

THE BEACON

PRACTICE NEWS BULLETIN OF THE PG STUDENTS OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

Friday, 26 February, 2021 / St Joseph's College (Autonomous) / Vol : 14 ; Issue :72 / www.sjcdeptcomm.wordpress.com

Guruvayur fest dimmed by Covid-19 restrictions

Athul Krishna

KERALA: As the Guruvayur Uthsavam draws near, locals are disappointed by the restriction on the number of devotees allowed in the temple, as defined by the state's Covid-19 protocols.

The festival is known for its feast and programmes but this year major changes have been imposed due to the pandemic.

The annual 10-day festival at Guruvayur Sreekrishna Temple takes place in February and March.

"As residents of Guruvayur, all of us happily celebrate these 10 days of the year with no limits. But this year the restriction in the number of devotees allowed in the temple premises and other measures are making me upset," said Latha Venu, who stays in Guruvayur town.

Food kits will be distributed instead of the festival feast and cultural programmes will be conducted through virtual platforms as part of the pandemic protocols.

Sabitha Shaju, another resident of Guruvayur, said, "Guruvayur Uthsavam is not only associated with temple rituals, but is also an event of art and culture. This year we will miss the true feeling of the festival. But safety protocols are necessary in the current situation."

Petrol prices: Traders call Bharat Bandh

Nishitha Rachel

BENGALURU: The Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has issued a call for Bharat Bandh on Friday, February 26, against rising prices of petrol, among other problems their members are facing.

The All India Transporters Welfare Association (AITWA) has extended support to the move, which also protests against issues like the current Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime and e-way bills.

The protesters are looking to ensure that all commercial markets across the country remain closed on Friday, with over 40,000 traders' associations taking part in the bandh.



Representational Image

Creative Commons

Plans are also reportedly afoot for road blockades.

Private transport is also likely to be affected as AITWA has asked all transport companies to park

their vehicles between 6 am and 8 pm as a symbolic form of the protest.

Dharnas are apparently being planned at 1,500 places across the country.

The overarching reason for the call to demobilise the country is the rise in fuel prices. Petrol prices have, over the past couple of weeks, touched Rs 100 per

litre in several parts of the country.

Transporters are joining the protest to demand scrapping of new e-way bill norms as well. An e-way bill is the permit that transporters have to carry while moving goods from one place to another.

The recent amendments in the GST laws have narrowed down the validity of the e-way bill by increasing distance from 100 km to 200 km per day.

The penalties for a truck carrying a consignment with an expired E-way bill amount to 200 percent of the tax value.

The protesters have also appealed to the government to withdraw heavy taxes on fuel prices and make them uniform across the country.

UN: 4m in Yemen without food, aid

Sudarshani

The financial support to Yemen's emergency aid has reduced drastically, which means that "at least 4 million fewer people cannot access food, water and medical aid due to the ongoing pandemic," the UN's Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a statement on Thursday, February 25.

"The grim outlook for Yemen ongoing conflict, economic collapse and major cuts in donor support for emergency aid has been compounded by the Covid-



Food preparation at a settlement

UNOCHA

19 pandemic, which has led to a significant drop in the amount of money sent home by the Yemeni diaspora, as global work opportunities dry up," said OCHA.

Yemen has seen one of the

worst humanitarian crises in the world, with six years of war, a collapsing economy and deteriorating living conditions — what OCHA calls "a death sentence for millions of families."

Myanmar military banned on FB

Alwin Benjamin Soji

Facebook on Thursday, February 25, announced that the Myanmar military or Tatmadaw was banned from using its platforms.

This move came after Facebook termed Myanmar's situation — where the military overruled a democratic election and subsumed power — as an "emergency."

Facebook's official statement said, "Today, we are banning the remaining Myanmar military ("Tatmadaw") and military-controlled state and media entities from Facebook and Instagram, as well as ads from military-linked commercial entities. We are continuing to treat the

situation in Myanmar as an emergency and we remain focused on the safety of our community, and the people of Myanmar more broadly."

Facebook highlighted the dangers of letting Tatmadaw use its social media platforms, saying the need for the ban precipitated after the violent February 1 coup.

Facebook added, "Since the coup, we have disabled the Tatmadaw True News Information Team Page and MRTV Live Pages for continuing to violate our policies which prohibit coordinating harm and incitement to violence. We have also reduced the distribution of content on at least 23 pages and profiles controlled and/or operated by the Tatmadaw so fewer people see them."

Comic Con India launches publishing division

Arakkal Shada Amina

Comic Con India on Thursday, February 25, announced the launch of its new publishing arm called Comic Con India Publishing, dedicated solely to publishing graphic novels and comic books.

The publishing division, a part of Comic Con India's 10th-anniversary new initiatives campaign, reportedly aims to provide the comic book industry of India support and resources. "A key roadblock for new content has been (the) lack of viable publishing



Comic Con India celebrates its 10-year anniversary

Comic Con India Website

opportunity," stated Comic Con India in the announcement, put out on several social media platforms.

It said it intends to provide

visibility to both new as well as previously published creators, with a special focus on Indian creators.

The announcement went on to add that the aim of the

division was "to provide Indian comic-book creators a path to getting published and unlocking the potential of their IP (Intellectual Property)".

A dedicated submissions section containing details on how to submit comic proposals have gone live on its website, highlighting sections such as publishing model, rights, ownership, and submission requirements.

Comic Con India held its first convention in New Delhi in 2011 and has since conducted annual comic-based conventions across the country.



Representational Image

Creative Commons