

THE BEACON

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UMANG to begin from Friday

Joel P Anto

BENGALURU: A two-day basketball practice tournament, UMANG will be held at basketball court of St. Joseph's College (Autonomous) on December 10 and 11.

The senior batch students of MA - Advertising and Public Relations from the Institute of Communication and Media Studies, as a part of their Event Management subject, are organising the tournament.

The tournament will have seven teams playing on Friday of which three teams are that of women.

The finals will be held on Saturday which will be followed by a victory run. The event will be live-streamed.

"As per the COVID-19 protocols we cannot have large crowds on the campus. So we were not left with any other option," said Sony Mariam, the Head of Marketing team.

Despite the fact that basketball is a low-contact sport, the significant increase in Covid clusters has increased concerns about the players' safety. "When it comes to the game we make sure that all the players are following the COVID-19 protocols," said Roshan Thomas, the Head of Finance team.

A campus doctor will also be there to attend to any medical emergencies during the tournament.

Devotees surge: Could it signal third wave?

Vandana KP

At a time when the Omicron scare is widespread all over the country, tens of thousands of devotees rushing to Sabarimala temple in Kerala has raised the concern of it turning into a super spreader. Last week, a total of 42,354 devotees visited. Initially, the State Government allowed up to 25,000 visitors per day to the Temple. The virtual queue for Sabarimala's hill shrine is expected to be filled with full capacity from December 9 until the end of the Mandala-Makaravilakku (Makar Sankranti) celebration. The temple will host a Mandala Pooja on December 26. According to the state government, around 45,000



Sabarimala Temple overcrowded

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individuals will be able to have darshan every day, with 40,000 obtaining it via a virtual queuing system and 5,000 receiving it via spot booking. "Devotees who enter the

temple without proper sanitation are given masks and sanitiser by the police. Devotees who have not been vaccinated are permitted to enter upon completing

the rapid covid test. This is raising concerns among some of us. They should only allow devotees who have gotten their 2nd dose of vaccine," said a devotee.

In the past, religious events like that of Tablighi Jamaat, Kumbh Mela and Onam celebrations, some of which drew millions of devotees, are believed to have turned into super-spreader events.

The visit to the temple started during the seasonal pilgrimage. The temple was closed multiple times in the past due to Covid and has been thrown open for devotees after nearly two years. The Sabarimala Temple is located on Sabarimala Hill, which is part of the Periyar Tiger Reserve, in Pathanamthitta district, Kerala. It is one of the most popular yearly pilgrimage destinations in the globe. It attracts between 40 and 50 million worshippers each year.

Karnataka State Police Hockey flick their way to the semi-finals with ease at AIPHC

Sharon Anna James

BENGALURU: On Wednesday, Karnataka State Police (KSP) won against Jharkhand Police by 1-0 in the 70th All India Police Hockey Championship 2021. Four teams made it to the semi-finals of the men's team. I.T.B.P. Jalandhar defeated C.R.P.F. Delhi 2-1. Punjab Police won by 2-0 goals against C.I.S.F. Delhi and, lastly, Tamil Nadu Police won by 2-1 goals against Odisha Police. Ramandeep Singh, a former Olympian (2016), played for



A walk towards victory

Karnataka police dept.

the Punjab Police but suffered an injury and is under treatment. Despite the absence of

their key player, they won the match and made it to the next round. On speaking to the All

India Sports Officer, Razi, he confirmed that they have the best players and that these matches play a crucial part in selecting the best among them who will go to national and international championships and will represent the nation's name. From the women's team Sashastra Seema Bal, so far has qualified for the semifinals after they defeated Tamil Nadu by 12-0. The semifinals will be on Saturday, December 10, at Karnataka Hockey Stadium.

Flight rates hike in Karnataka, after the omicron scare spreads

Sharon Anna James

BENGALURU: The emergence of the Omicron variant and the Karnataka Government's new guidelines have led to a rush of people travelling back home both within and outside the country, while the flight rates have witnessed a steep hike.

Additionally, the Christmas season has also contributed to the hike. The flight rates have gone up to Rs. 7000 and above for one-way between Kerala and Karnataka. This has caused concern amongst the people who wish to travel back home. Consequently, people have opted to travel by other means even though it takes time, as the cost has made it hard to book flight tickets.

"I am not going to travel by flight to Kerala; the ticket is too expensive, and I've decided to go home by train," said Sangamitra, a student of Kristu Jayanti College, who was planning to go home for the Christmas holidays.

People are reconsidering their plans to travel home for the holidays due to the increase in ticket prices, as well as other factors like COVID regulation and an increase in Omicron cases. The first case of Omicron variant was reported in Karnataka on 3rd December.

The uncertainty about Mayank Agarwal's future in Indian cricket

Joel P Anto

Mayank Agarwal, the star batter and his performance in the second test played between India and New Zealand, has become the talk among the fans and media, however, it lived for a short while. That has been the fate of Mayank, who has matured and progressed as an excellent test batsman for India. However, cricket fans are apathetic about Mayank perhaps owing to the lower star value. Scoring over 1,200 runs in 16 Tests, including four centuries at an average of more than 48, is an outstanding tally for an Indian opener. He



Happy Times

BCCI

has been consistently overshadowed by star cricketers like Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul. Therefore, the occasional guest role has taken a toll on his consistency. Pujara's (5 off 5 balls) and Kohli's (3 off 3 balls) in the second test against New Zealand (NZ) made way for Mayank to score 150 off 311 balls that

proved his ability yet again to successfully play long innings. Mayank became the first Indian opener after Sehwag in 2010 to score a century on Indian soil against NZ. The recent performance against NZ is a clear indication that he should be given more chances. With all of his records and experiences, from domestic cricket & the Indian Premier League (IPL), he can be someone who can deliver more in the subcontinent pitches. Moreover, the belief is that it's a combination of luck and fate that is impeding his career as a player. It will be an ignominy if a fortune does not come his way.

Nation pays homage to CDS Bipin Rawat and 12 others

Subadra Sarath

The black box of the Mi-17V5 helicopter that carried Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat, his wife Madhulika Rawat and 12 others was retrieved today confirmed the Indian Airforce Authorities. This will help confirm what traversed at the last moment before the crash. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in Lok Sabha stated, "Indian Air Force has ordered a Tri-service inquiry into the military chopper crash. The investigation will be led by Air Marshal Manavendra Singh. The inquiry team reached Wellington yesterday itself and

started the investigation." Mortal remains of the General were taken to Sullur where the dignitaries paid homage and floral tributes. It will be shifted to Delhi in the evening. Hundreds of students across Tamil Nadu and in other states observed a minute silence and paid homage to the CDS. Meanwhile, one of the ambulances carrying the mortal remains reportedly met with an accident this afternoon. The lone survivor in the tragic accident, Group Captain Varun Singh who was awarded with the Shaurya chakra, is on life support and has been shifted to Command Hospital in Bangalore.