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MediaCon: The countdown begins

A S Mandira

We wanted to do something regarding marginalisation, but I believe that the reason so many conferences are attempting to address it is because there is so much still going on, said Mark Rasquina, a PhD student and professor.

The Institute of Communication and Media Studies of St. Joseph's College Autonomous is organising MediaCon, an International Hybrid Conference on June 13, with the theme 'Evaluating Media Research Methodologies: Marginality and Entitlement.'

Rasquina said, "Just looking at conferences conducted all over India, Bangalore in particular, received many letters to present papers on marginality. We know that these discussions conducted by other institutions, look at marginality in terms of deprivation of people like poverty and the Dalit groups. So, we started to think about how do we address marginality."

Speaking of the scope of the conference he said that the objective is not to limit the concept of marginalisation to entitlement. "Do we really tackle questions of marginality? How relevant are the methods we employ in terms of answering the questions of marginality? And so that's why we came up with the theme." Pranav Sriram, the event coordinator for MediaCon says, "I hope that most of us will become sensitized to not just one aspect as the papers received are quite diverse. We have topics that are focusing on film and marginality, technology and marginality and many more."

Fight for dignity and respect continues

Thanmaya Prakash

LGBTQIA+ people have been fighting to earn dignity and respect and to be treated as equal to their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts said Ayaan, a member of the organising committee of Namma Pride.

The month of June is celebrated as Pride Month across the globe. Through the celebration of Pride Month, the queer community has been creating political awareness and sensitising society.

"Society has been so hostile to LGBTQIA+ people

Distorting history is a crime against civilisation

Sutapa Dhara and Arushi Srivastava

Expressing concern over the mandate given to a committee devoid of educationists to change the textbook content, the Rajashekar V N, Vice President of All India Save Education Committee said, the expert committee should be comprised of professional, forward-thinking, and those committed to Science.

Yet again, the Karnataka state is in the news for the wrong reasons. Recently, the changes brought about in the school textbooks have landed the state in controversy as the RSS ideologues have been included in the text while Revolutionary freedom fighter Bhagat Singh and social reformers like Basavanna, Narayana Guru and a few others have been omitted.

AISEC, which has been spearheading the movement ever since the changes in the textbooks came to light, had

organised a conference of leading intellectuals and academicians on Wednesday.

Speaking to The Beacon, Shekar said, "Well-known writers were the chairman of the committees (in the past). NCERT syllabus was prepared by the renowned professors, professional historians who were really progressive-minded, forward-thinking people (and) committed to science."

Explaining the importance of social science, he said history is also a science. The textbook on history should be based on historical pieces of evidence, archaeological evidence along with facts.

Referring to a similar incident from the past he said during SM Krishna's tenure in Karnataka the revised math textbook had one component that termed the invention of zero as the 'jewel from the Hindu mind'. "This (zero) was first historically documented by



Rajashekar V N, Vice President of AISEC add

Sutapa Dhara

not a Hindu but by the Arab scholar, Al-Biruni; without any hesitation, without any bias, he said that this number system we have taken from Hindus." When Arabs said Hindu, they meant the people residing on the banks of the Sindhu river. "However, the textbook misinterpreted this to glorify the Hindu history." Criticising the government

for falsifying history textbooks, he said they want to misinterpret the past to suit their ideology. "All the ancient past was glorified. The Vedic period was called as Vedic civilization. Indus Valley Civilization, they tried to call it a Vedic civilisation."

He further opined that by meddling with the history text the government is brainwash-

ing the students. Expressing concern over how these changes would affect the future generation, he said, "It's like putting poison into your brain. They will have a distorted thinking (and) distorted idea." He further wondered how could the government destroy the children's thinking abilities. "It is a crime against the civilization," he said.

Chemical pollution is a threat to humanity, says expert

The recent war in Ukraine led to leakage of harmful gases

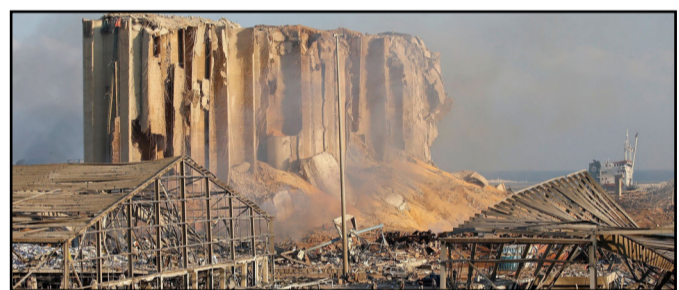
Bincy Joseph

The perils of chemical pollution caused during wars threatens the stability of global ecosystems on which humanity depends. When a chemical plant gets attacked it leads to leakage of harmful chemicals threatening humanity, says experts.

Last week in a bid to capture eastern city of Severodoneck, Ukraine, the Russian troops hit a nitric acid tank in a chemical plant warning the people to stay indoors. It was only last month a fertiliser tank carrying ammonium ni-

trate was attacked in Ukraine leaving fuming orange smoke into the sky. Video and satellite images confirm that 40 similar agricultural facilities have been destroyed in Ukraine.

Babitha Joseph, a bio chemist from Bharat Biotech spoke about the health hazards of explosive gas leakage. "We all have read about the Beirut explosion in Lebanon that led to a lot of casualties. The gas that got released was Ammonium nitrate which took the lives of people. The chemical Ammonium nitrate when it



Beirut explosion

Al-Jazeera.com

decomposes releases carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide into the environment."

Chemicals such as ammonium nitrate are only stable at room temperature, but at high temperatures it emits toxic gases such as nitrate, nitrite,

ammonia, nitrogen oxide, and pure oxygen, which ignited the explosions This leads to chemical pollution in the environment. Exposure to large amounts of harmful chemicals can lead to chemical poisoning, serious health hazards.

Exciting discovery, but limited scope: Dr Rajpurohit

Moksha Garg

In a group of 100 cancer patients, less than 5 per cent of patients can be candidates for Dostarlimab as it works on a subset of people, stated Dr Sajjan Rajpurohit, Director of Medical Oncology at BLK-MAX Super Speciality Hospital, Delhi, in relation to the recent cancer drug trial success story in the US.

The drug – Dostarlimab is an antibody that changes the action of the immune system, directing it to attack cancer cells. It is used to treat cancer of the uterus lining (Endometrial Cancer).

"This is an exciting discovery, but it won't work in all cases. The positive results have only been seen in 12 patients so far (the trial is ongoing), all of whom had tumours with genetic mutations called Mismatch Repair Deficiency (MMR)," he added.

Dr Rajpurohit elaborated that the drug is relatively safer, has minimal side effects and does not need chemotherapy.

The drug will be going into Phase 3 testing soon, and according to him, it will be available in India at the cost of about 2 to 4 lakh per dose.

QS Rankings indicate lack of commitment of universities

Niharika Bajaj

The success of an academic institution lies in its value system, said Dr Pramod Sagar, a Retd. Professor of the University of Delhi (DU).

With a career spanning over four decades as an educationist, he views the steep decline in the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings as the commitment lapse in the Indian education system. "What makes other Asian countries like Japan and China stand out in these rankings is they work on ap-

plied education, but we have moved to a trend of show-off and photoshoots, rather than focusing on developing students' intellectual abilities," said Dr Sagar.

QS is the most widely-used comparison statistic on university performance in the world. While various IITs have made it to the top 50 list, most of the top Indian universities, such as Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), DU, and Jamia Millia Islamia, have slid in the QS World University Rankings.



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