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BBMP campaigns for voter turnout

Prajwal SK

BENGALURU: In a strategic move to increase voter turnout for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, Chief Commissioner and District Election Officer Tushar Girinath has appealed to the Residents' Welfare Associations (RWAs) throughout the city for their cooperation.

Tushar Girinath held a video conference with the RWA office bearers on March 25, Monday to make them aware of the importance of voting in their respective constituencies and voting correctly.

He highlighted the special provisions for elderly and differently-abled voters, stating, "If there are people above 85 years of age in the apartments, such people have the opportunity to vote by post. We should organise various programmes in order to create and spread awareness among the people. He instructed RWAs to assist these voters with the 12D postal voting forms, ensuring everyone's right to vote is facilitated. "Residents Welfare Associations should organise meetings in their areas and work to create more awareness about voting," he added.

The initiative seeks to leverage the influence of RWAs to educate and motivate voters within the 28 assembly constituencies falling under four Lok Sabha constituencies. According to the election officers this would be a significant step towards a more inclusive and participatory electoral process in Bengaluru.

Subdued Holi at ISKCON

Amrutha GP

BENGALURU: Holi is commonly celebrated at ISKCON temples across the world with usual rituals, music, dance, and colour-throwing.

The celebration marks the coming of spring and the victory of good over evil. Devotees gather together to celebrate, sing, dance, and share welcome on this special day.

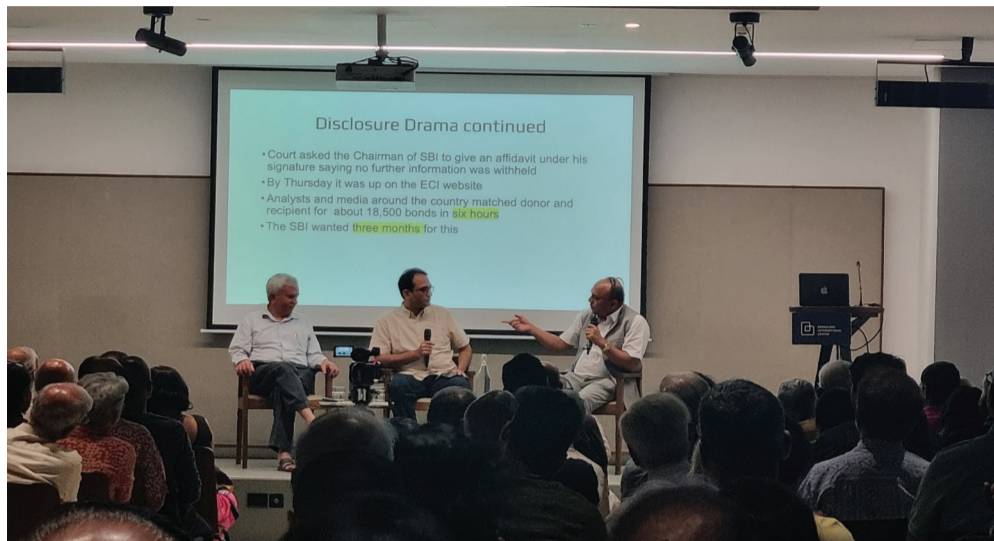
On March 25, in Bengaluru, ISKCON celebrated Holi by decorating the entire temple with flowers and applying colours as tikhas. People applied

Bond data unfolds sordid tale of black money

Rhea Sundara Raju

BENGALURU: The preponderance of black money in huge proportions in Indian elections is exposed by the latest electoral bond-related saga said Trilochan Sastry, Founder and Chairman, Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR).

Sastry was speaking at a discussion "Electoral bonds and the politics of funding" organised by the Bangalore International Centre (BIC) on Monday. The Electoral Bonds Scheme has been struck down by the Supreme Court of India. The scheme was heavily criticised for providing anonymity to political donors, promoting a culture of quid pro quo between donors and beneficiaries and allowing for unrestricted corporate donations to influence political decisions.



Brijesh Kalappa and Trilochan Sastry deliberating on electoral bonds

Rhea Sundara Raju

"The Electoral Bonds Scheme was introduced on January 2, 2018, and in the next elections held in 2019, the scheme was in full motion. That same year India claimed to make history since a record 3,654 crores of cash were seized by the election commission", said

Sastry.

Political parties are known to spend a huge sum of money on their election campaigns. Parties like BJP and Congress have been suspected of spending around 8000 and 1700 crores respectively during the 2007 Karnataka elections when

Operation Kamala was in motion, said Veeraraghav, an author and columnist. He remarked that South India has set the record for a multitude of things for the rest of the country, including setting a record for spending on elections.

The spending patterns of Tamil Nadu and Andhra

Pradesh during elections are enormous said Sastry. "From 1950 till about the 1970s, people used to spend only 1 or 2 lakhs on elections, but now people are spending 50 crores," he stated.

At the end of the discussion, there was also a question and answer session where other media and business personnel raised their queries regarding electoral bonds and the use of quid pro quo during elections.

When asked about the quid pro quo funding, Sastry was of the opinion that it is not acceptable. "World over, United States is a perverted example. The United States is not the only country in the world. There are 28 countries part of the European Union that do not allow people to fund for quick pro quo," he added.

Citizens follow BWSSB notice, observe dry Holi

Sneha Thomas and Neenu M

BENGALURU: We will take stringent action against those who waste potable water if there is a complaint, said Ram Prasath Manohar, Chairman of Bangalore Water Supply and Sewage Board (BWSSB).

In adherence to BWSSB's public advisory notice that prohibits the usage of Cauvery and bore well water for rain dances pool dances or other entertainment purposes for Holi celebrations in public interest, Bengaluru came alive with dry Holi celebrations all over the city.

The notice that came out on March 20 highlighted the



Dry Holi celebrations in Bengaluru

Mint

escalating water problems in the city and outlined specific restrictions without posing a complete ban on Holi celebrations. "Due to lack of rain in Bengaluru city, many tube wells have dried up due

to low groundwater level. In this regard, the cooperation of all is very important for the Board to adequately manage the escalating problems. There is no objection to celebrating Holi in their homes and res-

idences," stated the notice.

Numerous dry Holi celebrations took place across Bengaluru. "We had expected a much smaller crowd but even with the ongoing water crisis, the turnout was great. We had not provided a water facility because it was a dry Holi celebration," said Faisal Korian a resident who organised the celebration in a residential area.

"The event was packed with a huge crowd with long lines of people waiting at the entry, but the celebration felt incomplete as there was no water," said Ishika Sethi, an attendee of one of the events.

Fundamentals of journalism explored

Diva Batavia

CAMPUS: The three most important traits of a journalist are command language, curiosity and the right attitude, said Premangshu Ray, a veteran journalist and the Executive Editor at the Free Press Journal while speaking about his book 'News in the Making'.

Addressing the students of MA Journalism and Mass Communication at St Joseph's University he elaborated on newsroom culture, objectivity in reporting, and the role of a reporter and editor.

"To be a journalist you need to be a jack of all trades and master of some," said Ray. One should keep an eye on every small detail to find the stories, he said.

While deliberating on the role of the editor he mentioned that it is important to make sure no grammatical errors creep in the copy. "Even a single comma, will alter the meaning altogether," he said.

As the discussion on his book took place, he mentioned the challenges he came across while writing the book. The main challenge he faces was the time constraint.

Kate Middleton battling cancer

Shruti Srivatsava

Kate Middleton, the princess of Wales, on Saturday revealed that she has been diagnosed with cancer and is undergoing treatment in London.

The Kensington Palace released a video on March 23, where she revealed that her medical team has been assisting her through the therapy sessions. In the video, she said, "In January, I underwent an abdominal surgery which was thought to be non-cancerous, but later the reports showed that cancer was present."

Eminent personalities from

around the world have been pouring in their support to the princess and the royal family.

Rishi Sunak, the Prime Minister of the UK, tweeted, "The Princess of Wales has the love and support of the whole country as she continues her recovery."

"On behalf of Canadians, I'm sending my support as she undergoes treatment," posted Justin Trudeau, the Prime Minister of Canada, on X. Towards the end of the video, Middleton said that people who have cancer should not lose hope and faith as they aren't alone in this.



Bright, but dry celebrations

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colours to their faces and avoided the use of water.

"We didn't organise Holi like before because of water scarcity but we celebrated with all our hearts," said Ram Murthy S (name changed) while talking to The Beacon.

He further added that seeing people come to the temple and enjoy this festival makes them realise that people are still following the culture even though the craze of Holi is mostly in North India than in the South.