

# THE BEACON

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## 'A policy to curtail engg education'

Meghana S

**Bengaluru:** Expressing apprehensions regarding the state government's decision to provide financial independence to colleges and the potential risks that such financial autonomy could bring in higher education a seminar was held on Friday at the Alumni Association Hall of the University of Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE) by IGNITE (All Karnataka Engineering Students' Forum) and ECFA (Engineering Colleges Faculty Association).

"If a prestigious college like UVCE is converted into a self-financed institution, only those who have money will be able to study. The fight against education financial autonomy should involve students, teachers, and parents," said prof M N Srihari, UVCE alumni and advisor to the Smart Cities project.

Due to the commercial attitude of the government and bureaucrats, the UVCE is becoming unaffordable after creating numerous notable engineers and scientists, said professor B Narayanappa, a renowned educationist in engineering education, and retired principal.

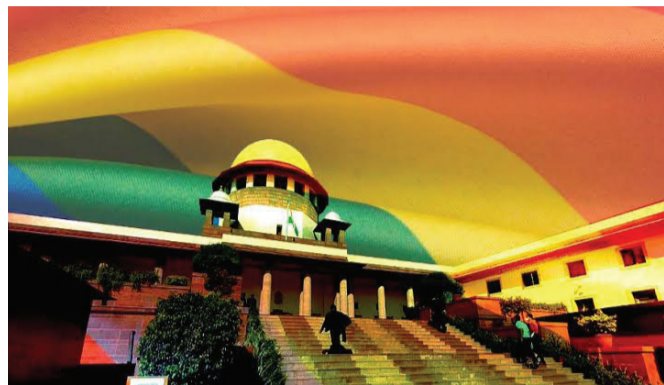
"Government is trying to shirk its basic responsibility of providing funds to educational institutions. It is attempting to label such a college as financially autonomous and to levy expensive fees on students and parents. We fear that this policy will curtail engineering education in the future," said Abhaya Diwakar, state coordinator of the IGNITE.

## 'Same-sex marriage is a different battle to win'

Anjela Patrick

The Central government's opposition to gay couples' petition to the Supreme Court to allow same-sex marriage in India, claiming that this marital law violates the Indian family concept, which only involves "a biological man and a biological woman," has agitated activists and the LGBTQIA+ community members who hold dissenting views on the issue.

On 13 March 2023, when the Centre opposed the legalisation of same-sex marriage in the Supreme Court, Law Minister Kiren Rijju stated that the government does not "disturb" individuals' personal freedom and activities. But the concern about marriage as an institution was a matter of policy. Additionally, the Supreme Court has asserted that while same-sex relationships are not illegal in India, the state only recognises heterosexual relationships in the form of



Representational Image

The Telegraph

marriage, not extending the law to gay and lesbian couples in the country. Denouncing this decision, Ajay (name changed)\*, a transman and an LGBTQ rights activist, stated that the idea of denying the community the right to marry each other itself is meddling adequately with the personal life and liberty of the people concerned. "Such actions will undo everything that leaders, activists, and everyone involved in fighting for the rights of same-sex marriage

sanction in India have done so far. Accepting one's sexuality has always been a difficult struggle for many people, and such decisions will all over again bring the people to the point where acceptance was not a cakewalk," he opined. When asked if such decisions can be a result of societal norms surrounding the marriage, Sunil Mohan, managing trustee of Lahi, a Kolkata-based organisation working for gender reaffirmation and LGBTQIA+ rights, said that

marriage is an institution performed for acceptance. "We live in a society where inter-religious or inter-caste marriage is still frowned upon. Same-sex marriage is a completely different battle to win. The right will not appear on its own. Our legal system is a structure that was built on patriarchy and heterosexual or heteronormative understanding. So changing one thing does not mean changing everything, but each step towards change must be worked out in a way that fosters acceptance," he added. Elucidating on the importance of legalising same-sex marriage, Ruhi Bose, a transwoman and an English teacher at New Delhi Japanese School, said that everyone has been given equal constitutional rights to equality and dignity, and those rights cannot be violated simply because they do not belong to the socially

accepted heterosexual identity. "The only word I can use is equality. If people in the heterosexual community can live together and marry, why shouldn't people of the other sex have the same right? It's not just about marriage; it's not just about marriage; if same-sex people want to live together, legalising marriage would reassure them that what they're doing is not wrong and that it can lead to marriage if they so desire. If things are legalized, they will be able to easily find a place to live together without fear of society. In their workplaces, they will not be looked down upon. The legalisation of same-sex marriage will not change society's opinion overnight, but it will be a step forward in lessening the community's atrocities. We are also humans, so it is past time for people and governments to stop judging us based on our sexual orientation," she expressed.

## Amritkaal seeks to achieve centenarian goal

Aasline Dsouza

We believe that India will certainly emerge as a leading power, and everything we are doing today is an effort towards preparing the ground for Amritkaal, said, S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India on Sunday on the occasion of the '29th Leadership Lecture- India in the Amritkaal' organised by T A Pai Management Institute (TAPMI), a constituent unit of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), Manipal.

TAPMI started the Leadership Lecture series in 2009 to commemorate the completion of 25 years of its existence. "On

this occasion, thought leaders from different sections of society were invited to share their vision, expertise and achievements with the students to inspire them to take the leadership roles in their quest to build this nation," said Lt Gen, Dr M D Venkatesh, Vice Chancellor, MAHE, Manipal.

Jaishankar said that 'India in Amritkaal' is important for the world. "We have just marked 75 years of our independence; these years have been years of considerable achievements, many challenges, also quite a few shortcomings, but we have come through a very challenging phase of the post-independence period. As we

reflect on that, we are now looking at a period ahead, a period which Prime Minister Modi has asked us to think of - Amritkaal; a period of 25 years, so that when this nation in its present form reaches centenarian independence, we can strive to be a developed nation and become a leading power."

Addressing the students he said: "These upcoming 25 years are your years to realise this dream. I would urge you to look at these four aspects of the world that awaits you; the world as a global workplace, the world as a global tech space, the larger challenge of the supply chain and to create a level playing field

culturally. I urge the younger generation to be more confident to be part of the world."

Speaking about the scale of achievements of the last decade in India, he said that we have seen a dramatic reduction in the intensity, rate and extent of poverty in our country. "... a lot of this is reflected in the Human Development Index. The 17 sustainable development goals have been expressed in the forms of national campaigns like Swachh Bharat, Digital India, Jal Jeevan Mission etc. Each of these is a national effort today to achieve a global goal by the end of this decade. This is a different India in the making."

## PwC's tool to a dynamic future

Kavya S

To equip students with the necessary skills and develop a strong talent pool that will boost productivity, accelerate sustainable growth, and increase company resilience in the digital-first economy, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) India launches a salesforce training course.

PwC India on Saturday launched a credit course on salesforce training under the umbrella of the Cloud Technology Development Programme for third-year computer engineering graduates and postgraduates students.

Students will be able to acquire Salesforce skills as part of the curriculum that is aligned with the National Occupation Standard. PwC specialists will spend 40 hours lecturing the entire course. Additionally, students will have the chance to obtain a certificate from PwC India, which will provide graduates with capabilities and skills in digital and cloud talents that are industry-endorsed.

"As we move towards a complex, dynamic and tech-enabled future, the need for industry and academia to come together to integrate digital skills into the curriculum becomes more important than ever," said Padmaja Alaganandan, chief people officer, of PwC India in a press release.

## Sceneries of the Silent Valley

Chandrasoodeshwar

**Bengaluru:** Photography is a powerful medium where one picture speaks a thousand words said N P Jayan, a photojournalist from Kerala in a photo exhibition on Kerala's Silent Valley National Park entitled 'Si-Lens', held at the Karnataka Chitralakala Parishath (CKP) from March 13-19.

Jayan stayed in the Silent Valley National Park for a year between December 2006- 2007 and captured the flora and fauna. The exhibition is the curation of



A glimpse of the exhibit Chandru

all the photographs that he took during this time. "I am doing this work for the new generation, to educate people about conservation and similar things."

Speaking to The Beacon about his experience living in the national park Jayan said, "I lived a very different life in

the forest than we are living here in this urban life ...

Getting food in the forest was very difficult, and we couldn't go in a jeep. I had to carry my camera, tripod, food, and clothes and sometimes we had to stay by the riverside, rocks, etc, but it was a wonderful experience."

This is the third exhibition after Delhi and Palakkad. "I'm planning to take this exhibition to all the major cities of India. Next, I have plans to organise it in Mysore, Payannur, Kannur, Kolam, and other cities."

## Now it's corp. workers on strike

Parnika S

**Bengaluru:** Owing to the unfulfilled promises of the state government, the workers of various municipal bodies of the state held a protest at Shivaji Nagar, Bengaluru on Monday. This decision was taken at a joint meeting held with workers and the All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICTU).

The workers demanded the cancellation of the contract system in solid waste management and water supply and in addition have asked all waste vehicle drivers, helpers and loaders to be brought under the direct payment system as

promised by the Chief Minister.

The press release stated that despite several appeals to the government, no action has been taken. "As a last resort we are again protesting and requesting the chief minister to remember his promise and keep his word. Immediately issue a notification and direct the authorities to bring all waste vehicle drivers, helpers and loaders in Karnataka under the direct payment system," the release stated. Due to the delay in wage payment and unfulfilled assurances, the families who depend on the income of the workers are suffering.