

THE BEACON

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

Friday, 27 October 2023 / St. Joseph's University / Vol:16 Issue: 48 / www.sjcdeptcomm.wordpress.com

Turmeric faces looming crisis

Sneha Thomas

BENGALURU: A team of researchers from the University of Lucknow, led by Professor Amrithesh C Shukla, made a crucial discovery concerning turmeric cultivation.

After a three-year study, the team identified a new pathogen affecting turmeric crops, raising serious concerns for both agriculture and public health. The pathogen in question, *Colletotrichum Siamense*, poses a threat not only to the crops but also has potential health risks.

This pathogen impacts mineral uptake and nutrition absorption, resulting in altered leaf colour and disrupted photosynthesis. Consequently, the plant cannot generate its usual food supply, leading to the termination of its functional life. The pathogen interferes with the plant's physiology and photosynthesis, ultimately causing its death, Shukla explained.

Having collected disease samples directly from the farmers' fields, they isolated and identified the fungal pathogen responsible for the diseases which were later confirmed by the NCL (National Chemical Laboratory), Pune. "There are around 250 species of this. They are soil-borne pathogens which can easily infect the plant and can spread to the whole field," Shukla said.

One of the major findings of the study was the identification of the problem based on the microbes. We will be able to control this pathogen using biological means or biopesticides with further investigation, Shukla added.

Pollution vs Rejuvenation, a fishy dilemma?

Sherin Johnson

BENGALURU: While the mass death of thousands of fish in Varthur Lake has raised concerns amongst residents, experts have offered multiple theories as the cause.

Bengaluru's Lakes, once a symbol of hope for environmental revival are now a cause for concern. As per reports, approximately 25,000 fish have died due to water pollution in Varthur Lake recently. The incident serves as a stark reminder of the ongoing battle to protect the city's precious water bodies.

"Varthur Lake, like the majority of the lakes in the city, is contaminated with sewage water," said Nidhi Hanji, a research associate while speaking to The Beacon. The Rajakaluvu that connect lakes are either polluted themselves with sewage, and stormwater or are rendered useless due to encroachment. There is no



Varthur lake in a questionable state

NDTV

dearth of funds or court orders for cleaning lakes. The problem is with owning up the responsibility, she said,

Varthur Lake's concern was highlighted years ago when the foam on the lake caught fire. Since then, the National Green Tribunal has been

monitoring its revival and ensuring that it stays protected. In the wake of the environmental catastrophe, local residents and activists are urging swift action from authorities. Periodically, there are orders to clean it up and the authorities are working on reviving it.

Local residents and activists are urging swift action from authorities. The contamination stemming from sewage flow following a diversion channel breach has left the once-thriving aquatic ecosystem in disarray. Despite

promising efforts to rejuvenate the lake, the recent breach allowed sewage to infiltrate the waters, making it inhospitable for the aquatic life it once nurtured.

In recent years, NGOs have participated in cleaning the lakes in and around Bengaluru. Varthur Lake was one among them and hence the rejuvenation process is ongoing. While speaking to The Beacon, RT Dasa, co-founder of Friends of Lake alluded to the issue of misconceptions on the part of the public and officials. He suggested that it was the fishermen who were in the wrong for breeding fish while the rejuvenation process was ongoing. According to him, meddling with the rejuvenation process is what is the root cause of the problem. "I'm not very supportive of the fact that they are coming and crying now when they did not even bother to follow the rules," added Dasa.

Mixed reactions to SC's LGBTQ+ verdict

Sonia and Neenu

BENGALURU: Implementing and understanding the concepts to cater the LGBTQ+ community is tough, especially for the less wealthy, making life in a country like India difficult, said Rohini Malur, LGBTQ+ activist, owner of Queer Reads Bangalore and founding member of ASQ (American Society for Quality), Bangalore.

The Supreme Court turned down the petition seeking recognition of same-sex marriage in the country under the Special Marriage Act.



Representational Image

The Hindu

The court suggested that only the parliament can handle the legal and social aspects of marriage.

"...they can't change any of the existing marriage laws to include us. It would require making those laws gen-

der-neutral... Why is marriage not fundamental," Malur questioned.

Aravind Narayan, an Advocate of PUCL (People's Union for Civil Liberties) said that he believes that the court's refusal to recognize same-

sex marriage is a setback for LGBTQ rights, as it denies them the right to establish a relationship and be officially recognised.

On the other hand, he added that the judgment isn't a setback but can be viewed as an acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community's entitlement to make choices and establish relationships. The exclusion of homophobic language in the verdict and the right to marry for a minor section of the transgender community can also be seen as a victory, he pointed out.

KSRTC workers voice concern

Kiranmai Basavaraj

BENGALURU: The KSRTC workers are upset with low-grade pay despite having to shoulder a heavy workload. They attribute their current situation to the absence of union elections since 1992, pointing out that many government employees have a recognized union representing them. The KSRTC Employees Union has demanded the government hold union elections.

According to the sixth pay commission, the basic salary for a driver under the government service is fixed at Rs 21,400, excluding gratuity and other incentives. Compared to them, the basic salary of a KSRTC driver is Rs 19,990. The pay disparity has made them unhappy.

Nanjappa, a KSRTC driver, expressed that a lot of pressure is being put on them. "Due to insufficient drivers, we are sometimes asked to do double shifts. Despite working extra, we are paid fewer incentives", he added.

Speaking to The Beacon, Chandrashekhara, President of the Transport Employees Union, commented, "These problems are leading to strikes very often, causing disturbance to society", he added.

Financial independence a necessity

Rhea Sundara Raju

CAMPUS: The youth must possess knowledge about the value of financial independence. Students need to know how to manage money and make wise investments, said Mohammad Shanu, founder of Horus Financial Academy, in a conversation with The Beacon.

The third edition of "Start-up Mela" was organised on Thursday by the Entrepreneurship Cell, under the Office of Public Relations at St Joseph's University. The event, which is a mixer of new and advanced startups, investors, and incubation cen-



Startup mela in full swing

Ishika S

tres, was organised in partnership with Startup India and Y20 to encourage student-led startups from across the country.

"I never had the opportunity to go to college. I've learned from my many mistakes how to manage money. I wish to help students not make the same

mistakes through my experiences and to choose the right and smartest way," said Shanu.

Having a passion for your projects is more important before entering the field, said Anandita Kaur, an employee at Suupam, who was also one of the entrepreneurs present at the event.

Frail shelter irks commuters

Prajwal S K

BENGALURU: The bus stop in Bengaluru's Rajajinagar sixth block, used daily by thousands of commuters heading to Majestic, Malleswaram, Rajajinagar, and other destinations, has become unmotorable. This is despite the locality being a major business hub in west Bangalore. There are complaints that the shelter system at this bus station is subpar with concerns raised about its condition and amenities.

Sumukh, an engineering student who commutes along

this road, commented, "It is quite difficult when it rains. Next to the bus stand, there is a huge tree. The tree might collapse anytime and I am constantly worried about it."

Speaking to The Beacon, Nagaraj, a resident of Rajajinagar, expressed his dissatisfaction with the government for providing free bus travel for women but failing to provide basic amenities for the commuters. "We have even complained to the BBMP numerous times but no firm action has been taken yet," said Nagaraj.