

Fight Will Continue Until Bhoodan Displaced Families Are Rehabilitated in Their Homes



“Arvapalli Nagesh khammam Staff Report March 3,(Indian Chronicle):”“BC, SC, ST State JAC Chairman Visharadan Maharaj stated that the struggle will continue until the displaced families of the Bhoodan lands are provided houses and restored to their homes. He visited the displaced victims who have taken shelter at Ambedkar Bhavan after being rendered homeless from the Velugumatla Bhoodan lands in Khammam. He also inspected the site where houses were demolished in Velugumatla and assured the victims that he would stand by them until justice is delivered. He urged them to remain courageous and united.”Visharadan Maharaj said that all victims should stay united and form a Joint Action Committee (JAC) with the support of all political parties. He emphasized that a legal and democratic protest would continue until houses are constructed for the displaced families in Velugumatla itself. He declared that there would be no step back until the poor are provided homes and rehabilitated. He alleged that under upper-caste dominance, the government has deprived BC, SC, and ST communities of shelter and livelihood, and demanded that immediate justice be done to the affected families. He further stated that leaders such as Tummala, Srinivas Reddy, and Bhatti, if they truly stand for the poor, should join and support this struggle. Among those present at the program were Podakanti Rambabu, Khammam District Convener Mulakalapalli Sangameswara Rao, Co-Conveners Jakkula Rajesh and Katakam Venkatalakshmi, Veernari Mahila District President P. R. R. Devi, Antony Suresh, Korlapaty Veera Raghavulu, Nageswara Rao, Narla Sheshayya Mudiraj, Ravula Hanumantha Rao Mudiraj, and others.

Holi Celebrations Today in Khammam (Khammam Rangostav Holi Meet)

“Arvapalli Nagesh khammam Staff Report March 3,(Indian Chronicle):““A grand Holi celebration titled Khammam Rangostav Holi Meet is set to take place on Thursday at the local Pavilion Ground in Khammam under the leadership of anchor Sabita. The event poster was unveiled during a press conference, where organizers invited all residents of Khammam city to participate in large numbers and make the celebration a grand success. Speaking on the occasion, Anchor Sabita urged youth to actively take part in the Holi festivities. She also announced that artists from the popular comedy show Jabardasth will be participating in the event, adding to the entertainment. Those interested in attending the Holi mela can obtain tickets at the Pavilion Ground or contact the organizers at 9848494996 and 9948959572. Interested participants can also visit the venue directly to collect passes. The event’s production partner is TRR Ortho and Accident Care Hospital. Sponsors and partners include Mercy Audio, Nagole Decoration and Events, Thambi Decoration and Events (Khammam), and Chandu Photo Videos.“Organizers and other members were present at the press meet.



Fitness is Essential for a Healthy Society

Dr. Mohammed Farha Appointed as Fit India Ambassador

Khammam Proud of Former Mrs. India Runner-Up’s Appointment as Fit India Ambassador.

“Arvapalli Nagesh khammam Staff Report March 3,(Indian Chronicle):““Stating that healthy citizens are the strong foundation of India, Fit India Movement Ambassador Dr. Mohammed Farha called upon people to make fitness a part of their daily lives. She emphasized that India can progress only when every citizen stays fit, conveying the message: “Fit India, Rise India, Viksit Bharat.” Dr. Mohammed Farha, a former Mrs. India runner-up who has expanded her social service activities across the country and stood at the forefront of women empowerment initiatives, has received another rare honor. In Visakhapatnam (Vizag), Andhra Pradesh, officials from the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India, along with the Sports Authority of India, presented her with the appointment letter as a Fit India Ambassador. “Speaking on the occasion, she said that efforts must be made to increase awareness about fitness among youth and encourage people to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle. She stated that this recognition as a Fit India Ambassador brings greater responsibility in her life. She expressed happiness at getting the opportunity to spread the message of fitness across the nation and mentioned that this honor is not only a matter of pride for her but also for her hometown, Khammam. In today’s mechanical and fast-paced era, she stressed that exercise is essential for everyone to maintain complete health. She explained that regular exercise helps in physical activity, weight loss, and preventing weight gain. Fitness improves strength, develops muscles and the cardiovascular system, enhances athletic skills, and contributes to better mental health and overall well-being. She expressed gratitude to the Fit India team for providing her with this opportunity. The event was attended by Vizag (West) MLA P. Vishnu Sudhakar, program organizer Ravi Naidu, Sports Authority of Andhra Pradesh Chairman P. G. V. R. Naidu, Olympic and Asian Games gold medalist Jin Sun Johnson, and others.”[8:10 PM, 3/3/2026] +91 96187 88997: End



Nature's Fury Leaves Tenant Farmer in Tears

“Indian Chronicle Babar Tandur(March 3)“A devastating fire has ravaged the jowar crop of a tenant farmer, Kurva Mallesham, in Chandravancha village, Tandur mandal,



leaving him distraught. “Mallesham had leased 8 acres of land from Karanam Leelavathi and cultivated jowar, hoping to reap a good harvest. However, the crop was destroyed in a fire on Tuesday, leaving him with nothing but ashes. “The fire broke out suddenly, and despite efforts to control it, six acres of the crop were lost. The fire department arrived just in time to save the remaining two acres,” said locals. “The farmer, who had taken the land on a rent of ₹12,000 per acre, is now facing financial ruin. The crop loss has left him worried about his future, with no land of his own to fall back on. “Locals are demanding that the government provide support to the affected farmer, who has lost his livelihood due to circumstances beyond his control.



Photo write up only:-“(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... March 3):- A picture of Bhuvanagiri Municipal Chairperson Thangalla Srivani Ravikumar and her husband celebrating Holi by rubbing colours on each other in Bonagiri town on the occasion of Holi festival.



Photo write up only:-“(Mandava Srisailam..Yadadri Bhuvanagiri District Bureau... Indian Chronicle... March 3):- A view of Bhuvanagiri MLA Kumbham Anil Kumar Reddy, Congress Party state leaders Potanak Pramod Kumar, DCC Dil Gate Tangallapalli Ravikumar and others celebrating Holi festival by rubbing colours on each other with fans and activists in Bonagiri town on the occasion of Holi festival.

Minor Girl Found Dead in Suspected Accidental Hanging

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, March 3, (Indian chronicle):“An eight-year-old girl was found dead in a suspected accidental hanging incident at her residence in Kapra on Sunday evening. According to police, T. Navaneetha, who lives separately from her husband due to marital disputes, works as a domestic worker to support her two daughters — Pavithra (8) and Aaradhya (7 months). Police said that Pavithra had not been attending school for the past ten days and had been staying at home. On March 2 at around 6:00 pm, Pavithra was reportedly playing in a cloth cradle tied inside the house for the infant Aaradhya. Navaneetha had stepped out to a nearby house to collect her monthly salary and returned home at about 7:00 pm. On returning, she found Pavithra hanging from the cradle with a saree



tightly wrapped around her neck. The mother immediately brought the child down and rushed her to Lifeline Hospital in Kapra. However, the attending doctor declared the girl brought dead. Based on the mother’s statement, police suspect that the child may have accidentally strangled herself while playing in the cradle. A case has been registered and investigation is underway.

Khammam Police Commissioner's Office Accused Sentenced to Jail in Two Ganja Cases

“Arvapalli Nagesh khammam Staff Report March 3, (Indian Chronicle):“In two separate ganja (marijuana) cases, the accused has been sentenced to one year of imprisonment and a fine of ₹10,000 in each case. The judgment was delivered by First Additional District and Sessions Judge K. Umadevi in Khammam. The accused, Boyina Venkata Ramana (62), a fancy materials trader from Kotha Lankapalli village in Penuballi mandal of Khammam district, was caught with ganja during checks conducted in 2024 and 2025 by V.M. Banjara Police. During interrogation, it was revealed that the accused, who was addicted to consuming ganja, used to travel from his native village to Bhadrachalam and stay there for a few days. From there, he would go to Kurmanuru village in Kalimela mandal of Malkangiri district in Odisha, procure ganja, and return to sell it in small packets in and around the V.M. Banjara area. Police registered cases under the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS Act), 1985. After conducting a thorough investigation, they filed a charge sheet in court. As the charges against the accused were proven, the court delivered the above sentence. Police Commissioner Sunil Dutt congratulated the investigation officers Inspector Muthulingam, SI Venkatesh, Additional Public Prosecutor J. Sharath Kumar Reddy, Court Constables Saidulu and Ramarao, Court Liaisoning SI K. Srekanth, and Home Guard Officer MD. Ayub for their efforts in securing the conviction

Nawab Raunaq Yar Khan Hosts Holi Celebration in Memory of H.H. Mir Mahboob Ali Khan, 6th Nizam of Hyderabad

Hyderabad Continuing a tradition of more than 50 years, Nawab Raunaq Yar Khan, Present Custodian & 9th Nizam of the Asaf Jahi Dynasty, celebrated Holi at his private estate in Jubilee Hills on March 3, 2026. The event was hosted at his own expense and was open to people from all communities.

The celebration was also to revive the memory of His Highness, Mahboob Ali Khan, the 6th Nizam of Hyderabad, who was apart from a lot else was noted for his generosity and inherent espousal of communal harmony by celebrated figures like Ms. Sarijini Naidu, Sir Vishweshwariah & Cyril Jones of th Brit rail-

ways who reported tribals across faiths in Maharashtra worshipping him. .

. Nawab Raunaq Yar Khan said that continuing such traditions is a way of honouring the inclusive values followed by his ancestors. Reminder of Which is of utmost importance in bridging communities & faiths in these divisive times.



The program included Holika Dahan, playing with colours, religious rituals, folk and cultural performances, and talks explaining the significance of Holi. Guests from different communities participated in the celebrations and later joined for lunch.

This event by the nawab used earlier to showcase the culture of India superficially to expats, but Nawab noticed even our Indian youth is unaware of the underlying significance of these traditions & decided to educate the Indian youth of the core significance of our celebrations rooted in the deep past.

Uppal Constituency – HB Colony Division President Ram Pradeep Participates in Holi Celebrations

“Nacharam, Indian Chronicle, March 3: “In the Uppal Constituency, HB Colony Division President Ram Pradeep participated enthusiastically in the Holi celebrations.“He celebrated the festival joyfully along with family members and



local residents within the division. On this occasion, he conveyed his warm wishes to the people and encouraged everyone to celebrate the festival with harmony and brotherhood.“He stated that the festival of Holi stands as a symbol of unity and strengthens social bonding within the community.

Two Booked for Illegal Liquor Sale on Dry Day During Holi

“NARRA SRINIVAS REDDY (NSR), Medchal - Malkajgiri Staff Reporter, March 3, (Indian chronicle):“Medipally: Police registered cases against two individuals for allegedly selling liquor on Holi despite the government declaring a dry day. According to police, acting on credible information, a raid was conducted in Surender Nagar Colony, Narapally, under the limits of Medipally Police Station. A man identified as Vishwanath was caught red-handed while selling liquor illegally. A case has been registered against him. In a separate incident, based on specific information, police conducted another raid in Kachivani Singaram and apprehended a person identified as Ramesh for selling liquor in violation of dry day orders. Police seized approximately five litres of liquor from the two accused. Cases have been registered and further investigation is underway.

Escorts Kubota launches new 'South Special' paddy tractor series

Introduces Shaurya, first dedicated paddy-focused range under the Powertrac brand

Hyderabad

Escorts Kubota Limited, the agri-machinery and construction equipment major, announced the launch of Powertrac Shaurya, a new 'South Special' paddy tractor series comprising five variants across the 39 HP to 52 HP category range. The launch marks the first time the Powertrac brand is introducing a dedicated paddy and wetland-focused series developed specifically for the paddy-growing regions of Southern India, including Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, strengthening the company's presence in a key mechanization segment.

Escorts Kubota operates three tractor brands in India — Kubota, Farmtrac and Powertrac — catering to premium, entry-premium and value segments respectively. Powertrac Brand represents the company's value and mass segment offering across multiple agricultural applications.

Developed for paddy cultivation, the Shaurya series is engineered for reliable operations in wetland and waterlogged field conditions. It incorporates cassette-type sealing across critical aggregates to help prevent water and mud ingress during operations and features a sharp turning radius of 3.1 metres to support manoeuvrability in small and medium-sized field conditions. The tractors are equipped with a fully constant mesh gearbox with 8 forward and 2 reverse gears and offer



Sensi-1 hydraulic lift in the 1600–2000 kg range, depending on the variant. An independent PTO lever with double clutch configuration enables controlled implement operations and supports advanced applications such as baler usage. PTO speed options include dual PTO offering 540/1000 and reverse PTO, supporting diversified paddy applications. A perforated elevated platform for paddy use and protected wiring harness routing inside the fender channel are integrated to support operations in wetland environments and long working hours. The Shaurya series models are also equipped with an adjustable slider seat with anti-slippery pads.

Commenting on the launch, Nikhil Nanda, Chairman and Managing Director said, "Southern India is central to Escorts Kubota's next phase of growth, and we are strengthening our presence through focused, high-quality, application-led products. The launch of Shaurya is in line with these objectives as we deepen our presence in paddy markets and expand our regional footprint."

Akira Kato, Deputy Managing Director said, "Our product development begins with field conditions rather than standard platforms. Shaurya has been engineered specifically for paddy and wetland operations in Southern markets to deliver reliability in demanding applications."

Bharat Madan, Whole-time Director and CFO said, "This introduction strengthens our participation in the paddy segment in Southern markets and improves the regional composition of our tractor portfolio. Focused expansion in such application-driven segments is important to maintaining portfolio strength across cycles."

Neeraj Mehra, Chief Officer – Tractor Business Division added, "Powertrac Shaurya is designed specifically for wetland farming. Its maneuverability, sealing protection and versatile PTO configurations are aligned with the operational requirements of paddy growers across Southern markets."

The Powertrac Shaurya series will be available across authorised Powertrac dealerships in Southern India.

Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water unveils 'The One And Only', celebrating the Power of Success with Distinction.

Hyderabad



Blenders Pride Packaged Drinking Water, a cultural icon that has elevated the idea of success for generations, unveils its newest campaign 'The One And Only' – a compelling new narrative of success. In today's world, where markers of success have become increasingly visible and crowded, the brand reasserts a timeless truth – True success lies in distinction – that draws admiration and sets one worlds apart.

The new campaign captures this spirit, portrayed by three protagonists—Avanti Nagrath, Kirandeep Chahal and Mahieka Sharma — each embodying a different facet of the brand. Avanti radiates charisma with her fearless confidence and individuality, Kirandeep evokes desire with her magnetic and unapologetic presence, and Mahieka inspires awe with poise and quiet admiration – all in an aspirational world filled with many equals — yet where they and hence, the brand itself, stand a cut above the rest and unmistakably command everyone around them.

In Odisha, coal dust is clogging leaves and blocking carbon uptake

The Bengal Nagpur Railway had been tasked by the British Indian government with developing rail networks in eastern and central India. In 1900, when its workers were digging in Jharsuguda, now a district in Odisha, they stumbled upon large coal deposits. Nine years later, Jharsuguda's first coal mine was established and a century later the region was producing more than 15 million tonnes of coal in a year. Coal is a fossil fuel produced by the decomposition of dead plants trapped in layers of soil. Around three-fourths of India's electricity is produced by coal-fired power plants. It's also critical in the iron, steel, cement, and fertiliser industries. India is one of the largest producers and consumers of coal worldwide, second only to China. In Jharsuguda, most coal mines are open-cast. Miners here start at the surface of the soil, removing soil and rocks to expose the coal deposits. This is more cost-effective than underground mining, which requires digging tunnels to access the deposits.

But open-cast mining pollutes the air more. The dust from blasting rocks, drilling holes in the ground, and transporting the coal and rock waste disperses through the air and can choke lungs when inhaled. The dust also settles on the leaves of plants nearby. When this happens, stomata — the small pores on leaves through which plants exchange carbon dioxide, water vapour, and oxygen — are clogged, affecting photosynthesis and temperature regulation in the plants. Estimating the impact of mining dust on nearby vegetation requires researchers to collect a large number of dust-laden leaves from plants spread in the area surrounding a mine. With the dust spreading as far as 30 km away from the mining site, this is a Herculean task. In a October 2024 study published in the *Journal of Geophysical Research: Biogeosciences*, researchers from the University of Southampton in the UK and the National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela, reported using freely available data from several satellites to investigate how plants are affected by mining dust. "Use of satellite data provides a great opportunity to efficiently monitor larger areas," study co-lead and University of Southampton professor of remote sensing Jadu Dash said. The data suggest the dust has significant effects on the ability of vegetation to absorb carbon dioxide. Amit Kumar Gorai, professor of mining engineering at NIT Rourkela and the other lead, added, "The study emphasises the importance of tackling dust pollution to protect vegetation and promote sustainable urban and industrial development." Eyes in the sky

The study was performed by Avinash Kumar Ranjan, who undertook the project as a part of his doctoral research at NIT Rourkela. He began by estimating the amount of mining dust settling on leaves in areas surrounding coal mines in Jharsuguda. To do this, he used data from two satellites, Landsat-8 and -9, and two satellite clusters, Sentinel-2 and PlanetScope. The US Geological Survey and NASA launched the Landsat satellites in 2013 and 2021 while the European Space Agency launched Sentinel-2B

(which supplied data for the study) in 2017 and Planet Labs launched PlanetScope in 2016-2022. Light falling on leaves is composed of different wavelengths: we can see some (blue, green, red) but not others (e.g. infrared). The leaves absorb some of these wavelengths and reflect the rest. Like a camera snaps our photographs by capturing the visible light reflected by our bodies, satellites can capture images of an area in different wavelengths using special instruments. When dust settles on leaves, it changes how much of a certain wavelength of light the leaves reflect. This changes the images of an area captured by a satellite for that particular wavelength. By comparing satellite images of areas farther from the coal mines with those that were closer, the researchers could estimate the amount of dust settling on leaves.

To validate their estimates, the team also visited two sites in Jharsuguda and collected 300 leaf samples with dust on their surfaces. In their laboratory, they weighed each dusty leaf, and brushed the dust off and weighed the leaf again. The difference between the two readings yielded another estimate of the amount of dust settling on plant leaves around the coal mines. Finally, they used statistical methods to find that the actual readings were remarkably close to those calculated from satellite data, demonstrating that satellite images could be used to estimate the amount of mining dust settling on the local flora. Narayan Kayet, a scientist at the Environmental Management and Policy Research Institute, Bengaluru, said the strength of the study lay in "the use of data from multiple satellites, which ensures comprehensive coverage and cross-validation of results." Kayet has previously studied the amount of mining dust settling on plants surrounding coal mines in Jharkhand. He wasn't involved in the new study. "Incorporating measurements from the field strengthens the credibility" of estimates derived from remote-sensing data, he added.

Dusty leaf, sick plant The researchers also used statistical models to correlate the amount of dust on leaves with vital physiological processes. For the latter, they used readings from two other space-based instruments called ECOSTRESS and MODIS. Their data can be used to compute the temperature of plants in an area and the amount of water vapour they release, both in high resolution. The team's models suggested that plants with one gram of mining dust on their leaves absorbed "approximately 2-3 grams less carbon per square meter of area," Gorai said. While the amount might seem small for an individual plant, "when you multiply it across large areas of forests or vegetation near mining sites, the loss of carbon absorption becomes significant over time," he added. Apart from being important for photosynthesis in plants, carbon absorption lowers the amount of carbon dioxide in the air. But when dust clogs the stomata, the plant absorbs less carbon and leaves more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This could worsen global warming over time. Another effect of clogged stomata is that plants become less able to exude wa-



ter vapour in a process called transpiration. Plants that transpire well are able to maintain their temperature better; those that don't become warmer. "When leaves are too hot, they struggle to photosynthesise efficiently," Gorai explained. "Over time, this can lead to stunted growth or even the death of plants." This then leads to long-

term damage to local ecosystems. Dash and Gorai also said their study provides a quick and effective way for governments to monitor dust pollution in and around coal mines, identify hotspots, and implement timely measures to prevent long-term damage to surrounding vegetation and local ecosystems.

US Homeland Security officials visit gurdwaras in New York, New Jersey to check for illegal immigrants

Law enforcement officials from the US Department of Homeland Security have started visiting gurdwaras in New York and New Jersey to check for the presence of illegal immigrants, drawing a sharp reaction from some Sikh organisations which see such actions as a threat to the sanctity of their faith. Some of the gurdwaras in New York and New Jersey are believed to be used as a hub by Sikh separatists along with illegal and undocumented immigrants.

Within hours of Donald Trump being sworn in as the 47th President of the United States, acting Department of Homeland Security Secretary Benjamine Huffman in a directive rescinded the Biden administration's guidelines for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) enforcement actions that thwart law enforcement in or near so-called "sensitive" areas. These "sensitive" areas included places of worship like gurdwaras and churches.

"This action empowers the brave men and women in CBP and ICE to enforce our immigration laws and catch criminal aliens—including murders and rapists—who have illegally come into our country," a spokesperson for the Department of Homeland Security said. "Criminals will no longer be able to hide in America's schools and churches to avoid arrest. The Trump administration will not tie the hands of our brave law enforcement, and instead trusts them to use common sense," the spokesperson said.

In a statement, the Sikh American Legal Defence and Education Fund (SALDEF) expressed grave concern over the directive rescinding the guidelines that desig-

nated "sensitive areas", such as houses of worship, where immigration enforcement actions were previously restricted. "This troubling shift in policy comes in tandem with community reports of DHS agents visiting gurdwaras in the New York and New Jersey areas just days after the directive was issued," SALDEF said.

"We are deeply alarmed by the Department of Homeland Security's decision to eliminate protections for sensitive areas and then target places of worship like gurdwaras," said Kiran Kaur Gill, executive director of SALDEF. Ms. Gill said gurdwaras are not just places of worship; they are vital community centres that provide support, nourishment, and spiritual solace to Sikhs and the broader community.

"Targeting these spaces for enforcement actions threatens the sanctity of our faith and sends a chilling message to immigrant communities nationwide," Ms. Gill said. Sikh Coalition said the Trump administration's decision to rescind the DHS policy on "protected areas" (which also included hospitals, schools, social service providers, and more) opens the door to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents conducting surveillance, investigations, arrests, and raids at gurdwaras. "The idea that our gurdwaras could be subject to government surveillance and raids by armed law enforcement with or without warrants is unacceptable to the Sikh faith tradition. It will burden religious exercise by limiting the ability of Sikhs to gather and associate with one another in accordance with our faith," Sikh Coalition said.

Climate is one of many factors that play a part in people's large-scale movements: Amitav Ghosh

Amitav Ghosh thinks of the West as an empire of chaos. "Look at the mess the West had made," says the award-winning writer, who was recently in Bengaluru to release his latest book, *Wild Fictions*, a collection of 26 essays centred around many of the themes he has explored in both his fiction and non-fiction over nearly four decades. Some of these include the long shadow of colonisation, the planetary crisis, displacement and migration, a mapping of south-south connections, neo-imperialism, the limitations of science, and so much more. "The pieces in this collection are about a wide variety of subjects, yet there is one thread that runs through most of them: of bearing witness to a rupture of time, of chronicling the passing of an era that began 300 years ago, in the eighteenth century," he writes in the book's introduction, adding that this was the period that saw the birth of modernity and industrial civilisation, in which, under the leadership of the British empire, the West tightened its grip over most of the world, culminating ultimately in the emergence of the U.S. as the planet's sole superpower.

"Starting with the collapse of the Soviet Union, the 'unipolar moment' peaked at the turn of the millennium and then ran into a series of profound shocks that began in 2001," writes Ghosh, who was awarded the Erasmus Prize 2024 "for his passionate contribution to the theme 'imagining the unthinkable', in which an unprecedented global crisis — climate change — takes shape through the written word."

In the introduction to the book, you quote a term coined by the writer and philosopher Antonio Gramsci, who refers to the time between the death of the old world and the struggle of the new world to be born as "the time of monsters", something that you thought the world again entered after 9/11. Unlike Gramsci's monsters, who are political creatures, our monsters today are an amalgamation of both the natural and the political. Could you expand a little on that today, especially given recent significant climate events, such as the California wildfires, the toxic air bubble that plagues the Indo-Gangetic plains in winter or the multiple floods occurring in South and Southeast Asia in the last year? These things are really monsters in the sense that they are overdetermined by various causes. You can't reduce them simply to climate, bad management or bad planning. All of those things are coming together. It's like all the frailties in our patterns of development have suddenly come together for a perfect storm to be exposed in a way that has never been seen before.

The California fires are a very good example. On the one hand, there is a major climate impact that dried out the soil and has been doing that for a long time. This is the longest period without rain in winter that has ever happened in Southern Californian history. That played a very important part in desiccating the soil and laying the groundwork for these devastating fires. However, settlement patterns also played a very important role in all of this; real estate interests have built ever denser housing along Malibu, for instance. And because it's sea-facing, there's a huge property premium, which creates this con-

centration of wealth. So wealthy people who seem to have no common sense have moved there in larger and larger numbers even though they know Malibu has been devastated by fires for over a century. There's nothing secret about these fires. They've happened repeatedly.

Climate deniers start saying that this is nothing new; it's always happened. But the intensity of it is new, determined by multiple factors. Politics plays a very large part in it because real estate interests are some of the major financiers of politicians. In California, there have been repeated initiatives to try to prevent building in locales like Malibu, (but) they've always been defeated by the real estate interests. One of the problems that arises now is that they use various kinds of fossil fuel derivatives as building materials... laminates... various kinds of siding. They're all spin-offs of fossil fuels, and they become extremely flammable under certain conditions. That is, in effect, what's happened in this region. There were politicians who introduced bills trying to force the real estate industry to use safer materials. But they [real estate interests] fought that tooth and nail and ultimately managed to defeat the bill. The real estate industry is one of the most dangerous industries in the whole world; the capitalist system under which building occurs has every incentive to move into areas that are not right for settlement. For real estate interests, this is easy money... a win-win situation because they're not committed to the long-term risk. They build, sell, and move out, and that's the end of their commitment. And the risk is borne by those stupid people who buy these things. You argued earlier that literary fiction does little justice to climate change and what it means for the Earth's future. Do you think this narrative has changed, and has there been some attempt to mainstream eco-fiction in the last few years? It has certainly become part of the mainstream discourse, especially from 2018 onwards. But it is not just climate change. We are in a planetary crisis, which includes biodiversity loss, species extinctions, new pathogens and AI. It is not like writers were not writing about these issues. They've always been writing about it. The problem is not with the writers. I think the problem ultimately lies in the wider ecosystem of culture. Even if writers wrote these books, mainstream reviews would not pick them up because they would say that these are just like a genre, you know? They're not serious. That's a very major problem, and that hasn't changed.

One of the reasons why I'm increasingly hesitant to speak of just climate, you know, is because this has been picked up and turned into a market opportunity even though we can all see that the climate crisis itself is the greatest market failure that has ever happened. Unfortunately, the world led by the United States has decided to embrace market-based solutions, where we know that market-based solutions won't work. Climate change-driven human migration has historically been a key aspect of the human condition, whether it be the great migration out of Africa or how the Little Ice Age caused people to flock into towns and cities. Are there any parallels or



lessons to be learnt from this past, especially given that the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) predicted that there would be about 1.2 billion "climate refugees" in the next two decades or so? One very important lesson that we should absorb from this is that terms like "climate migrants" and "climate migration" are very reductive terms, and I would caution against thinking of climate migration as a singular thing. Nobody migrates for just one reason. There are always multiple reasons: Sunil Amrith, the historian who's written extensively about migration in the Bay of Bengal, for example, points this out. In fact, there are now innumerable articles, books, and essays that hotly dispute the term climate migration.

Climate is one of many factors that play a part in people's large-scale movements. The first essay in my book, for example, is about migration, for which I did a lot of research on young migrants who had crossed the Mediterranean and walked over the Balkans. And it was very interesting to talk to them. You know, this whole phenomenon of migration, when it's covered in the Western press, is almost always covered by journalists who don't speak the languages of the migrants. So they get, I think, a very false picture of what is actually operating there. Migrants are extremely intelligent, and they know what sort of story Western journalists want to hear. Because I speak the languages of the migrants, I would hear completely different stories. You also write that many of them regret having made this decision to move... that their dreams and expectations of the West, shaped by cultural colonisation, did not measure up to reality.

For the last many centuries, but especially intensifying since the Washington consensus (a term used to denote neoliberal economic policy prescriptions made for developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s, including deregulation and reduced public spending, made by Washington DC-based institutions like the World Bank and IMF) the West has very powerfully invested in propaganda about itself as the best, the most affluent, and the most free. Ultimately, this influences gullible people, and it's a really sad thing. I mean, all these young migrants I spoke to... 90% of them regretted having set out on this journey. Because look at the lives they lead over there... 10 to a room, discovering that

there is no work for them. I mean, Italy can't provide work for its own people, how is it going to provide work for these migrants? It is entirely based on a kind of fantasy, and we should never forget that a very major aspect of this fantasy depends on social media. These technologies have been so profoundly transformative that we don't even now recognise or acknowledge how disruptive they have really been. Think of that Gujarati couple who took their children and froze to death on the Canadian border. What kind of madness is that? They're from families that are perfectly fine in Gujarat. I looked at a lot of the cases. They were from educated middle to upper-middle-class families... school teachers, etc. What did they think they would get in America that they don't have in Gujarat?

But you can't stop people from aspiring for things... You can't. And that's why this is an unstoppable phenomenon. You've created a society that's built on creating appetite and creating discontent with your present circumstance. And that's got a long, long history of colonialism.

When colonisers first went to Nigeria, for example, they saw that people were, you know, they would cultivate enough for themselves, but they didn't want to grow anymore because they were not interested in accumulation. They wanted to spend time with their families and so on. This was very threatening to them, so sometimes they would actually give people double the land. But it didn't help because people would only cultivate half the land. There are these amazing statements by white Americans, you know, who were dealing with Native Americans in the 19th century, saying we have to make them want more because they don't want enough. And now, this is the tail end of that history. We have very deliberately created this society of demonic desire (where) everyone just wants more, more. Your essay, *The Town by the Sea*, is a very moving account of a visit to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands immediately after the 2004 tsunami, which elucidates the ecological vulnerability of the space. What are your thoughts about the recent "Great Nicobar Project" and plans to develop it in a Hong Kong-like manner? It's horrifying. I mean, it's the perfect example of disaster capitalism, you know, because they seized upon this after the 2004 tsunami, and in the aftermath of that tsunami, they just cleared the native peoples off the land.