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Art from the beleaguered land comes alive

Jesbin Sam Mathew

BANGALORE: The Zaina by CtoK brings the 2nd edition of its flagship event KASHMIRIYAT - a celebration of the crafts and craftspeople of Kashmir contemporised with its unique 600-year-old traditions and skills at Bangalore International Center.

Zaina by CtoK is a Commitment to Kashmir programme, launched in the Valley 11 years ago, and aims to support young Kashmiri artisans, in finding new, cutting-edge uses for their talents. In the Exhibition, several goods honouring modern-day Kashmir and showing the potential of design in the home and lifestyle sector are on display.

Speaking to the Beacon, the Co-founder of Zaina by CtoK and the project head of Commitment to Kashmir, Sruthi, said that due to the violence, Kashmir has been cut off from outside influence for decades. "We are working only with Kashmiri artisans intending to provide a living for them and bring back the world of traditional crafts. Because of the positive reaction to the B2B event we arranged before the pandemic time, leads to a B2C event." The organisation is currently preparing to hold this event in Bombay and do little pop-ups in Delhi.

Priya, a Domlur native, said, "It is quite different from the typical pre-market and has a pleasant ambience that brings to mind old Bangalore."

Failing intelligence in land of intellectuals!

Megha Mukundan

How wide is the gap between literacy and education? Going by the disturbing trend that has rattled God's own Country, the gap is wide enough to accommodate human sacrifices and cannibalism. The state, known for its high literacy rate, has hit the national headlines for its blood-curdling, unscientific practices.

Kerala has a sordid history of human sacrifices and black magic dating back to the 50s. From a friend being sacrificed purportedly to cure the illness of an elephant in 1956, to a mother chopping off the head of her 6-year-old in 2021, a lot has transpired in between. The latest in the hideous list is the massacre of two women by a couple in return for 'prosperity'. With



Anti-superstition activist Dr Narendra Nayak

Facebook

cannibalism being reported in the incident, it is distressing.

Superstition is not a standalone concept in our country, rather it is a system built upon several beliefs, including the cosmic probe and astrology. Even the Indian sci-

entific community largely is a victim of it as so often, we are witness to the spectacle of puja being performed before a rocket launch. It is inseparable from social lives, as the line between superstitions and faith appears to be blurred.

"We are (people with) the 16th Century mindset imposed on the 21st Century technology," says Dr Narendra Nayak, the president of the Federation of Indian Rationalist Associations (FIRA). Technology has made communication faster, but not the thinking capacity. The existence of these rituals comes from the lack of proper education, and it is now clear that there is no relation between the literacy rate and education, he opines.

"The degrees don't develop rational thinking or reasoning capacity of individuals, especially in a conditioned society like ours. We are not born into a religion but forced by our parents. Growing up under such conditioning makes everything prejudiced," he asserts.

Legal means would not fetch a permanent solution, he says. Although the anti-superstition promulgated in a few states, they are very weak, and there is no central law to date to tackle black magic. But a few states have different laws that deal with the crimes of witchcraft. "The anti-superstition act was passed as an ordinance in Maharashtra but it was diluted as it was blocked by the council. The same story happened in Karnataka; it is not even an anti-superstition bill but indicates only about inhuman evil practices and black magic," says Nayak, who had vouched for such a bill in Karnataka. Meanwhile, Kerala is considering bringing back the 2019 anti-superstition bill as an immediate remedy.

Byju's profiteering comes with a social cost

Sowmya A

The decision is a reflection of their concern towards making profits than the lives of 2500 employees dependent on the company, criticised Arun Kumar (name changed) on Sunday, an employee at Byju's on EdTech's decision to fire employees to achieve the profits by March 2023.

The EdTech giant Byju's recently announced that they would fire around 2500 employees within the next six months to cut down their marketing and operational costs. They released this statement amidst facing a loss of Rs 4588 crore in FY21.

Kumar blamed the medi-



Representational image

Deccan Herald

ocre quality of delivery for the reason for the company's loss. The employees working in other departments besides teaching were not responsible for the loss. "Instead of firing the employees from product, media, content and technology teams, they should focus on

improving the education quality and teachers, so that many will opt for Byju's," he said.

Prasenjit Ray, a teacher from WhiteHat Jr, a subsidiary of Byju's, expressed that it was not ethically right to fire employees just to cut down their marketing and operation-

al costs. "I strongly feel that what they should've done is to train employees (of other departments, so that they also could contribute to the firm's business motto and goals," he said.

Byju's, which bought WhiteHat Jr for \$300 million in 2020 has eliminated around 300 roles in recent days from WhiteHat Jr. Ray, though not sure about the other employee departments, was confident that the teachers would stay as they are the face of the company. "There are no recorded classes in WhiteHat Jr and classes are live. So they can't get rid of us," he added.

Unfolding the Cosplay Scene

Anjali Singh

BANGALORE: Comic-con Bengaluru, in association with Vapour Indiranagar, organised an Annual Cosplay Workshop 2022. The workshop was hosted by Nabil Khan and Rahul Karan Diwakar.

Comic-Con is a comic convention, an event where comics fans, creators, and experts gather to attend panels and participate in discussions centred on aspects of comics. The event was based on Cosplay. Cosplay is the act of dressing up as a character or concept.

Nabil Khan, the winner of India's Championship of Cosplay 2016, mentioned the materials used in a Cosplay like Worbla, EVA foam, leather, PUP board, heat gun, glue gun, and fevicol. EVA foam is a flexible and durable plastic that is used to create armour. "Everything is about layers, no costume is made without layers, there should be a minimum of three layers. The more the layers, the more the depth in the costume," he added.

When asked about how to present yourself in the event, he said, "You have to stay away from people, be respectful to them; if someone wants to take pictures with you and your weapon or props allow them to take pictures."

Cannabis: Narcotic or medicine?

Priyanka Gond

BANGALORE: "Hemp and Cannabis are more than just illegal smoking," says Nandita Gattani, customer experience lead of India Hemp Organics, at the Horn Ok Please food festival.

A Delhi-based Horn Ok Please hosted a food festival on Oct 15-16. It was a one-stop shop for people searching for a pleasant weekend at White Orchid Ground, Manayata Tech Park. Bangalore's most well-known restaurants, unknown pop-ups, cocktail bars, and chilled beer booths made their first-time appearance.



Poster Credits: Priyanka Gond

"The Cannabis plant's leaves and seeds can be used for food, medicine, and industrial reasons, but the flower and resin are illegal," says Gattani.

India Hemp Organics

was one such unusual start-up offering an experience of cannabis wellness, sourced from the Himalayas, freshly created by Indian farmers, registered with the AYUSH Ministry of India and the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS Act, 1985).

The three problems most go through are stress, anxiety, and sleeping issues. The start-up is considered to be a revolutionary one as it uses natural resources instead of allopathic medicines, which have long-term side effects on the liver and kidneys, she added.

Unveiling nutrition in Lalbagh

Ashish Bhandarkar

BANGALORE: The urban population's preference for attractive and fancy food stuff over nutritious organic produce is the underlying cause of deteriorating health. India needs to progressively reduce its reliance on chemical fertilisers and return to the age-old rural tradition of eating a diverse and pure diet was the key takeaway from the "Savayava Habba".

"Savayava Habba" is an organic exhibition and sales fair organised by Jaivik Krishik Society, in association with the Department of Horticulture and Mysore Horticulture Soci-

ety on Oct 15-16 at Lalbagh.

More than 20 organic farmers from different parts of Karnataka displayed and sold millets, 'forgotten' foods, tubers, yams, vegetables and desi seeds to the consumers.

Talking about the importance of organic produce, Harish Kumar, manager of the society said, "If we suddenly shift our agriculture to organic there will be a huge food shortage in the country, the convergence should come slowly and gradually."

The event was inaugurated by the Director of Horticulture K Nagendra Prasad.