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Activist voices support for Ladakh's cause

Sonia Sebi

BENGALURU: Supporting the ongoing hunger strike by Sonam Wangchuk, an environmentalist and education reformist, at Ladakh, D T Devre, environmentalist and trustee of the Bangalore Environment Trust (BET) said citizens should protest across the country to spread awareness.

He was addressing the silent protest demonstration at Freedom Park on March 24. Wangchuk has been on a 21-day fast since March 6 demanding statehood and Constitutional safeguards under the sixth schedule for the Union Territory of Ladakh. The Sixth Schedule provides safeguards for land rights and limited self-governance for the tribal regions of the nation. The strike entered the nineteenth day on Sunday.

The demonstrators offered solidarity with the activists and people of Ladakh. Rigzin Angmo, president of the South Indian Ladakh Student Association, mentioned how the government was unresponsive towards the issue. "We are demanding the safety of our land. If mining is started in the name of development, this small place will lose its beauty and essence," said Ladol, a Ladakh native studying in Bangalore.

Sandeep, Founder of Citizen's Agenda Bengaluru, pledged his support to the people of Ladakh and stressed the effects of climate change and Biodiversity on the UT.

Bengaluru hit by surging cyber crime wave

Amrutha GP

BENGALURU: The city of Bengaluru has seen a significant rise in cybercrime activity over the past year, presenting a risk to citizens, companies, and governmental organisations alike. Cybercriminals have taken advantage of several weaknesses in digital systems, which have led to monetary losses, data breaches, and extensive delays to regular business operations.

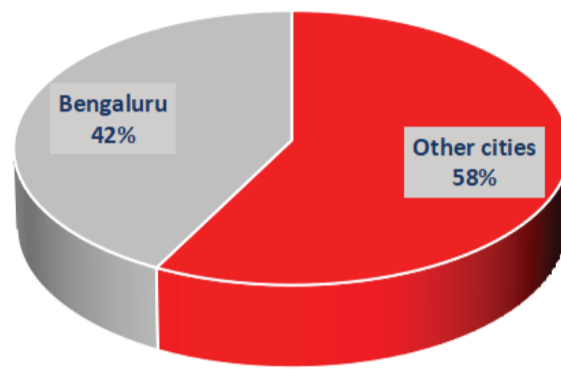
Bengaluru, the IT centre of India, recorded almost 75% of all cybercrime instances. Bengaluru had 9,940 instances, or almost 73.4% of the total cases, out of the 13,534 cases that were recorded in 19 metro areas. Thanks to a significant concentration of IT experts and widespread knowledge of cyber regulations, this city routinely tops the list of metro areas with cybercrime incidents, which

encourages greater reporting.

Unexpectedly, over the same period, Hyderabad, another South Indian IT hub, recorded only 282 occurrences of cybercrime.

As part of its preventive strategy, Bengaluru has established five police stations that are dedicated to handling cyber crimes. The

Cybercrime: Bengaluru versus other cities



Amrutha GP

city has also established Special Investigation Teams (SITs) to look into particular categories of cyber crimes. Even while real-time monitoring has improved the money recovery rate, it still makes up a small portion of the overall losses. With 12,549 cases

recorded out of a total of 31,908 cases in 2021, Karnataka topped the list of Indian states in terms of overall cybercrime cases. In India, more than 25,000 persons were detained in 2023 for cyber crimes.

According to Cyber Police, Bengaluru, more than 26,000 individuals

faced legal charges for these offences. In general, the cases related to cybercrime offences account for the greatest number of arrests and court cases, followed by cybercrimes involving the dissemination and publication of pornographic and obscene data.

According to estimates, cybercrimes cost Indian consumers more than 18 billion dollars in lost revenue in 2017. These were merely estimations, though, based on numbers that had been released.

The primary cause of the abrupt increase in online crimes that began in 2017 may very possibly be due to recent government actions, such as the creation of a special online platform for reporting cybercrimes. Everyone involved in tackling cybercrime must continue to be attentive and hostile as the threat from cybercrime grows, said the police.

Economically weak shouldn't be denied justice: CM Siddu

Parvathi Nair

BENGALURU: Affordability of justice is a critical concern that affects the essence of equitable justice. Legal Aid services must be strengthened and made more robust to ensure that the economically weaker sections of the society are not denied justice due to the lack of financial resources, said CM Siddaramaiah while speaking at the inaugural ceremony of the 21st Biennial State Level Conference of Judicial Officers on Saturday.

The conference held at Dr Babu Rajendra Prasad International Convention Centre, Bangalore also had the Chief Justice of India Justice

Dhananjaya Y Chandrachud, Chief Justice of Karnataka Justice N V Anjaria, Justice A S Bopanna, Justice B V Nagarathna and many other judicial officers in attendance.

The theme of the conference 'Equity and Excellence for Futuristic Judiciary' resonates deeply with the ethos of our democratic society and the imperatives of our time, said Siddaramaiah. He said that ensuring the aspects of accessibility, availability and affordability is crucial for fostering social inclusion and equality within the justice system during the quest towards a futuristic judiciary.

He maintained that the pursuit of these principles is a moral imperative to ensure that justice is not a privilege for few but a fundamental right for all.

"The use of digital platforms and E-courts is a step in the right direction, allowing for the seamless filing of cases, hearing schedules and even virtual court proceedings, breaking down barriers of distance," he added.

Justice D Y Chandrachud said that a futuristic judiciary can meet the ever-changing demands of the time. "There is an internet divide. Every one of our lawyers does not necessarily have a laptop or even a smartphone," he

stated. He highlighted recent technological developments and said that e-SEWA Kendras are an initiative to ensure that no citizen is left behind and technology is made accessible. He pointed out that the National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG) provides real-time data of district courts on an online platform and helps identify, manage and reduce the pendency of cases. "The e-committee of the Supreme Court and the computer cell have also spearheaded several projects that seek to bridge the gap using modern technology to improve the quality of data collection and analysis," he said.

Ethnic tensions menace B'luru

Sneha Thomas

BENGALURU: The only thing they asked me was "ooru elli" and when I replied Kerala they started assaulting me, said 24-year-old Abhishek Benny.

On 15 March, Benny, a Kerala resident who had come to Bangalore to join a job was assaulted at Mylanahalli near Kempegowda International Airport by a group of locals. It appears to be a targeted attack based on his ethnicity.

The hospital had filed a medico-legal case as soon as he was admitted. Following this, Benny gave an official statement but the Police have not filed a First Information Report (FIR) yet. "There are many CCTV cameras in the area but the Police are reluctant to look into the matter," he said.

After Benny posted about this incident on social media, many other Kerala residents from Bangalore have come forward, sharing similar incidents of assault in recent times. "Seventeen Keralites reached out to me on Instagram sharing similar experiences and some of them have paid up to 13,000 Rs to the police and in most of these cases FIR has not been filed," he added.

Kalamandalam alumni condemns bias

Neenu M

Considering that Sathyabhama has judged a lot of dance competitions to date, it's disappointing that she discriminated based on colour and has denied a lot of talented artists a chance at winning, said Gopika KM, a former student of Kalamandalam, an institution of Art and Culture under the Kerala government.

Controversial comment made by Indian classical dancer Sathyabhama, a former student and Executive Board member of Kalamandalam, against Indian Mohiniyattam dancer RLV Ramakrishnan has



Kalamandalam Sathyabhama

Mangalam

sparked outrage among the general public and artists alike.

Sathyabhama commented that Mohiniyattam, an art form, must be performed by artists with fair complexion and also remarked that a fellow artist's skin was like the "colour of a

crow". She later claimed that she had quoted the principles of Natya Shastra, a handbook on performing arts. "Natya Shastra does not entail anything about skin tone being a factor that determines the capability of an artist, added Gopika.

Remembering Bhagat Singh's legacy

Sherin M

BENGALURU: To commemorate the revolutionary legacy of Shaheed Bhagat Singh on his martyrdom day "The Spark Mag" released a book titled Bhagat Singh: Our North Star in These Dark Times.

On March 23, The Spark organised "Do you hear people sing?" an evening of music, poetry, and art to discuss and rekindle the thoughts of Bhagat Singh.

Sandhya, an organising team member, said, "Let us stand in solidarity against all the atrocities." Refer-

ring to the war in Gaza, she said more than 35,000 people have been brutally killed, but world leaders are silent on this issue.

Ramneek Singh, the playwright, performed his poetry and student teams presented their opinions in music. Arbaaz Ahmed, a student, recited two of his poems, one of them spoke about how it feels to be a Muslim in this country.

Along with this book, Spark launched their new website where readers can get their monthly magazines.