



CBI registers case against Varun Industries in Rs 388 crore fraud in two

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CHANDRAYAAN-3'S SUCCESS CELEBRATION: "SOMNATH JI, CONGRATULATIONS TO YOUR TEAM" PM CALLS ISRO CHIEF



As Chandrayaan-3 landed successfully on the South Pole of the moon, making India the first country to reach that particular area, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday dialled the ISRO chief S Somnath, congratulating him and his team on this historic feat. "Somnath Ji, your name is Somnath, which is associated with the moon, and therefore your family members will also be very happy today. Many many congratulations to you and your entire team from my side," PM Modi said in the telephone conversation.

The Prime Minister also said that he would congratulate the ISRO chief face-to-face later. It was a giant leap for India on Wednesday evening as the Chandrayaan-3 lander module successfully landed on the moon's South Pole. The Prime Minister, who is in South Africa for the BRICS Summit, joined the live telecast of Chandrayaan-3 landing online. Following the landing of the Chandrayaan-3 moon mission at 6:04 PM today, ISRO Chief S Somnath said, "India is now on the Moon!" People all over the country celebrated the historic occasion. Officials at India's space agency ISRO headquarters in Bengaluru broke into applause after the Vikram began its powered vertical descent towards its landing site. ANI

The news channel that misleads, leads the viewership

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

In the recent past many news channels are under criticism for spreading fake news. Most of the news channels are supporting the propaganda of the ruling party. There is a famous saying that, "Perception is reality." Your perception and understanding of the reality in India come largely from the news media, often referred to as the MSM, MainStream Media. As a result, perception of India is completely projected wrongly. The MSM is a business that exists to make money for the owners. That's what business does-make money for the owners. The way the MSM does that is by offering something they call "news," which is what you read or watch. In order to attract viewers, such as you, they present the news in such a way as to make

it hold your attention. "Sensationalize" is the word to use, so they have a series of "rules" that they use to attract and keep your attention.

At the arrival of television in India, there used to be a single channel - Door-Darshan. It served as a jack of all trades - fictionalized serials, cartoons, musical programs, documentaries, and news. Back then, the news was broadcast once or twice a day, far from the 24x7 coverage we are used to now. News was also about impassionedly reporting the facts. There were no debates, speculations, or subjective analysis.

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The news channel that misleads, leads the viewership

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But nothing good lasts forever. Along came cable with its catalogue of dozens of channels. Now you had specific channels dedicated to specific categories of TV programs, news being one of them.

Like any other possibly profitable scheme comes corporate greed. TV wasn't going anywhere. In fact, it was only becoming ever more popular.

Mark Twain once said that if you don't read the news you are uninformed, but if you do read the news, you are misinformed.

But nothing good lasts forever. Along came cable with its catalogue of dozens of channels. Now you had specific channels dedicated to specific categories of TV programs, news being one of them. But with 1440 minutes of the day dedicated to "news", factual content became a scarcity. What would the producers do? News wasn't just facts anymore. They were special reports, group discussions, and expert analysis. And it was still fine.

Historically, TV has been on an upward trend in India over the years. From the days of only Door-Darshan, we are a country of more than 800 channels today. From two channels in 1991 (DD National and DD 2), India grew to 50 channels by 1996 and 130 by 2004. This was around the time private channels emerged. In just five years, the number of channels had increased to 521, reflecting the growing strength of the small screen. This growth was all round: news, regional, music, lifestyle, food, travel, science, wildlife, fashion, films and, of course, English entertainment channels. There has been no looking back since. Today, there are around 826 channels across various genres covering all regions of India.

Currently, Indian television reaches an average of 615 million individuals every week. This, out of a total universe of 675 million (people in TV households), means 9 out of 10 people with access to TV are watching it every week. In comparison with the earlier years, urban TV reach has increased from 245 million individuals in 2013 to 300 million by 2016, an increase of 22%. If spliced to just the Hindi speaking urban audience, TV has reached 200 million individuals in 2016. Conflicts of interest were inevitable. And what we see today is a culmination of decades of corporate poisoning of what was conceived as a key outlet for the fourth pillar of our democracy.

Mark Twain once said that if you don't read the news you are uninformed, but if you do read the news, you are misinformed. That was true a hundred years ago, just as it is true today. A bench of Justices K M Joseph and Hrishikesh Roy said the role of TV anchors was "critical" and it is their duty to discourage hate speeches during news programmes. We have so much repetition, under-investigated information, opinions, and worst of all... fear mongering. Don't be fooled; both sides

of any issue can be guilty of the above. We need to enact some legislation that holds our freedom of the press (or any outlet) more accountable. We had no mass usage of social media. Facebook had less than 20 active users at the beginning of 2002 and Twitter did not exist. At that time our networks were in a much better financial position to be able to report responsibly without all the financial pressure that motivates them today. Isn't that what Federal Regulations are supposed to protect the citizens from? The media made people afraid of shark attacks during the "Summer of the Shark" — that was sensationalism, rightly criticized.

The media telling people about all the new infections, deaths, precautions, rules, political responses, etc in a deadly pandemic that's deeply affected the whole world and continues to spread, especially in the United States where it's killed more Americans in 6 months than two entire Vietnam Wars, where 3 million Americans have been infected, where it's infecting another 75,000 people per day, where infection rates are rapidly rising in about half the states, where hospitals are running out of beds, where major cities are running out of morgue space, where some people have to wait in line 12+ hours to get tested, where about half the states are mandating the wearing of face masks, where millions of people and some politicians dismiss reality and continually act recklessly, where the entire country is debating how to safely re-open schools, where there's no expectation of the viral spread slowing any time soon — that's called responsible journalism. We need to stop feeding the Mainstream Media and letting them manipulate and divide us against each other.



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Voices



Letters to the Editor

Senior citizens lives at risk

Close on the heels of the shocking murder of a 70-year old woman at Tardeo, comes another frightening case of a man attacking a woman, a senior citizen at Gowalia Tank while delivering her daily tiffin. This is certainly a scary scenario where the lives of senior citizens are at risk. More often than not, it is an inside job.

All safety measures need to be taken for securing the lives of senior citizens, both by the people themselves and the authorities. Senior citizens living alone must be in touch with the local police.

At the end of the day however, it seems like man has lost his conscience judging from several such incidents of rape, murder, abusing people on the street, fighting, cheating even their own family members, etc. We need to introspect, we cannot live like cannibals.

Melville X. D'Souza

Control over inflation

The prices of Fuel, Diesel etc. are arising very high even the prices of edible too but the onion is somehow better than before.

Rising crude oil price is a concern but they are still within a tolerable zone from the point of view of oil marketing companies. "Flexible trade policy has been adopted to keep prices down. We must remember that global food prices are very high due to the Ukraine war and the supply of food grains has been affected and that is a global factor from which India cannot remain isolated. But the question is that why India is affected in domestic items, it precisely shows that trade policy makers are responsible. They should consider about it to resolve for humanity welfare".

Mohammad Taukir

Significance of Onam

Onam is a harvest festival celebrated by the Malayali people of Kerala (India). It is a state festival that falls during the Malayalam month of Chingam (either in August or in September) according to the Malayalam calendar. The festival commemorates the Vamana avatar of Vishnu and the subsequent homecoming of the legendary King Mahabali. The Malayalees celebrate this festival with unity without any difference of caste and religion.

People all over Kerala celebrate this festival for ten days. Each day of this festival carries unique importance. Thus, people celebrate each of them uniquely. Atham is the first day of the festival and Thiruvonam is the final day.

The festival is marked by various sports and festivities, including music, dances, games and boat races. People put flower mats in front of their houses on this day to welcome King Mahabali. Keralites all over the world celebrate this festival with great pomp and gaiety.

During Onam, traditional rituals are performed followed by a lavish feast with twenty-one homemade dishes and a sweet dish (payasam).

The state government of Kerala conducts Tourism Week celebrations in connection with Onam, showcasing Kerala's beauty and culture.

All in all, Onam is a festival that unites all the people of Kerala. It is a festival that erases all the boundaries we have created. People celebrate it with joy and zeal and enjoy the days to the fullest each year.

Jubel D'Cruz

In the changing environment, nuclear families are keeping the elderly away from the threshold of the house

The elders of the house are called the foundation of the family, keeping in mind the experience of the elders, they should be consulted. His affection and love is priceless. The elderly is increasing rapidly in our country, but the resources available for them are decreasing. In such a situation, it becomes the responsibility of all of us to integrate them into the life of the communities, to take care of them physically and mentally, instead of keeping them aside. where they can make a substantial contribution to improving social conditions. It is very important to try to convert the 'problem' of the elderly into a 'solution'. As the country's aging population and health challenges emerge, the largest comprehensive national survey in the country has been conducted to scientifically examine the health, economic and social determinants and consequences of the aging population in India. This is India's first and the world's largest survey so far, which measures social, health and economic well-being. Provides longitudinal databases for the purpose of formulating policies and programs for aging populations.

It includes a representative sample of countries and states, socio-economic profile, comprehensive, contextual focus, longitudinal design, data collection, quality control and use of Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) technology for Geographic Information System (GIS). This will lead to synergy in various national health programmes. emerging demographic, socio-economic and other

relevant sectors in the country. Keeping in view the trends, the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is formulating a National Policy for Senior Citizens, which covers issues like financial and food security, health care and nutrition, a growing India to have a healthy future population. Will live longer. Research indicates that 12% of India's population will be above the age of 60 by 2030 and according to the United Nations Population Fund; This is expected to increase to 19.4% by 2050. more than men aged 60+ There are going to be women.

Increasing longevity has led to an increase in the number of people over the age of 80, accounting for about 11 million people. With nearly 6 lakh people above the age of 100, India will have the largest number of people by 2050. The number of senior citizens is expected to increase from 10.38 crore in 2011 to 17.3 crore in 2026 and 30 crores in 2050. In such a situation, the need for programs for their welfare increases. increase in life expectancy, nuclearization of families, their day-to-day maintenance and Dependence on others for age-related difficulties; The life of elderly people is a difficult challenge.

The problem is compounded for older women due to greater economic dependence. In rural areas, where 70% of the elderly live, economic reasons and poor quality of medical services leads to a serious situation, especially for those over 80 years of age. 5.1 crore elderly population is living below poverty line and due to increasing crimes against senior citizens, the condition of

elderly people that's pathetic.

The percentage of senior citizens of India has been increasing at an increasing rate in recent years and this trend is likely to continue. According to the State of World Population 2019 report, six percent of India's population was 65 years and above. The increase in life expectancy, though desirable, has brought new challenges to the modern world. The problem of increasing population has become a matter of concern for many countries today. Provisions for pensions and healthcare are falling short in the budget from 100 million Home to more elderly people and with the number expected to triple over the next three decades, India faces many challenges.

In the changing environment, nuclear families are keeping the elderly away from the threshold of the house. Children have started liking PUBG instead of grandmother's story, elders have longed to talk to their children. They are falling prey to loneliness in some corner of the house. In such a situation, their mental-economic-social problems are increasing. Pension is decreasing in front of inflation. Elderly included in Ayushman scheme There is a dire need to bring separate schemes for the elderly including their health care. So that in every household the elderly is seen as a blessing and not a burden.

- Vijay Garg

Columnist

Readers are requested to mail Letters to the Editor only at

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No postal letters will be entertained
(The views expressed are authors' own.)

CBI registers case against Varun Industries in Rs 388 crore fraud in two banks

The CBI has registered two separate cases against Varun Industries for alleged bank fraud of more than Rs 388 crore, officials said Wednesday. The company, its promoters and directors Kailash Agarwal and Kiran Mehta were booked in the two fresh cases registered on separate complaints from the Central Bank of India and Canara Bank, they said. The Central Bank of India has alleged that it has suffered a loss of Rs 269.29 crore, while Canara Bank pegged the losses to be around Rs 118.88 crore, they said.

"The accused company had availed PCL facilities for the export of steel and kitchenware items, but it was revealed that at least on three occasions, the beneficiaries of Packing Credit Limits (PCL) were not dealing with the steel and kitchenware



items," the FIR pertaining to Canara Bank said. In its FIR registered on the complaint of Canara Bank, the Mumbai unit of the CBI's Banking Securities and Fraud Branch noted that the proceeds in the PCL facilities were diverted to other activities. It is also pointed out in the complaint that Varun Industries was mainly

dealing with two companies in Dubai -- Al Rad International Trading and White Impex General Trading LLC -- and most of the sale turnover was with them only.

"It is further alleged that the accused company and its group companies were the only suppliers of these two Dubai-based companies. Criminal misconduct

of public servants are suspected since PCL beneficiaries were not dealing with the steel and kitchenware items, though the Packing Credit was opened for the same," it said.

The Central Bank of India had alleged that the company offered personal guarantees of Kiran N Mehta and Kailash S

Agarwal to secure credit facilities availed by the company. Besides allegations of funds diversion, the bank alleged that the company failed to arrange funds to meet the liabilities against the devolved Letters of Credit and other commitments as a result the bank declared the account as NPA on April 17, 2012 with outstanding balance of Rs 269.29 crore as per RBI guidelines. "The company and its promoter directors (Kiran N Mehta and Kailash S Agarwal) siphoned off the fund in a pre-planned manner by various methods as mentioned above which included the funds availed from our bank, with dishonest intention of causing wrong loss to our bank to the extent of (Rs) 269.29 crore and wrongful gain to VIL to the extent of the said the amount of Rs 269.29 crore," it alleged. PTI

Bombay HC issues notice state govt over PIL demanding temporary halt to traffic on Samruddhi Expressway

The Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court on Wednesday issued notice to the Maharashtra government and MSRDC over a PIL demanding a temporary halt to traffic on the Samruddhi Expressway till proper safety measures are put in place.

The Public Interest Litigation, filed by citizen Anil Wadpalliwar, claimed inadequate safety measures were responsible for several fatalities in accidents that occurred on the Expressway since its inauguration last December.

A division bench consisting of Justice Atul Chandurkar and Justice Vrushali Joshi directed the PWD (Public Works Department) and MSRDC (Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation) to file the reply within four weeks. The PIL expressed deep concern over the loss of innocent lives and the probability

of accidents due to half-hearted safety measures and the absence of wayside amenities, said petitioner's advocates Shreerang Bhandarkar and Bhupesh Patel.

The 701-km expressway provides connectivity between Nagpur and Mumbai. While the stretch between Nagpur and Igatpuri taluka in Nashik district is operational, the work on the Igatpuri-Thane section of nearly 100 km is yet to be completed. "As per the statistics maintained by the state highway police to date, as many as 39 fatal accidents have occurred on the Samruddhi Mahamarg in which 88 people have died. Nearly 87 serious accidents occurred in which 232 people were left with severe injuries and 215 accidents occurred in which 428 people sustained minor injuries, while 275 accidents occurred in which motorists escaped with no injuries," Bhandarkar said quoting the PIL. PTI

CBI has registered case against Superintendent and others to get goods delivered without paying fines

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has registered a case against the Superintendent, Bond Section, Jawaharlal Nehru Customs House (JNCH), Raigad (Maharashtra) and two private companies based in Goregaon, Thane, and unknown others for conspiring to get goods delivered without paying the fines, causing a loss to the Government Exchequer, an official said on Wednesday. The CBI informed

that a Joint Surprise Check was earlier conducted in the Bond section of JNCH, Raigad, by the CBI along with officials of JNCH.

It was alleged that a redemption fine/ penalty of Rs. 9,56,000/- and Rs. 4,96,000/- respectively, was imposed against two bills of Entry pertaining to said private companies, and the goods covered under these two Bills of Entry were kept on hold by the Customs Intelligence Unit

(CIU), the official said.

The CBI officials further added that it was further alleged that both the private companies entered into a conspiracy with the said Superintendent, Bond Section, JNCH, Raigad, and others by paying undue advantage and managed to get delivery of the goods covered under these 02 Bills of Entry without paying the due fine/ penalty and thereby caused loss to the Government Exchequer. ANI

Four people were booked of private firm for cheating businessman of Rs 2.1 crore in Navi Mumbai

The Navi Mumbai police in Maharashtra have registered a case against four directors of a private firm for allegedly cheating a businessman of more than Rs 2 crore over a land deal, an official said on Wednesday.

Citing the complaint by the

31-year-old businessman, the official said that the accused in September 2022 promised to transfer a plot at Pawne MIDC area in his name and took Rs 2.1 crore for the deal.

The four, identified as Ashok Narayan Pathare, Sushma Narayan Pathare, Jagdish Parvesh

Batliwalla, and Parvesh Minuchar Batliwalla, spent the money for personal use and did not transfer the plot in the complainant's name, the official said. The police on Tuesday registered a case of cheating against the four directors but no arrests have been made yet, he added. PTI

Nation

Covid-19: India records 56 new cases



India saw a single-day rise of 56 new coronavirus infections while the number of active cases was recorded at 1,475, according to Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday.

The death toll was recorded at 5,31,926, the data updated at 8 am stated. The country's

Covid case tally is 4.49 crore (4,49,96,732).

The number of people who have recuperated from the disease has increased to 4,44,63,331, and the national recovery rate stands at 98.81 per cent, according to the health ministry's website. PTI

ED arrests has made a fresh arrest in fraud case linked to NHAI, HSIIDC in Haryana



The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday said it has made a fresh arrest as part of its ongoing money laundering investigation linked to alleged financial fraud with the NHAI and the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC). A man identified as Chandra Shekhar was taken into custody on August 21 and a special Pre-

vention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court sent him to ED custody for seven days after he was produced before it on Tuesday (August 22), the agency said in a statement. The ED last month arrested Naresh Kumar Sheokhand, a former district revenue officer-cum-land acquisition collector of Panchkula, in this case. He is in judicial custody at present. PTI

JU student death case: Police investigation reveals sexual molestation, ragging

The deceased first-year student of Jadavpur University was paraded naked in the corridor of the main hostel's second floor, minutes before he fell off from there and died, Kolkata Police's initial probe has revealed. Investigators have also found that the teen was "sexually molested" and the arrested 12 people, including present and

former students of the varsity, "had played active roles" in the entire episode, leading to the Nadia teen's death, a senior police officer said on Tuesday. "The teen was definitely ragged and sexually molested. He was paraded naked in the corridor after he was forced to undress in room no. 70. We have evidence," the officer told PTI. PTI

Chandrayaan-3: NASA chooses geology team for first crewed lunar landing mission

Amid the frenzied anticipation in India around its third lunar mission — Chandrayaan-3, American space agency NASA has chosen a geology team that will develop the surface science strategy for the first crewed lunar landing mission in more than 50 years, the agency informed through an official release. For advancing scientific research and opening the door for extensive lunar exploration, NASA's Artemis III mission will send humans, including the first woman to set foot on the Moon, close to the lunar South Pole.

Dr Nicky Fox, NASA's Science Associate administrator, was quoted as saying in the release, "Science is one of the pillars of Artemis," adding, "This team will be responsible for leading the geology planning for humanity's first return to the lunar surface in more than 50 years, ensuring that we maximise the science return of Artemis and grow in our understanding of our nearest celestial neighbour." Led by principal investigator, Dr Brett Denevi, The Artemis III



Geology Team will work with the agency to ascertain the mission's geological science objectives and design the geology surface campaign that the Artemis astronauts will conduct on the Moon during this historic mission. These objectives will be defined in accordance with the established Artemis science priorities, the release added. "Selecting this team marks an important step in our efforts to optimize the science return of Artemis III. This team of well-respected lunar scientists

has demonstrated experience with science operations, sample analysis, and operational flexibility, all of which is critical for the successful incorporation of science during Artemis III," said Dr. Joel Kearns, deputy associate administrator for exploration in NASA's Science Mission Directorate at NASA Headquarters in Washington. "With the establishment of the Artemis III Geology Team, we are ensuring that NASA will build a strong lunar science program," he added. ANI

Uttarakhand: Water levels in Pindar river increases due to heavy rainfall

Water levels of the Pindar river and its tributary Pranmati in Uttarakhand's Chamoli district rose again on Wednesday following heavy rains, threatening to flood places located along their banks. Both Pindar and Pranmati are in spate once again following which a flood-like situation has arisen in Tharali town located on the banks



of Pindar, Additional Information Officer Ravindra Negi said. PTI

17 workers were killed in Mizoram at under-construction railway bridge collapse in Aizawl

At least 17 workers were killed after an under-construction railway bridge collapsed in Mizoram's Aizawl district on Wednesday morning, police said. According to officials, the incident took place in the Sairang area, about 20 km from Aizawl in Mizoram.

Sabyasachi De, the chief public relation officer of North-



east Frontier Railway, told ANI that a team of railway officers and senior officials of zone will also visit the site. Mizoram chief

minister Zoramthanga condoled the incident, saying, "Deeply saddened and affected by this tragedy." He said that the rescue operations are in progress. ANI

World

Iran: Eight people were sentenced to prison over paramilitary's death at last year's nationwide protest

Iran sentenced seven men and a woman to prison after their convictions over allegedly aiding two men who were earlier executed for killing a paramilitary volunteer during the nationwide protests last year that followed Mahsa Amini's death in police custody, state media reported Wednesday. The sentences come just ahead of the one-year anniversary of Amini's Sept 16 death, as authorities have been rounding up activists and others in an apparent attempt to tamp down on any dissent ahead of it. The report by the judiciary's Mizan news agency offered the first official confirmation of the sentences apparently handed down earlier by a Revolutionary Court in the city of Karaj, where the November slaying happened. The report



said the country's Supreme Court upheld the sentences handed down following an appeal by the lawyers for those convicted. The defendants were found guilty of committing "warfare" and of corruption on Earth, a term often

used to describe attempts to undermine the Iranian government, Mizan said. Iran's Revolutionary Court conducts closed-door hearings and has long been criticised by activists and other nations for their harsh sentences against op-

position figures and those with Western ties. The tribunals don't allow those on trial to pick their own lawyers or see the evidence against them. Among those sentenced, Dr Hamid Qarahasnalou received a 15-year sentence,

while his wife Farzaneh received a five-year sentence, Mizan said. The two must serve that time in a prison far from their homes, as must the others sentenced in the case.

It's not clear exactly what the doctor and his wife did. However, during the protests, doctors who treated those taking part in the demonstrations faced harassment and arrest. Their sentencing comes as part of the case that saw two men identified as Mohammad Mehdi Karami and Mohammad Hosseini executed in January. The men had been convicted of killing Ruhollah Ajamian, a member of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's volunteer Basij force, in the city of Karaj, some 40 km (25 miles) northwest of Tehran, on Nov 3. **PTI**

PoK: Several people gathered as protestors torch thousands of power bills in Rawalakot



Several people gathered at the Pakistan-occupied Kashmir's Rawalakot and torched thousands of electricity bills, Dawn reported. The demonstration brushed aside a notification issued by the PoK government on Monday in its desperate attempt to defuse the situation.

The protest started over 150 days ago in the town to record protest against the "cruel electricity taxes, unavailability and increase in the prices of wheat flour and some other issues of public concern". On Monday, the government "suspended" the implementation of the increase in power tariff until the "next orders" directing the electricity department to correct non-submitted bills in accordance with the pre-increase tariff and adjust the already submitted amount by

users in the next month's bills, as per Dawn.

A seven-member committee, comprising four cabinet members and three civil servants, was also formed by the government to look into the issue and give recommendations for its ultimate solution.

However, angry protesters in Rawalakot and elsewhere rejected what they called the "lollipop" by the government and made it clear that their agitation would continue as per their calendar until all unnecessary and cruel taxes were withdrawn and the tariff was brought on par with Gilgit-Baltistan. Participants of the rally in Rawalakot, some of whom were also carrying placards, chanted slogans and torched around 7,000 electricity bills at Kutchery Chowk, reported Dawn. **ANI**

Russia claimed to have destroyed three Ukrainian drones, which were trying to destroy facilities in Moscow

Russian Defence Ministry on Wednesday claimed to have destroyed three Ukrainian drones, which tried to attack the facilities in the capital Moscow, TASS News Agency reported. In a statement, the Russian Defence Ministry said, "On the night of August 23, air defences thwarted another attempt by the Kyiv regime to carry out a terrorist attack on Moscow, which involved three aircraft-type unmanned aerial vehicles. Two drones involved in the attack

were destroyed by air defences over the Mozhaisky and Khimkinsky districts of the Moscow Region, while the third one was jammed by electronic warfare and lost control, crashing into a building under construction in the Moscow City complex."

According to the ministry, there were no casualties. Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyenin, on his Telegram account, claimed earlier that air defences had downed an unmanned aerial vehicle over the Mozhaisky District of the Mos-

cow Region, while another drone hit a building under construction in the Moscow City financial district, according to TASS News Agency. "Air defences downed a drone in the Mozhaisky District of the Moscow Region, while another unmanned aerial vehicle hit a building under construction in the City," he said. Response teams have been dispatched to the sites, Sobyenin added. "According to preliminary reports, there were no casualties," the mayor added. **ANI**

Nepal: Eight dead as bus plunges into river

At least 8 passengers died after a bus plunged into a river in Dhading District of central Nepal. The bus, en route to Beni-hilly district, some 300 kms away from Kathmandu, met with the accident at Gajuri which is situated approximately 60 kms away far from the capital.

"The bus met with an accident late in the morning in the Gajuri Rural Municipality area. 8 people are confirmed dead while 19 are injured. A search operation is underway for more survivors," Dhading SP Gautam Mishra told



ANI over the phone. Among the dead were two women and six men. "The bus veered off the road into Trishuli River from near the waterfall at Gajuri. Half

of the bus was submerged in water after it fell into the river," the vice chairperson of Gajuri Rural Municipality, Sharmila Bisural, told ANI over the phone. **ANI**

Expression

Change Needed in Thinking on Living in the Mountains



Lalit Garg

Columnist

First the calamities of Uttarakhand, and now in Himachal Pradesh have raised many questions on the hill life, whether the hill life will become impossible, or we will have to adopt new ways to live safely on the fragile mountains. The destruction of life and property due to heavy rains and landslides in these mountains is highly disturbing. This is, however, not the first time when such devastation has taken place in the mountains. Even before this, many other such devastation have been taking place in the mountainous states of the country, when not only a large number of people have lost their lives, but private and government properties are also getting damaged. In such situations, the question arises: what lessons have we learned to minimize the devastation caused by frequent natural disasters?

Is it appropriate to make developmental plans, roads, undertake heavy constructions, tunnels, industrial undertakings, and allow tourism etc. in the mountains just like in the plains. It is necessary to investigate the reasons behind increasing incidents of landslides. Hydro-power projects on the mountains are the major reason for frequent landslides. During the hydro-power project, blasting is done to make the tunnel. The use of heavy machinery causes strong vibrations on the mountains. The ecosystem of Himachal Pradesh is still very sensitive. Due to the continuous cutting of trees in these states and the age of existing mountains also decreases, thereby the numbers of landslides increases. Apart from this, climate change can also be considered as one of the major reasons for the increasing cases of landslides.

In February last year, NASA released a report saying, climate

change can increase landslides in Himalayan glacier lake areas from June to September. Also, it may have to face the disaster of flood. But why didn't our governments learn from such predictions? Today the Himalaya mountain has become the Himalaya of worries. Over the decades, there has been indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources in the name of development, especially in the states of the Himalayan region. Not only this, such a construction is being erected against the scientific rules, which have brought in the destruction with cloud-bursts, floods and landslides. This question also persists: what should be the correct scale of development in hill states? If construction activities are necessary somewhere in the name of development, it should be capable of withstanding disasters along with the planning. It is generally seen that in the name of promoting tourism in these states, such huge buildings were erected which not only proved incapable of withstanding sudden floods and landslides, but were also harmful to the ecology and environment. In such a construction, the expectation of vigilance at the government level was ignored.

We have handed over the mountains to marketism. The kind of infrastructure from the past area to the residential area, hotels etc. have been constructed indiscriminately and have dug the mountains on one side, and on the other side by making concrete construction work on them. The burden has increased, due to which the appearance of these beautiful places created by nature is changing. Recently, we had seen the condition of Joshimath, the base town of Badrinath pilgrimage, how this city has started to crack. Earlier, I had also seen the destruction by sudden flash-flood in Shri Kedarnath Dham in June 2013. All this is the result of increasing the burden on the mountains and the result of cutting and digging the mountains in an unaccountable way. If landslides happen at ten places on Kalka-Shimla highway till Solan, then we have to think where the mistake has happened. If houses start collapsing on the hills of Shimla city

itself, then we have to think what are the rules for construction of buildings in such places?

The incidents in Shimla have caused even more concern. Due to being the capital and more active, populous and tourist city, the scenes seen in Shimla were more scary, worrisome and terrifying. On August 15 last, several houses collapsed due to a landslide in Krishna Nagar area of Shimla. Neighbors could not stop their screams after seeing the houses of the people living near them collapsing for decades, after the landslide, the whole country has witnessed an outcry. But when the ground subsides and everything is destroyed before your eyes, that helplessness questions criminality in government schemes, developmental neglect and callous thinking. Landslide occurred after the cloud-burst in Summer Hill area of Shimla itself. The Shiva temple of the area also came under the grip, where the crowd was bigger due to the day being a Monday of Sawan month. The ground sank so fast that no one could get a chance to do anything. A total of 25 bodies have been pulled out from the debris of the temple, so far. On August 14 itself, another landslide occurred at Fagli in Shimla, in which five persons died. There is news of the death of seven persons in Solan district also.

The manner in which the heavy rains have wrought destruction, question marks are being put on the various developmental activities being done for the hilly areas, and geologists are also giving warnings that the scale of development for the hilly areas should not be on par with the plains areas. According to Chief Minister Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, a gigantic loss of 10 thousand crore rupees and huge loss of life and property has been caused by the natural calamity. These painful and tragic incidents are the result of ignoring the fury of nature. This is the reason why the people of both the hill states have to be prepared to avoid the rush of indiscriminate development in future. Nature is giving us this signal and message with disasters that a lot needs to be done at different levels. It is the

responsibility of the government and the people to maintain the dignity, restraint, simplicity and purity of the delicate hilly life. Everyone wants to achieve happiness and prosperity in life, but there is a need to control indiscriminate construction activities. There should be balanced development without disturbing the nature of the mountains.

According to environmental experts, mountains are being cut from above to widen the roads in Himachal Pradesh. Due to this, the incidents of landslides are continuously increasing. Human and tourism activities are continuously increasing in hilly areas. Because of this, the balance of the mountains is continuously deteriorating. In the rainy season or after the rains, the foundation of the mountains becomes weak. Because of this, mountains start falling apart. Deforestation is also a major reason for landslides. Actually, the roots of the trees make a firm grip on the soil. Along with this, she also binds the stones of the mountains. This grip gets loosened by cutting trees. For this reason, when it rains, big stones start falling from the mountain. This is also the reason for the accidents happening in Shimla.

Man's greed and insensitivity has increased to the extent of tragedy in the mountains, which has become a major cause of imbalance and destruction of mountain life with its wildlife, birds, nature and environment. India will have to prepare a development policy for its mountains. Only geologists can have a major role in this work. The Chief Minister of Himachal Mr. Sukhu is himself admitting that he himself has invited this trouble by making indiscriminate constructions on the mountains in a completely non-scientific way, and by cutting the mountains indiscriminately in the temptation of widening the roads. It should be considered that what can be the result of exploiting nature without knowing it?

Entertainment

Singer KK's daughter Taamara pens an emotional note on his birth anniversary stating "I hope we can eat cake together again"



On the occasion of the 55th birth anniversary of singer Krishnakumar Kunnath, popularly known as KK, his daughter Taamara penned a heartwarming note on social media. Taking to her Instagram handle, Taamara wished her dad- late singer KK and shared a throwback picture.

In the picture, baby Taamara could be seen sitting in her dad's lap, who is busy playing piano. She wrote, "Happy birthday dad, love you more than I'll ever be able to explain. Miss you so much, thanks for coming back to life at least in my dreams. I hope we can eat cake together again sometime."

Not only his family but Bollywood celebs remembered the singer on his birth anniversary. Rakul Preet Singh shared a picture of him in the background she added KK's song 'Dil Kyun Yeh Mera.'

She wrote, "Remembering the magical voice of KK today and everyday." **ANI**

Proud wife and actor Twinkle Khanna on Wednesday shared a sweet message for her husband Akshay Kumar on the success of his recent release 'OMG 2', which has collected 120 crore at the box office. Taking to Instagram, Twinkle penned a note for her husband and shared the poster with the film's collection on it.

She wrote, "Congratulations Mr K! So proud of you-A movie that helps change the system and shakes the box office as well. #omg2."

Amit Rai's directorial has scored Rs 120.62 crore after 12 days since it was released. **ANI**



Twinkle Khanna pens a note for Akshay Kumar stating "So proud of you" over 'OMG 2' success

American former tennis player Serena Williams welcomes second child, reveals name



Good News!! Ace tennis player Serena Williams and her husband Alexis Ohanian have been blessed with a second child. The couple became parents to a baby girl.

Taking to Instagram, Alexis Ohanian shared a series of pictures with a new family member. In the first picture, the new mommy and daddy posed with their two angels.

In the next picture, Alexis introduces his elder daughter Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr. to her baby sister Adira River Ohanian. Sharing the news, he wrote, "Welcome, Adira River Ohanian. I'm grateful to report our house is teaming with love: a happy & healthy newborn girl and happy & healthy mama. Feeling grateful. @serenawilliams you've now given me another incomparable gift - you're the GMOAT. Thanks to all the amazing medical staff who took care of my wife & our daughter. I'll never forget the moment I introduced @olympiaohanian to her baby sister." He added, "Your peace would have been like a river, your well-being like the waves of the sea." **ANI**