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Technology enhances police vigilance

Unnati Mishra

To promote excellence among police officers in the scientific detection and investigation of crimes, the railway authorities commemorated the 67th All India Police Duty Meet (AIPDM) on Monday. The Railway Protection Force (RPF) on February 12, 2024, hosted the meeting in Jagjivan Ram RPF Academy, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. The program had Ashwini Vaishnav, Union Minister of Railways, Communications and Electronics & Information Technology in attendance. The program envisions, enhancing internal security and strengthening the collective pursuit of investigative excellence said the Director General of RPF, Manoj Yadava speaking to The Beacon. He launched a dedicated mobile application and website and said this would aid in streamlining communication, provide real-time updates, and facilitate seamless participation for officers attending the event. "Featuring a range of competitions such as Scientific Aids to Investigation which includes fingerprint, face look, and other biometric identification, Police Photography, Computer Awareness, Special Canine Unit contests and Anti-sabotage checks, and Police Videography, the meet will provide a platform for law enforcement personnel to sharpen their skills and uplift their best practices," said Radhey Choubey, Assistant Security Commissioner, RPF. The meeting witnessed the participation of 29 law enforcement agencies of the Centre & states whereby 1230 members will participate in various events.

Government accused of undermining democracy

Ishika S

The loopholes existing in parliamentary democracy are discussed across the country, be it the absurdity of parliamentary debates, ordinances passed without a mandate, issues relating to electoral bonds, finance bills and many more that have reduced parliamentary democracy into a joke in today's context, said Priya Darshini, Coordinator of Delhi Forum. During an online press conference, hosted by the Civil Society on February 9, she released a charge sheet against the Central government that contained details of the procedural violations and Constitutional provisions to turn the parliament into an instrument for majoritarian and undemocratic. Fr Cedric Prakash,

Henri Tiphagne, HRDA, Maitreyi K, AILAJ, Nadeem Khan, APCR, Priyadarshini, Delhi Forum and Representatives of NAPM, PUCL, MKSS, Bahutva Karnataka were among the speakers.

Forest Conservation Amendment Bill is going to affect the entire north-east Indian States and no debate was conducted before passing it within 33 minutes, asserted Darshini. "This is not just a one-off instance, in 2023 alone, seven bills were passed with an average discussion of 20 minutes," she added.

The charge sheet is entitled 'We the People of India v. Government of India'. The charge sheet enlists and shares evidence for eight charges levelled by the people of India against the government. "No deputy speaker in Lok Sabha,

the lowest number of sittings in a full term Lok Sabha, controlling Parliament as per government's whims, reducing opportunities for holding government accountable, bringing more and more ordinances bypassing parliamentary scrutiny, promulgating ordinances committing a fraud on the Constitution, bringing Bills without following democratic process, passing Bills without discussion in absence of opposition MPs, without following democratic process and discussion, lack of transparency in law-making process, not doing proper public consultations, violating Pre-Legislative Consultative Policy and not sending Bills to Standing Committees, passing budgets without adequate scrutiny, including problematic provi-

sions like the Electoral Bonds in Finance Bill, unprecedented number of Opposition MPs suspended in Winter Session 2023, a virtually opposition-less Parliament passed controversial Bills, Govt uncomfortable with questions, questions asked by Opposition MPs get deleted, ministries provide evasive responses to questions," are the charges.

Clifton D'Rozario, general secretary of AILAJ, said that the criminal bills were passed recently in the absence of the opposition parties and without consultations before passing the bills proving a lack of transparency in the government. "If you go back in time, to the freedom struggles itself, when we realized that the freedom struggle was not just about driving the British out, it was

also a contestation of ideas of how India should be in the future and more, less than one. It's conceptualised in the Constitution, and it was decided in most emphatic terms that, we will go ahead with a parliamentary democracy." He further quoted Ambedkar, "A form of government can only be parliamentary or dictatorial; If it is not a dictatorship, then the government is always on trial."

Nadeem Khan, Secretary, APCR explained the Haldwani-mosques and Madrasa attacks and mentioned that a shoot-at-sight order was passed in which around 250 people were reported to have bullet-related injuries and six dead. The whole attack was orchestrated to get a reaction for the passage of UCC.

Urban life of caste woven into Bengaluru's tapestry

Aatrevi Bose

BENGALURU: Mapping out the historical legacy of Bengaluru, Janaki Nair elucidated upon the spatial understanding of public spheres and workplaces underlined by social hierarchies and the pervasive influence of caste. Yet she asserts that through cycles of oppression, exploitation and liberation, the city gives hope to 'certain kinds of secular equalities'.

The event Urban Life of Caste featured the renowned Bengaluru-based author and retired professor from the Centre for Historical Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University. On February 9, the Departments of History and Communication

Studies of Mount Carmel College collaboratively hosted Nair at the Platinum Jubilee Event Center.

From 1931 census data and old city maps, Nair showed the caste-segregated spaces to trace Bengaluru's administrative and industrial shift in accommodating workers from Karnataka and beyond. "Although they're exploited in the city as workers, for example, in the construction site and so on, they experience freedom from certain kinds of oppression. They are not face-to-face with the upper-caste landlord who stops them from drinking water from wells in the village," pointed out Nair. She also stressed the indis-

pensable need to comprehend century-long discrimination before drafting public policies. Calling the 10% criteria for the economically weaker section misplaced and a direct attack on ideas of reservation, she added, "There is a resentment expressed by the upper castes, who all now claim backwardness in the name of economy." Economic deprivation is necessary to address but not as necessarily as reservations. Since the 1980s, the proportion of upper castes in Parliament has been extremely high because they asserted their right to be present without reservations, she said.

Challenging the upper-caste grip on shaping

national narratives, like vegetarianism, she said, "This is a country where 86% to 90% of people consume meat in some form or another. Only 10% of the population, in certain regions, like Gujarat, surprisingly Punjab and so on, there is a greater degree of vegetarianism in India. But it's a completely mistaken belief that this is a vegetarian country."

Tolerance is necessary more than comfort, she opined. We have to build a new culture which integrates rather than segregates, focusing upon the social responsibilities of holding conversations through a critical examination of caste privilege, she added.

Kairos: The right time

Fiona Vaz

CAMPUS: Kairos entails a comprehensive approach to education, and social transformation, besides prioritising the social transformation value of knowledge over cognitive skills said Fr Brian Pereira, Director of Samagra, St Joseph's Holistic Wellness Centre.

In a holistic initiative, led by Fr Brian, Directors of Samagra, St Joseph's Holistic Wellness Centre, students of St Joseph's University (SJU) experienced an impactful program called Kairos. According to its Greek meaning, Kairos means 'the right time'. The one-week-long event was conducted at SJU.

The programme was designed for final-year students of all courses. "The students share with us about what they want to do for society out of gratitude, for what they've received, because that is the motto of Jesuit institutions, forming men and women, for and with others," said Fr Brian.

With the belief that students must grow with values, he added, "Kairos is where we express our gratitude in action by reaching out to people and give back to society."

Pop-tastic Visages '24

Navya Y

CAMPUS: In line with the 'One state many worlds'- the tagline of Karnataka Tourism Department, let us emphasise our cultural heritage, classical music, folk music and dance, and classical dances. Participation becomes more meaningful when everyone is enthusiastic, no matter who takes away the price said the chief guest, Concepta Fernandes, inaugurating Visages 2024.

Visages, a flagship inter-collegiate fest of St Joseph's University is a convergence of cultural, academic and sports events and was



Visages 2024 inauguration Kiranmai B

held on February 9 and 10. It comprised over 30 events with participation from different colleges across Bangalore. The theme 'pop culture' encompasses a wide range of practices, beliefs, artistic expression and traditions of the society.

"Participating actively in college fests, and receiving applause from the audience builds confidence in you and that is one of the driving forces towards pursuing your talent as a profession," said Kannada film director Akash Srivatsa.

Speaking about the importance of Visages, Vice-Chancellor, Dr Victor Lobo said that jobs are the result of degrees, but skills play an important role. "Each one of us has talents and skills. Students are amazing, not just because you have a talent, but because you are chosen to exhibit your

From your Valentine

Srishti R Jois

February, also known as the month of love, is devoted to the love birds across the world.

Every year on February 14 we celebrate centuries-old traditional celebration, Valentine's Day or the feast of St. Valentine, known to have begun in the Roman Empire.

The Catholic Church acknowledges two martyred Saint Valentines from the 3rd century, and both died on February 14. The popular belief attributes the day to St. Valentine of Terni, who was executed by Emperor Claudius II.

This priest secretly performed Christian marriages and preached Christianity, which was considered to be illegal at the time. Hence, he was sentenced to house arrest and during his detention, he fell in love with the jailer's daughter. Soon, the news reached the emperor who ordered his execution on February 14. Valentine sent a farewell note to his lover before the execution signed "from your Valentine", giving way to the tradition of exchanging Valentine's greetings and new celebration for love. The church later embraced the festival as a Christian celebration.