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Empowerment or politics?

Pratham Basu

BENGALURU: While the Women's Rights Bill is a promising start, Vimala KS from the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) thinks it might be more about gaining political points as the current government tenure ends in 2024, than actually empowering women.

She says that this bill, tied up with Delimitation and Census, might delay fair representation for women until 2029.

Vimala points out, "Women played a big role in the freedom struggle and leaders like Sarojini Naidu and Begum Shahnawaz pushed for equal status. Today's women still struggle to get decision-making roles. This underrepresentation shows that there are deeper issues, like neglecting the concerns of minorities, especially Dalits and women, in our society."

According to Vimala, the government seems more interested in politics than in doing the necessary work. She elaborated on 'reservation within a reservation,' where the system might give reserved seats to women from dominant groups in constituencies, which doesn't promote an ethos of fairness.

She wants women to pay attention to political agendas and stand up against parties that exploit women's interests. To turn this bill from a political move into something that actually helps women get their fair share, AIDWA plans to make these issues heard during a protest in Delhi on October 5.

B'luru traffic police targets dangerous black spots

Hemalatha Y. N

BENGALURU: The Bengaluru traffic police reported the existence of sixty black spots in the city. These black spots are mainly found on state highways, national highways, airport roads, and the ring road stated Shobha B, Inspector (traffic).

These locations are considered black spots because they have experienced a high number of accidents, with at least 5-6 grievous injuries and 10 deaths occurring within a distance of 500 meters over a span of three years. The lack of street lights, road humps, narrow roads, footpaths, speed breakers, and overspeeding are some of the common reasons for accidents, she added.

The Karnataka Rajya Raste Suraksha Nigama is responsible for identifying these black spots and implementing improvements. Accidents do occur in other areas as well and the number of facilities in local areas is



Representational Image

relatively lower. Local areas often have more road humps and signals placed closer together at intervals of 500 meters compared to highways. To identify and address these issues, the department notes the frequency of deaths due to accidents and reports the number of accidents to the relevant authorities. The department also conducts a

survey to identify the causes of the problems and takes appropriate measures to address them, mentioned the Inspector.

To prevent such accidents measures like the installation of High-rise Pedestrian Crossings (HRPC), increased use of RLVD 3D scanner cameras, installation of street lights, road humps, wider

footpaths, rumble strips, skywalks, zebra crossings, dedicated lanes, precautionary boards, and the development of accident-free spots have been planned, she added.

"The use of half helmets should be banned, as they lead to critical head injuries. Two-wheelers must use full helmets for their own safety," mentioned Shobha. The role

of traffic police has changed; traffic police no longer catch violators on the spot due to the implementation of RLVD cameras. The RLVD cameras have been installed at 50 junctions, with plans for additional installations. Field Traffic Violation Reports (FTVR) are generated based on camera evidence, and registered complaints are reviewed regularly. She added that violators receive immediate messages on their mobile phones containing all the details, such as the reason for the violation, vehicle number, fine amount, and junction location.

To raise awareness and promote adherence to traffic rules, regular traffic awareness programs are held every second Saturday at prominent locations such as bus stops and police stations. Local residents are invited to attend these programs, where they are educated about traffic rules and provided with helmets for their safety, she mentioned.

Revelations of fact finding committee

Sadhika Dasgupta

More than 200 hundred people have lost lives and 60,000 have been displaced in Manipur since the ethnic strife began and the government has failed to handle the situation, said a delegation of eight people representing various organisations after they visited the State.

To understand the prevailing socio-political situation in the State, and to meet and extend solidarity and goodwill to the affected people in Manipur, CPI (ML) Liberation constituted a team of eight people. Activists of CPI (ML) Liberation, All India Progressive Women's

Association (AIPWA), All India Lawyers Association for Justice (AILAJ) and an independent feminist activist visited Manipur from August 10 to 14, 2023.

On Sunday, September 24 2023, the fact-finding report on ethnic segregation and violence in Manipur was released through a Zoom meeting.

"According to official estimates given by the representatives of the government in July. More than 200 people have been killed in Manipur and more than 60,000 people have been displaced as we can understand from these statistics that have been given by the government which has massively failed in

controlling," said Sucheta De.

"The government is squarely to blame for the violence and loss of lives and property suffered by the affected people. It is a matter of shame that the Supreme Court has or had to intervene to ensure that basic steps are taken in investigating these gross and inhuman crimes," the fact-finding team said.

The economic destitution caused by the violence and displacement has resulted in serious impoverishment and financial insecurity for the affected Kukis. The Meiteis in the relief camps in the Valley too are facing a livelihood crisis and are trying to search

for work around the camps. It is helpful that the local clubs and philanthropic organisations have started livelihood training programmes for displaced Meiteis in some of the relief camps, said Clifton D. Rozario, one of the team members.

"Malnutrition has reached its peak in conditions devoid of basic hygiene, where women are compelled to perform all sanitary tasks in the presence of others," added Madhulika from the Orlando Association for Justice.

Madhulika from the Orlando Association for Justice pointed out the dire livelihood conditions, malnutrition as well as dearth of basic hygiene.

Snitch CEO's success story

Kushal Varma J V

BENGALURU: Starting from a young age and capitalising on opportunities, the Snitch CEO aims to cross the Rs 250 crore mark today.

On Wednesday, the Entrepreneurship cell of St. Joseph's University conducted the Insights Seminar with Siddharth Dunganwala, the founder of Snitch.

Siddharth got into the business of selling men's clothing sourced from factories around Bengaluru, during his college days bringing in profits of over Rs 20,000 monthly.

"Something very strange happened in 2012. There was one particular factory that was ready to sell fabric as well. I borrowed Rs 25 lakhs from friends and family to make the transaction."

The entire batch was converted into men's shirts. Their sales brought in Rs 6.5 lakhs of profits. Manufacturing was a much bigger game, he added.

In 2019, Snitch innovated with its research making it possible to execute designs within 25 days. With the streamlined manufacturing, revenue of Rs 110 crore was obtained in 2022. We're expecting to cross the Rs 250 crore mark, he added.

Bitter truth of sweeteners

Nidhi B

Depression is a mental health disorder where feelings of sadness, hopelessness, emptiness and a lack of interest or pleasure in activities that were earlier enjoyable persist for more than 2 to 3 months. It also has a diverse effect on physical behaviour such as changes in sleep cycles and appetite, said Sushma Kaushik, a psychologist and a music therapist.

Recently, scientists have found that consuming highly processed foods, particularly artificial sweeteners and artificial-

ly flavoured soft drinks, may increase the risk of developing depression.

Dr Kaushik added that the link between artificial flavours of sweetness and depression is that sugar or sweeteners have addictive properties similar to cocaine. These sweeteners provide a relieving or pleasurable effect which stimulates neurons in some parts of the brain responsible for reward systems. Thus whenever a person feels low or sad they tend to consume chocolates which will activate their reward system and release dopamine, and this can turn into

an addiction.

A healthy diet plays a significant role in an individual's mental health. It can support brain function and mood regulation. Excessive intake of processed food and artificial flavouring of soft drinks which contain high amounts of carbohydrates can cause an imbalance in the sugar levels in the body contributing to mood swings, irritability, and fatigue and also affect cognitive functioning, she said.

A balanced diet and involvement in physical activities improves ones mental health she added

Guidance value surges

Dattatraya Dutta

BENGALURU: Karnataka government is set to reap benefits by increasing the guidance value of properties as market value is skyrocketing, opined Anish Dixit, a property consultant.

The guidance value of properties in Karnataka, which wasn't revised in the past four years, has increased from 25-30 percent. Additionally, some areas like Electronic City, Sarjapur and Whitefield with a considerable IT presence could see a surge of guidance

value up to 50 per cent from October 1.

Speaking to The Beacon, Dixit said, "This move by the government to increase the guidance value has come late, as there has always been a massive gap between property guidance value and market value. The gap has been ever-increasing."

IT hub areas with flourishing IT companies, have especially seen a massive surge in market value, and the government has failed to bank on this opportunity all these years, he added.