

THE BEACON

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

Thursday, 25 March, 2021 / St Joseph's College (Autonomous) / Vol : 14 ; Issue : 89 / www.sjcdptcomm.wordpress.com

Myanmar internet curbs worry citizens

Worinphi Ronra Shimray

BENGALURU: It's been eight days since Zon Pwint Phyu spoke to her mother Mamicho, in Myanmar. Phyu, who now lives in India, is worried about Mamicho ever since the military in the country shut down all internet connections there eight days ago.

She said, "I couldn't know the whereabouts of my family in Tamu, Myanmar. On March 15, I learnt that the local police officers were being replaced with new military and police. This is frightening because the military junta cares about nobody."

She added: "Only a few in the country were able to access Wi-Fi and update the



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current situation. The ones on the battleground were able to capture and upload videos through keyboard fighters

who had Wi-Fi. This is the reason for the blockade of internet services in Myanmar. They are trying to suppress

our voices."

She also said: "They have been raiding houses, arresting people and the worst of all

corpses were cremated without the family's consent. I am really worried for my family as I have not been able to contact them. The future is quite uncertain for people in Myanmar."

The Myanmar military seized power on February 1 by staging a coup. They detained Aung San Suu Kyi and other elected officials from the National League of Democracy party.

The military junta have allegedly been killing protestors and raiding homes.

The United Nations Security Council has strongly condemned the violence against the protestors. It expressed its continued support for the democratic transition in Myanmar.

Thrifting hygiene concern shoppers

Nandita Narayanan

With thrifting becoming a rage among millennials, the hygiene and sanitary precautions of thrift-shopping is now a rising concern, especially with the looming after-effects of the pandemic.

"When I collect clothes, I make sure they are washed with a laundry sanitiser," said Praneetha Maria, a 22-year-old student from Chennai who owns the thrift shop page Thrifting Now on Instagram.

"After the clothes are packed in covers, they are sanitised once again using a sanitiser spray," she added.

Samecha Shroff, a 22-year-old student from Chennai, said: "The thrift stores I follow focus on sustainable fashion, and take extra care of sanitisation."

She explained that the clothes she orders come neatly ironed and dry-cleaned. "If I buy products like sunglasses or bags, I sanitise them," she said.

"I thrift from online stores my friends or acquaintances own, so I am usually aware of their sanitary procedures, which I trust," said Amy Mathew, a 22-year-old student from Kochi.

She added that she puts washed thrifted clothes before using them for the first time.

Keep other states' cops away from Bengal: TMC

Varsha Benedict

The Trinamool Congress (TMC) wrote to the Chief Electoral Officer of West Bengal on Tuesday, March 23, urging it to "immediately stop the deployment of State Armed Police (SAP) from Uttar Pradesh and/or any other state in West Bengal," especially from those ruled by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

The letter states that there are no objections whatsoever with the "deployment of SAP from any non-BJP ruled state."

Affirming that UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath "is a star campaigner" for the BJP, the TMC claimed sending armed cops from that state to Bengal would disturb and influence the election machinery.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said in a public meeting in Purulia in the poll-bound state on Tuesday that BJP-ruled states sent forces to West Bengal to influence votes, and any outsider should be resisted.

Also, those who speak Hindi do not belong to the state, she said.

India has double-mutant Covid-19

CJ Rahul

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said in a press release on Wednesday, March 24, that the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG) has found a new double-mutant variant of Covid-19 in India.

The genome-sequencing and analysis have been carried out on samples collected from international travellers and with those in contact of Covid-19 affected people for variants of concerns (VOC).



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The samples analysed included those collected from Maharashtra, which revealed that in comparison to

December last year, there has been an increase in the level of mutations and such mutations turn out to be

highly infectious and resistant to cure.

As these were not detected earlier in numbers sufficient to either establish or direct relationship of the rapid increase of cases in some states.

Since INSACOG began this work, 771 VOCs have been detected in total of 10,787 positive samples shared by states and union territories.

From Kerala, 2,032 samples have been screened. VOCs were earlier found in 53 out of 104 samples tested from Telangana.

Property owners look to recoup rental losses

Abhimanyu Sharma

BENGALURU: Renters in the city may find it difficult to find reasonably-priced accommodation as property-owners look to make up for the losses from last year.

"Initially, we lowered our rates so we could get as many people as we could in our property," said Ashok Bhatt, a property manager at Koramangala 4th block in the city.

"We planned to offer a discount for the first two months for people who planned to stay for longer

than eight months," he said.

Mukesh Agarwal, who owns a paying-guest (PG) facility in Koramangala, 7th block, said, "We were originally a hotel but during lockdown we decided to operate as a PG facility and partnered with online portals to increase our customer reach."

Kaushik Bansal, a working professional who moved to the city from Uttar Pradesh a month ago, said, "I contacted many PG facilities before moving to Bengaluru, and owners were desperate to fill their rooms at relatively cheaper rates."

Summer fashion goes earthy, boho

Jesly Pulikotil

BENGALURU: Jewellers and designers predict a lot of bright and earthy colours, natural fabrics and patterns, and minimalist designs when it comes to accessorising or using jewellery this summer.

"Bohemian, and boho-chic are the terms to look for this season. People want to embrace styles and colours that are earthy. I specialise in earrings, and lately our buyers are asking for earrings in colours such as beige, turquoise, mustard yellows, and browns. In patterns, there is an increasing interest in tassels, which give a more



Trending summer designs

IG/knotsandcords

effortless look to one's outfit," said Gayatri Rao, a young jewellery designer and macramé specialist.

"In terms of accessories, fanny packs are trending and staying true to the whole bohemian yet comfort-

oriented vibe. Macramé fanny packs are new. They serve the purpose but are also very stylish," she added.

Abheri Sen, a jeweller specialising in modern silver jewellery, said, "People are wearing masks, minimalist jewellery is in fashion. They prefer more rings, earrings and bags as accessories."

She added: "Recently, we saw masks with decorative chains on them. It is a new style statement that is bound to stay. It will shoot up more this season. We are seeing a lot of floral designs, embroidery, natural and sustainable materials taking the centre stage this season."