

# THE BEACON

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## Psychologist stress student well being

Nidhi B

**BENGALURU:** Mental well-being is important for all age groups as it plays a major role in affecting the overall quality of one's life. Teenagers and high school students must build a positive environment around them said psychologist Sushma Kaushik.

According to a nationwide mental health study conducted in India, approximately 14% of the population needs active mental health interventions. Speaking to The Beacon, Sushma Kaushik stated that counselling in schools is very important as the students face educational pressure, stress, and emotional disturbances.

Thus, it is important to provide support and help them cope with their problems. "A stimulating environment in schools as well as at home is important for students as it helps in critical thinking and helps in fostering their cognitive development and social skills which helps in improving interpersonal interactions and promotes a positive environment," explained Kaushik.

Schools have to take the initiative to support this, by organising workshops and seminars on the importance of mental well-being. Students should be taught how to manage their stress by engaging in hobbies, exercising, and listening to music instead of turning to habits such as bingeing food, substance abuse, etc, which can give way to more severe issues, added Kaushik.

## Monopsony: Key driver of sweatshop exploitation

Sinchan S and Kushal V

**BENGALURU:** Monopsony is the reason why many suppliers across the world have been able to exploit labourers through sweatshops, opined Dr Ashok Kumar while speaking about his book on Sunday.

In anticipation of the Kannada translation of his latest book, Dr Ashok Kumar from Birkbeck, University of London, engaged in discussion with the youth of Bengaluru. Titled, 'Monopsony Capitalism', the book seeks to explain how monopsony can affect the agency of the labour class.

"Monopsony is the opposite of monopoly. It is like a bottleneck, where there are lots of sellers and few buyers would prevail," said Kumar. Due to this, there's an uneven relationship between the seller and the buyer, in turn making the buyer more



Prakash Urs, Dr Ashok Kumar and Dr Manjunath at the discussion (left to right)

Sinchan Saha

powerful in the labour market. He explained how this results in the exploitation of labourers in sweatshops. Sweatshops are characterised by poor working conditions, low wages and unreasonable working hours. These are typically seen in industries like textiles and shoes in regions like India, or Southeast Asian countries.

However, with an increase in investment, and higher competition, there are fewer places where sweatshops can be established. This weakens the monopsony of the suppliers thereby providing more power to the labourers, as highlighted in the book.

The discussion further delved into the socio-economic aspects of the present day. He talked

about 'gender roles' with reference to America.

During the war, women were put to work, to aid the men fighting in the army. In the post-war situation, however, the change in gender roles retracted back to its original traditions and society started demanding women back in the house.

He mentioned how very recently, there has been a trend of the same strain,

even in India, where men have started to demand 'traditional roles' for women.

He further expressed his views about gender politics and the role of media in aiding it. He spoke about the 'big ones' that is, sports in the USA and about the ongoing debate about whether Trans persons, who have not undergone hormone therapy be allowed to partake in women's sports.

"Even if you ask the most liberal person in America, should someone who's a biological man, identifying as a woman, who hasn't had hormone therapy, go ahead and compete with women? I think during these arguments, you cannot win," Kumar said.

Kumar highlighted how a lot of conservative media amplifies this situation using examples of specific cases, in turn portraying an entire community in a bad light.

## Elevate '24: Empowering underprivileged children

Sadhika Dasgupta

**BENGALURU:** Over 900 kids have joined from nine regions nationwide for the two-day event Elevate 2024, being organised by Enabling Leadership. The organisation utilises play and experiential mediums to teach leadership skills, said Programme Director at Enabling Leadership, Rewin Raj.

Enabling Leadership is a non-profit organisation for underprivileged children that recently hosted the Elevate 2024 event, where children showcase their talent on the national stage to participate in football, music, and Lego competitions. The event was held on February 17



Students during the Build Programme at Elevate 2024

Sherin Johnson

and 18, and the programme's national finals took place at St Joseph's University, Bengaluru.

Rewin also pointed out that participation in public events is challenging, particularly for children from underprivileged

backgrounds. Creating equality in opportunities and resources, such as providing the same clothes and equipment, can help build confidence gaps between students from different socio-economic backgrounds, he added.

"When you play, you learn a lot of different life skills, which you will never learn normally in life," Divya Rohilla, head of finance and support function at Enabling Leadership.

Rohilla mentioned that the children have the chance to learn and connect with other children from various cultural backgrounds during the event.

The teaching instruction focuses on promoting practices in the classroom, including active learning or engaging learning styles. This would involve students in between three and five different activities that engage them visually, physically, and verbally, said Rohilla.

## Pedagogy of feminism in science

Dattatraya Dutta

**BENGALURU:** On Sunday, February 18, Dr Gita Chadha and Dr Riya Ghosh of the National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS) shed light on the underrepresentation of women in science at a discussion at the Champaca Book Store.

Addressing the growing trend of more women dropping out of science as compared to men, as well as women receiving less recognition, Dr Chadha points out the need to

understand how inherent bias born out of patriarchal ideas affects research outcomes.

Dr Ghosh underscored the need to scrutinise studies with a feminist lens to uncover biases in scientific research. She noted that a recent review of scientific research spanning several decades revealed that the design of the research and outcomes were biased towards patriarchal perspectives.

Thus, research papers help shape popular culture that portrayed women



Discussion at Champaca Dattatraya D

through patriarchal ideologies.

Ghosh suggested that all researchers and women in science should read 'Inferior' by Angela Saini, which reveals how researchers have long portrayed women as inferior to men, instead of highlighting their similarities.

## New Rapido fee to benefit drivers

Hemalatha Y.N

**BENGALURU:** Ride-sharing platform Rapido is all set to discontinue charging commission from auto-rickshaw drivers in Bengaluru instead of a one-time login fee of Rs 5.

Rapido driver Madhan J, who has been working for three years, mentioned the decline in earnings and issues with cancellations and deductions due to policy changes. Despite the company's announcement, Madhan has not seen any improvements in driver support or services. He also suggested that fellow drivers on other ride-hailing platforms

collaborate and work towards resolving the issue while maintaining exceptional customer service. Rapido should focus on understanding and addressing the drivers' problems to promote a more positive relationship between the company and its drivers, he added.

Mohammed Murtuza a customer executive from Rapido, mentioned that Rapido has stopped charging commission from auto-rickshaw drivers, as it was not assisting them in completing more rides.

## Bramayugam: A monochrome marvel

Kessiah Joseph

Director Rahul Sasivaran's Bramayugam is a masterpiece that keeps the audience under its influence from the beginning to the end. Actor Mammooty playing the lead role has put forth an outstanding performance.

The other two characters played by Arjun Ashokan and Sidharth Bharathan, who stay in a dilapidated mansion are the main focus of the movie. Despite its limited locations, songs and costumes, the absence of colour enhances the storytelling and the commendable performance.

It also lets out a sense of terror and keeps the viewers on the edge of their seats throughout the movie. It is a must-watch for its cinematic brilliance and mesmerising performance. Speaking of performance, the transformation of the characters from their initial role to the end is effectively portrayed.

The movie also highlights societal issues like caste discrimination that are still prevalent in our society. The art team must be praised for the whole setting. The monochromatic tone has helped effectively capture the essence of the seventeenth century.