrated festivals, was observed without Covid-19 restrictions for the second consecutive year, Bengaluru's markets experienced a significant surge in business from September 17-19 as bustling crowds flocked to make bulk purchases.

Mohammad Nizam, a flower vendor, expressed his delight at the remarkable surge in flower prices and turnover compared to the Varamahalakshmi festival. "Roses, usually priced at Rs 60 per kg before the festival, soared to Rs 200 during the festivities. Sevantige (Chrysanthemum) went from Rs 40-50 per kg before the festival to Rs 300 afterwards. Mallige (Jasmine), once priced at Rs 600 per kg, skyrocketed to Rs 1800 during the festival," he said. Nizam emphasised that this year's festival season marked the best sales period since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, attributing the success to the high demand and increased prices.

The market witnessed a substantial influx of shoppers, many of whom engaged in bulk purchases, highlighting the festive spirit and economic comeback in Bengaluru during this joyous occasion.