

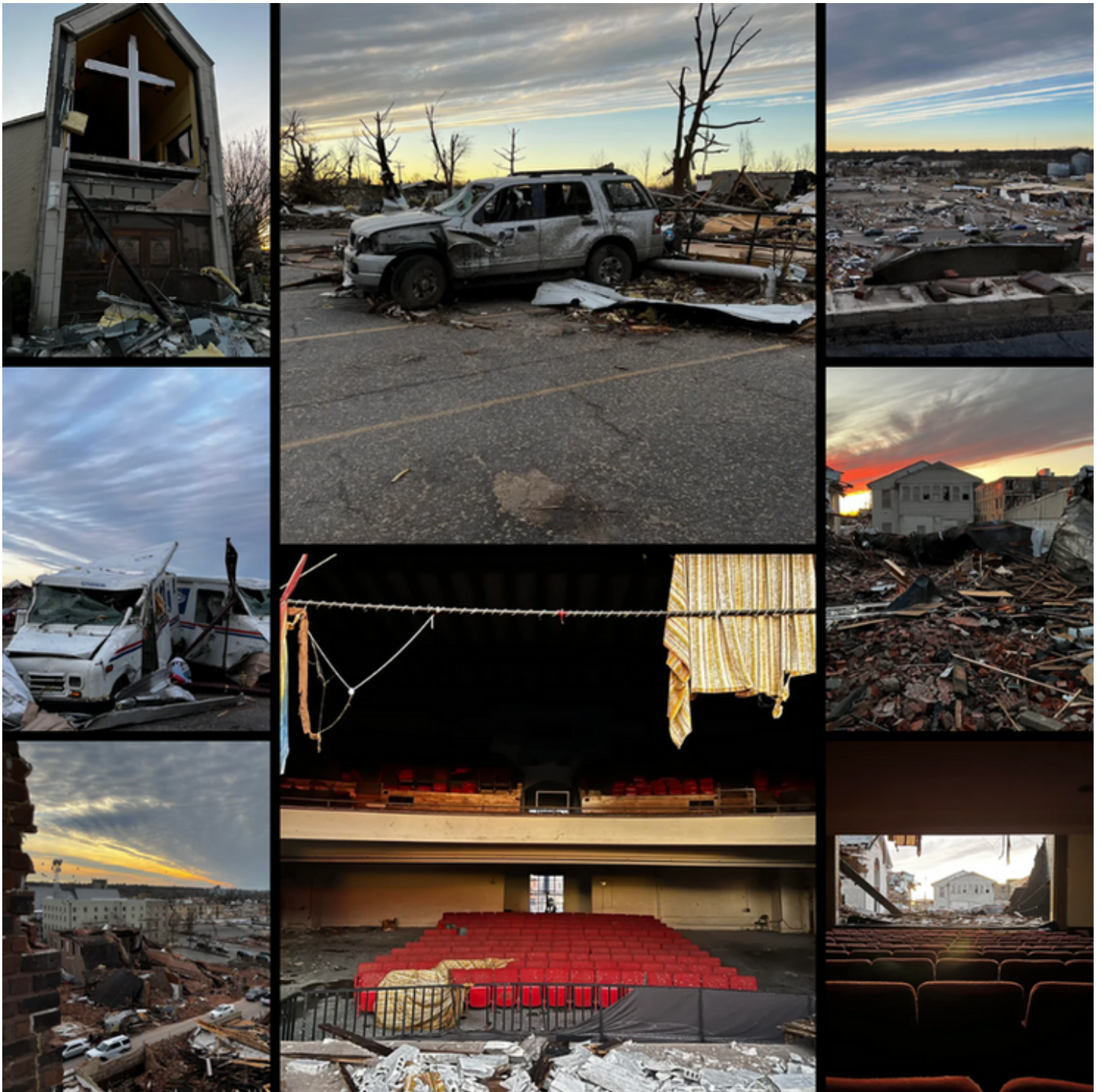


Raven Newsletter #22

Updated: Dec 18

I believe in God, only I spell it Nature - *Frank Lloyd Wright*

Climate Change and the Tornadoes:



On late Friday and early Saturday, devastating tornadoes were unleashed across parts of the central and southern United States, collapsing buildings into twisted debris and claiming lives, with the death toll reaching 100.

US President Joe Biden has asked the US environmental protection agency (EPA) to investigate what role the climate crisis might have played in these deadly tornadoes.

Experts have said that tornadoes with such intensity are rare later in the year during colder seasonal weather, and that Friday night's storms, which included one tornado tearing a path of more than 225 miles across Kentucky, appeared to be an anomaly.

Climate analysts have long studied links between a rise in global temperatures and the increasing intensity of unseasonal severe weather events around the world, including more powerful hurricanes, heatwaves and stronger and more widespread flooding and wildfires.

We can say with certainty that such unusual scenarios are going to be our new normal, and the effects that we're seeing from climate change are the crisis of our generation.

Ecocide: not suicide but a murder



While bidding goodbye to 2019, we were unaware of how would 2020 look. Today, we are not even sure of next month. This unpredictability is increasing every day. According to the climate change experts, roads will be flooded with water by 2050 but the recent trends show the possibility of making it happen way too early. Our capitalist ambitions have caused permanent damage to this planet. This phenomenon where an activity or a series of activities cause permanent damage to the ecosystem on a macro level is known as ecocide. The term was first used during the Vietnam war, in which American forces used a chemical weapon called agent orange. This chemical dented the terrestrial ecosystem of Vietnam. Fast forward to today, we are in the middle of an environmental crisis dealing with climate change, global warming, pollution, water contamination, radioactivity, and hazards bred beneath the representation of development.

It seems the International Court of Justice has understood the chasm of the issue and is actively engaging in the process of criminalizing ecocide so that the world can work as one organization to promote healthy life on earth. Though this realization to come together is not recent, we have seen the failure of the Paris agreement and tons of other commitments concerning environmental conservation. But this time, we can be positive with international laws keeping a check over the exploitative endeavors of humans. As with legal consequences, there is a sense of accountability and fear. This induction of fear that was supposed to take effect long back might help countries with poor laws around the environment to build a perspective around the environmental crisis.

Sometimes it's not "*Darr ke aage jeet*" (victory lies ahead of fear) it is "*Darr kar jeet*" (With fear comes victory).

India's messy coal transition!

In one out of three districts in India, there is an asset linked to the coal sector, that's how much we are dependent upon coal. A study by the National Foundation of India (NFI) about the socio-economic impacts of the jobs in coal-based industries showed how there are no guidelines on decommissioning of coal-based power plants and environmental remediation that ensures safe management, handling and disposal of hazardous substances as well as the dismantling, reclamation and/or disposal of scrapped thermal power plant sites and structures including machinery, buildings, ash ponds, thereby emphasizing on how messy the coal transition of India could be. The same was recently acknowledged by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

Challenges that India might face during its coal transition would be managing funds i.e. demanding climate finance on huge levels for the long run. Another challenge is to de-risk the coal bearing areas as they are already destroyed and will take quite a lot of time to recover. For that, green investments are required. Extensive research will also be required to study the best way to manage the reserve of coals. And also about its alternatives.

The dilemma of Radioactive pollution



Radioactivity is the phenomenon of spontaneous emission of particles or waves from the unstable nuclei of some elements. There could be three types of radioactive emissions namely Alpha, Beta and Gamma. Water pollution is an already grave concern for marine life and for humankind also. A newly emerging phenomena is the radioactive pollution that is a fresh concern. People have reported health issues across the globe that are caused by radioactive contamination.

Radioactive elements are found naturally in the Earth's crust. Oceans and seas hence get it from there. Nuclear power plants near coasts release atomic wastes and add to the radiological contaminants. Nuclear submarines are also one of the reasons.

Therefore, proper analysis and monitoring of radioactive pollutants are also required for a safe water supply. Prevention and precaution measures can check the anthropogenic sources of radioactive contamination in water resources.

And Vaquitas joins the list of 'Once upon a time...'



In what could be considered a serious threat to the porpoise population, Vaquitas are now nearing their extinction. If the reports are to be believed, there are only 10 Vaquitas left in the world. Vaquitas are an important food source for the whales and they keep a check on the population of Squids and Small Fishes. Their extinction will mean a serious imbalance in the water ecosystem. The number one reason for the untimely demise of such a beautiful species is the illegal fishing in the Mexican-US gulf using the advanced gillnets. It is high time we mend our ways and be more respectful to the environment otherwise the repercussions which await us will be beyond destructive, to say the least.

Glasgow Climate Pact: Explained



Following fourteen days of hard discussions with state run administrations quarreling about management on transitioning away from coal, cutting ozone depletion substance outflows and giving cash to the helpless world, the yearly environmental change highest point reached a conclusion with the reception of a more fragile than-anticipated pact called the Glasgow Climate Pact.

While most nations demanded that the arrangement was a significant, however little, step in keeping alive the expectations of accomplishing the 1.5 degree Celsius temperature objective, onlookers and common audience bunches considered it to be a botched chance to improve worldwide environment activity.

The primary assignment for COP26 was to settle the standards and systems for execution of the Paris Agreement. The majority of these guidelines had been concluded by 2018, yet a couple of arrangements, similar to the one identifying with production of new carbon markets, had stayed unsettled. Nonetheless, because of obvious proof of the continuous deteriorating environment emergency since the Paris Agreement, the United Kingdom was quick to guarantee that Glasgow, rather than turning out to be just a "procedural" COP, was a defining moment in improving environment activities. The work was to push for an arrangement that could put the world on a concrete 1.5 degree Celsius pathway, rather than the 2 degree Celsius direction which is the primary target of the Paris Agreement.

Subsequently, in excess of 100 heads of states and legislatures were welcome to go to the meeting and lend their political load behind the interaction. Such countless pioneers have gathered on just two before events, at the environment gatherings in Copenhagen in 2009 and Paris in 2015. On both those events, the COPs were meant to convey a significant understanding. Copenhagen had flopped in that, yet Paris had succeeded.

Glasgow profited from the presence as large numbers of them likewise declared new and upgraded environment activities. In any case, the last understanding was a mishmash, as most such discussions and agreements constantly are.

Beacon Of Hope



A six year old little girl, Kendall Johnson from Atlanta becomes the youngest USDA certified farmer. She has founded an organisation by the name of "aGrowKulture" that aims to educate others about sustainable agriculture and farming.

What to Watch?

Finch



Finch is a 2021 post-apocalyptic movie starring Tom Hanks. Its plot revolves around a robot that lives on post-apocalyptic earth which was built to protect the life of his dying creator's beloved dog. It learns about love, friendship, and the meaning of human life. Finch is a great watch.

Finch is available on Apple TV+.

Snowpiercer



Snowpiercer is a post-apocalyptic movie directed by Bong Joon ho. The movie is set in the future where the earth is frozen, only a few survivors of the human race are left and they board a train travelling the globe. Curtis, a normal worker, leads a group of people wanting to control the engine and the future. The movie is a mix of emotions and action. The movie is successful in depicting the future of humanity.

Snowpiercer is available on Netflix.

What did you like about this fortnightly's The Raven? What did we miss? Let us know what you think:

Our mailing address is:
envisage@sgndkc.du.ac.in

Curated with love by Kasturi, Akshita, Shawn, Ayush, Sujal, Jyothika, Vikas, Shubhangam, Shivansh and Gurshan.