

# THE BEACON

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## ICBD advocates business sustainability

Nidhi B & Hemalatha Y.N.

**BENGALURU:** The School of Business at St Joseph's University conducted the fifth edition of the International Conference on Business and Sustainability (ICBD) to promote sustainable practices in a business environment, said Dr Christo Selvan V, Dean of the School of Business. The conference held on March 14 and 15 focused on promoting sustainable development with an emphasis on 5Gs: Goal, Green, Growth, Governance, and Globalisation. Dr Selvan highlighted the significance of sustainability and its influence on the future. To foster awareness among students, a panel discussion featuring delegates from Japan, the Netherlands, South Africa, and various regions within India was organised to help students understand the importance of sustainability.

"The conference offers networking opportunities and a hands-on approach to tackling sustainability issues. This, in turn, empowers students to make proactive career choices and encourages them to consider the importance of sustainability. As Bengaluru is facing water scarcity, it is vital for budding students to understand their role in fostering a sustainable future for all," he added. Speaking to The Beacon, Leena Baptist, a teaching assistant at SJU's Department of Management, said that student presentations on waste reduction and environmental protection were effective in highlighting the hurdles in adapting to a sustainable environment.

## SJU gears up to tackle water crisis

Shoaib Shakeel

**BENGALURU:** The looming water crisis in Silicon City due to depleted groundwater levels and drying of borewells has not left any institutions or locality unaffected. St Joseph's University is also reeling under the severe water crisis this summer.

The water requirement for the university's students is higher compared to other educational institutions, said Dr Melwin Colaco, Registrar of St Joseph's University.

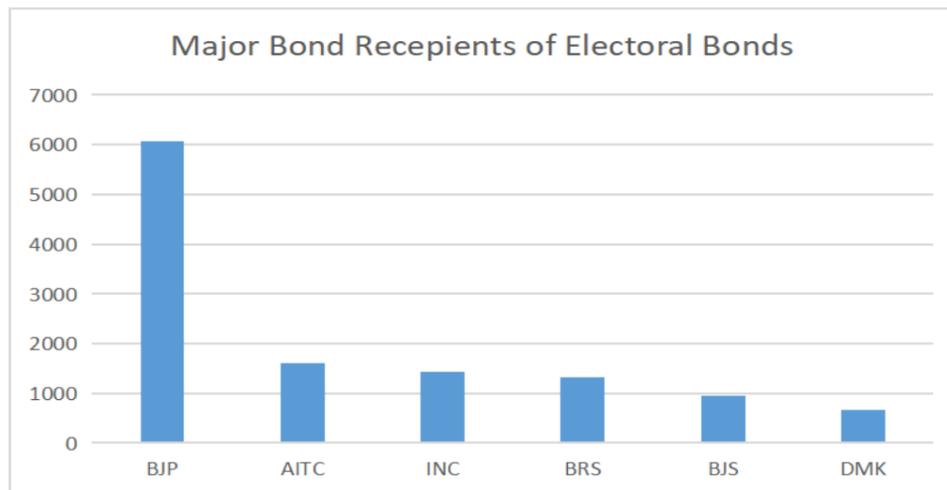
The total student strength of the university from all three shifts is 10,000. Besides students are

## BJP, the biggest beneficiary of electoral bonds

Dattatraya Dutta

Following an ultimatum by the Supreme Court, the Election Commission of India recently released a detailed data report on electoral bonds sourced from the State Bank of India.

Introduced in 2017, electoral bonds allowed private organisations and individuals to anonymously donate money to political parties. The electoral bonds scheme was introduced by the government through the Finance Act of 2017 under the pretext of maintaining transparency, as the government claimed it would formalise the influx of money into political parties by channeling it through bank sources. The electoral bonds scheme, however, has been under constant scrutiny since its introduction, as several experts have claimed that it could give an unfair advantage to certain



The share of electoral bonds redeemed by the political parties

Dattatraya Dutta

political parties and that the anonymity of the donor could be a major caveat.

The detailed report released by the Election Commission reveals a total of 12769 crores worth of electoral bonds being purchased by various private organisations and high-net-worth individuals. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) emerged

as the biggest beneficiary amongst all the political parties, redeeming 6060.5 crores, accounting for 47.5 percent of the total bonds encashed, followed by the All India Trinamool Congress (AITC) and the Indian National Congress (INC), encashing 1609.5 crores and 1421.9 crores, respectively. Bharat

Rashtra Samithi (BRS),

the Biju Janata Dal (BJD), and the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) were other major recipients, redeeming 1322 crore, 944.5 crore, and 656.5 crore, respectively.

One major concern after the release of election bond data is the lack of disclosure regarding bond serial numbers, which could help match the

donors with the recipients as there is a lot of ongoing debate around the identity of the donors. A look into the data of the donors reveals that the biggest purchaser of these bonds was a company called Future Gaming and Hotel Services Private Limited, with a purchase worth 1,368 crores. The company has been under the radar of an investigation of financial fraud and money laundering by the Enforcement Directorate.

Another company, Vedanta Private Limited, which purchased bonds worth Rs 400 crore, also has a controversial past. According to an Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) report, this energy and mining giant was involved in a major covert campaign to weaken key environmental regulations in the country.

## ECI takes measures to ensure fair elections

Pratham Basu

On Saturday, March 16, the Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar emphasised the commission's commitment to enhance inclusivity in the electoral process, particularly by ensuring better representation for youth, women, and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) for the 2024 General Elections.

The CEC along with Election Commissioners Gyanesh Kumar and Dr Sandhu, unveiled the schedule for the General Elections 2024 to Lok Sabha and State Assemblies. They also announced stringent measures by the Election Commission of India (ECI) to

| General Election to Lok Sabha 2024- State wise data in each Phase |                   |           |                        |                            |                           |                             |
|---|-------------------|-----------|------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Phases/ Poll day  | Total States/ UTs | Total PCs | State/UT Fully covered | State/UT Partially covered | State/UT started in Phase | State/UT Completed in Phase |
| Phase 1 (19.04.2024)  | 21                | 102       | 10                     | 11                         | 21                        | 10                          |
| Phase 2 (26.04.2024)  | 13                | 89        | 1                      | 12                         | 2                         | 4                           |
| Phase 3 (07.05.2024)  | 12                | 94        | 3                      | 9                          | 3                         | 6                           |
| Phase 4 (13.05.2024)  | 10                | 96        | 2                      | 8                          | 4                         | 3                           |
| Phase 5 (20.05.2024)  | 8                 | 49        | 1                      | 7                          | 1                         | 3                           |
| Phase 6 (25.05.2024)  | 7                 | 57        | 2                      | 5                          | 2                         | 2                           |
| Phase 7 (01.06.2024)  | 8                 | 57        | 3                      | 5                          | 3                         | 8                           |

Dates of 2024 General Elections

Special Arrangement

ensure free and fair elections.

He added that special provisions will be implemented, such as ramps and assistance for pregnant women, visually impaired individuals, and at-home voting to facilitate their

participation in the voting process.

The Lok Sabha elections 2024, might boast record-breaking participation, with over 97 crore voters, 1.5 crore polling officials, and 10.5 lakh polling stations. To ensure that the 19.7

Cr young voters (20-29 years) and 1.8 Cr first-time voters exercise their right to vote, the ECI will be collaborating with influencers and opinion leaders like Sachin Tendulkar and Rajkumar Rao among others to create awareness amongst the youth of the nation.

He also stated that the ECI is facing challenges of the four M's: Muscle, Money, Model Code of Conduct violation, and Misinformation. To ensure fair elections it will be taking stringent measures involving tracking any suspicious movements of bribe money, deployment of police personnel and electoral observers to ensure a level playing field.

## Print is still thriving: John

Fiona Vaz

**BENGALURU:** Legacy media plays a fundamental role in news dissemination and provides many opportunities to young journalists, opined John Thomas a veteran journalist speaking to the journalism students.

The School of Communication of St Joseph's University hosted a guest lecture on March 14 titled 'Navigating through Legacy Media'.

Describing the competition between the legacy media and social media, he said that the

print medium will be at the helm and referred to examples of Bengaluru's prominent newspapers such as Deccan Herald, Times of India, and The Hindu.

He pointed to the job stability and opportunities legacy media offers while allowing young journalists to work on their branding and skill development. "Do not focus on the money, instead, build contacts, speak to people, and practice writing job applications," he said.

## Premalu: A tale of comedy & romance

Kessiah Joseph

Directed by Girish AD, 'Premalu' is a Malayalam romantic comedy that entertains and keeps the audience engaged. The movie is skillfully executed with perfect comedic timing and evokes nostalgic feelings of heartwarming love stories.

The plot follows the love story between the two characters and is portrayed beautifully, radiating genuine warmth and focusing on friendship throughout the movie. The theme adheres to the celebration of love and friendship.

The film skillfully weaves various themes like dysfunctional families and class differences in Hyderabad. While delivering witty dialogues and situational comedy, the film delves into a more serious tone in the second half. The music in the movie keeps it engaging.

Technical aspects of the movie are well executed including the costumes, location settings, editing as well as, the presentation.

Premalu emerges as a remarkable addition to Malayalam cinema, offering a delightful experience. It's a feel-good movie with stellar and outstanding performances making it a must-watch.