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Legalising vigilantism with Love Jihad bogey

Jenett Jose

BENGALURU: Karnataka is witnessing state interference in the personal lives of citizens lately as adult women are restricted from marrying their choice. Bahutva Karnataka, in their recent press release, has condemned the continued state harassment of minorities under the administration of Basavaraj Bommai.

The Karnataka Police has booked its first case under the anti-conversion statute known as the Karnataka Protection of Freedom of Religion Act, which came into effect on Sept 30. Syed Moin, 24, was taken into custody in Bengaluru after the mother of a 19-year-old girl filed a complaint. The speed with which the police lodged a complaint and detained Moin betrays the real intent of the police, said the release.

"The actions of the police moreover have been matched by the increasingly emboldened actions of vigilante groups who interfere in everyday life and relationships," says Bahutva Karnataka. Police response to such offenders has been incredibly slow. Numerous times, police have declined to take action against members of Hindutva organisations that call for violence against Muslims, boycotts of Muslims, and attacks on anybody who is a Christian.

The law mentions, "No individual shall convert or seek to convert, directly or indirectly, any other person from one faith to another, by means of deception, fraud, force, undue influence, coercion, allurements, or through marriage." Arrest reveals how this ordinance was not meant to protect anyone's rights, but rather to harass and intimidate them, claims the release.

Sigh of relief for people of Uttara Kannada

Ashish Bhandarkar

Though the people of Uttara Kannada district had been promised good things for decades and used as vote banks by the governments, they were deprived of basic needs such as higher education, transport, and healthcare. It's high time the district gets its due, opined Dinakar Shetty, MLA of Kumta constituency, speaking to The Beacon.

The Karnataka government has finally given its nod for the construction of a multi-speciality clinic in Mirjan village of Kumta taluk. The project is estimated to cost 160 crores, and the authorities are in talks for collaboration with the K.S Hegde Medical Institute of Mangalore. Health Minister K Sudhakar confirmed this during his visit to the allotted land on October 11.

A fatal accident in July in-



MLA Dinakar Shetty in a public rally

Suvarna News

volving an ambulance that killed five sparked yet again the long-standing demand for a specialised hospital in the district. The ambulance was on its way to Manipal from Honnavar. The incident stirred mass agitation compelling the government to take immediate ac-

tion. Shetty said, "The collective uproar by the people, unity of legislators of the district in the assembly and the efforts by Minister of Welfare Srinivas Poojary played a crucial role in getting this project approved."

The hospital will be equipped to perform neurologic and

cardiac surgeries along with a dialysis facility and a trauma centre. Initiatives for private investment have been taken and Bharath Electronics Limited has already pledged a sum of 2.73 crores under their corporate social responsibility. The project is also expected to bring in a lot more subsidiary

investment to the region aiding economic development.

The construction is expected to start by the end of the year in Kumta because of its proximity to the other taluks.

One of the hurdles currently for this project is the absence of an airport in a 100 km radius, which would hinder the place from becoming an ideal destination for medical tourism. Even though being the fourth most literate district of the state, Uttara Kannada does not have a single university further contributing to its backwardness. A resident, Indira Shanbhag, opined, "The construction of this hospital is going to bring in a positive change, as most of the people in this region are elderly whose children are living in the cities. Earlier they had to travel to Manipal regularly for basic medical treatment. This decision comes as a great relief for them."

Showering colours on lives of the marginalised

Aileen Raju

To showcase the abilities of the transgender community and provide new insights into their personalities, allowing viewers to see beyond the commonly held perception of a transgender person, a State Art and Cultural Festival was organised for transgenders named 'Varnapakittu' in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.

The capital city of Kerala witnessed a two-day art festival for the transgender community at University College, Trivandrum, with participants from all over the state. The fiesta had 281 transgender participants from diverse areas



Trans Art Festival

Zee News India

competing in 21 disciplines. This time, special competitions were organised in the transmen and transwomen categories.

"We noticed that the public participation was lower than at other art festivals. The majority of the attendees were universi-

ty college students who were quite supportive, and about 200 students stood as volunteers with an interest," said Vinod Kumar, Volunteer Committee controller of the programme.

He also mentioned that, although numerous channels

were covering the event, audience reach was limited. As these are the small steps taken to promote transgenders and bring them to the forefront, huge public support was expected, just as for the other art festivals held in Kerala. The cultural competitions presented as part of the festival demonstrated transgender people's ingenuity and love for numerous art genres. Transgender people, marginalised for many years, were delighted to be given a platform to express their abilities in all creative genres. Students from the institution and participants' friends were equally encouraging and enthusiastic throughout the event.

A play that challenges misogyny

Jesbin Sam Mathew

BENGALURU: Freeda Theater brought tears to the eyes of the audience on Monday at the Bangalore International Centre (BIC) with the performance 'Main Yahan Hoon'. It exposed caste discrimination and sexual violence against women across the country.

'Main Yahan Hoon' is a collective manifestation of women who have experienced caste and sexual based violence in their life. The performance is packed with unmet wishes, confessions and dreams. The performers go between childhood, adolescence and womanhood while bringing up concerns about justice, freedom and identity. It is performed by the intergenerational women's group Freeda Theater, part of the MARAA organisation from Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

"Violence against women due to caste and sexual assault still occurs in our village," said Vishnu, performer of the play 'Main Yahan Hoon'. She hoped this act would persuade at least a few people to rethink their beliefs.

Speaking to The Beacon, Angarika, a member of MARAA, said, "These performers are part of the network of survivors of sexual and caste violence, and our goal is to expose these realities to the outside world."

Langford Town's secret treasure

Vanlalhuma

BENGALURU: A store with intriguing history that brings alive the ancient epoch aura, coated with the passionate efforts of the owner, Saanchi is an antique store specialising in colonial furniture and relics.

Hidden in the heart of Langford Town, Saanchi is safeguarding a lost form of art. With handpicked pieces imported from all over the globe, Saanchi boasts an extensive collection of household furniture and numerous artworks.



Saanchi's interior

Vanlalhuma

Catering to a niche market, the antique store strives to offer top-quality pieces to its

consumers.

A Café of Saanchi is located on the top floor of the three-storied building. Kyoumars, the marvellous host of the café told the Beacon that the cuisine is like no other. Specialising in Persian cuisine, this café offers a concept of homemade food - a rarity in Bengaluru; that has been handpicked and fresh from the source. "I believe a café should be your second home. So, I interact with each and every customer. It's in my nature," he said.

Nutrition before education

Anjali Singh

BENGALURU: The recent report of the National Adolescent Health Programme (NAHP) that declared nutrition to be the major concern of government school students has led psychologists to offer solutions to overcome the problem.

Nearly 2 lakh adolescents in the age group of 10-19 from government schools sought help from counsellors under the NAHP in the first quarter of this academic year for problems ranging from nutrition and skin problems to sexual abuse and domestic violence.

Nupur, a Patna-based coun-

sellor, said the diet prescribed to adolescents by doctors must have vitamin A, vitamin B and proteins in considerable amounts. "Nutrition doesn't mean only cashews and almonds; it can be regular food such as vegetables cooked at home."

Both, career counselling and physiological counselling are important for students in educational institutes, opine the experts. The government has also made physiological counselling mandatory in schools and colleges. Interviews are conducted frequently to understand the psychological state of students.